United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015 No. 44

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 16, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM EMMER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the sobering but extremely consequential topic of Christian persecution.

Last week, I had the honor of visiting with more than 100 parishioners of St. Alphonsus Liguori Catholic Church in Zionsville, Indiana, including many interested high school students who shared with me their passionate concerns about the senseless persecution of their Christian brethren.

Through the church's Social Action Committee, they wanted to know how a small, faithful community could make a difference in bringing attention to this commonly overlooked matter. However, they wondered if their cries for mercy were falling on deaf ears in Washington. They felt helpless in bringing to light the barbarity, torture, and living conditions that Christians in places like Iran endure.

The parishioners at St. Alphonsus felt that too often horrendous massacres are met with isolationism and arguments that it is not America's job to promote human rights beyond our shores.

Today I want to let the people of St. Alphonsus and all those who seek to give a voice to the silenced victims of religious persecution know I hear you, and others in Washington, D.C., do as well.

I believe that America must reassume its leadership role in protecting those most destitute and downtrodden, that American leadership in the world should advance not only our national interests but also the interests of those who yearn for freedom across the globe, that Christians who have to shield their faith for fear of crucifixion or beheading have an ally in America, an ally who will fight for the dignity of all mankind.

Incidents of persecution of Christians more than doubled in 2014 alone. I wish I could say I was surprised by this increase, but I am not. I think this is part of the larger trend around the globe.

The world we live in is remarkably unstable right now. People lack security. Too many regions of our world are fending off the rise of groups that espouse extremely radical ideologies, groups that hate this Nation, groups that often hate all other religions, groups that feed off of destruction and poverty, groups that value violence over peace, groups that are clearly not a true or worthy representation of the religions they claim as their own.

The parishioners at St. Alphonsus Church asked me: What can we do?

I told them America first needs a smart and decisive plan because the threat Christians face is significant, and it is not going away.

The United States must work with free nations across the globe to reaffirm a simple but important message: human rights are not negotiable. Countries don't get to pick and choose which rights they allow and which ones they deny. We also need to work more locally to raise awareness of the specific issue of Christian persecution. There must be a strong grassroots element to this effort.

Each month, approximately 180 Christians are killed across the globe because of their faith. That is a startling number. In America, a country where it is so easy to take our freedoms for granted, it is easy not to notice the pain and suffering of others, but we must. And I know we are a truly generous and kind people.

When Japanese communities were torn apart by a massive tsunami in 2009, Americans mobilized to donate more than $700 million in charitable relief.

Americans always answer the call when people are suffering. Well, today there is clearly a tsunami of hatred sweeping parts of the world, and there are people who need our help. So churches and other groups with a concern for their fellow Christians and all global citizens need to take a stand.

Like those at St. Alphonsus have, Christians and people of all faiths across this Nation need to reach out to their elected officials and let them know of the tragic persecution of Christians and that it deserves attention, that religious freedom is a value we must defend and promote. Only then will everyone in this body know what was foretold in Matthew, that

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blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Let us now work to bring that kingdom of Heaven closer to Earth.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. In this Chamber where the people's House gathers, we pause to offer You gratitude for the gift of this good land on which we live and for this great Nation which You have inspired in developing over so many years. Continue to inspire the American people that, through the difficulties of these days, we might keep liberty and justice alive in our Nation and in the world.

A week after many Members of this assembly traveled to Selma to remember historic and heroic actions 50 years ago, may the House be energized to guarantee the very rights so many suffered to obtain back then and which still elude so many of their American descendants today.

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

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KILDEE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANOTHER OBAMACARE DEBACLE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last month, the Obama administration admitted that it sent inaccurate tax forms to 820,000 Americans who receive health insurance through ObamaCare. Individuals who received subsidies must fill out the 1095–A form to document what they have received for the past year.

The government is advising people not to file their tax returns until they have the correct forms, but just last week Kevin Counihan, the man responsible and accountable for leading healthcare.gov, declined to say when ObamaCare participants will get the correct tax forms and if all of the new forms have been created.

Since its implementation, the President's health care law has proved to be a hindrance, not a help, to the health care market. This debacle is yet another example of why we must continue to work towards repealing this ill-conceived law and replacing it with policies that empower patients and promote access to affordable health care options.

JOBS

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

Mr. KILDEE. Well, Mr. Speaker, I just got back from spending a week at home in Michigan talking with the people that I work for and meeting with small business owners. I heard a lot of frustration—frustration about the priorities of the Republican leadership in the House and of Congress in general.

Instead of legislation to create jobs here in America to make it easier for hardworking families to buy their own home, to afford to send their kids to school, and to save for retirement, this Congress has bounced from one manufactured political crisis to the next and has not taken on the big challenges that the people sent us here to take on.

Let's put away this dysfunction and this paralysis. Let's get back to the work of the American people.

As we now are set to consider our Nation's budget, let's make sure that the priorities of the American people—good paying jobs, affordable college, homeownership, and the ability to save for a decent retirement—that those priorities are the priorities that we include in this important budget document. This is what the American people expect of us, and this is what we should take on.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 16, 2015 at 10:38 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 7.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

ROBERT F. REEVES,
Deputy Clerk.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1530

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 3 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

IMPROVING REGULATORY TRANSPARENCY FOR NEW MEDICAL THERAPIES ACT

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 639) to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 639

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 ''Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act''.

SEC. 2. SCHEDULING OF SUBSTANCES INCLUDED IN NEW FDA-APPROVED DRUGS.

(a) EFFECTIVE DATE OF APPROVAL.—

(1) EFFECTIVE DATE OF DRUG APPROVAL.—Section 505 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 355) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(x) DATE OF APPROVAL IN THE CASE OF RECOMMENDED CONTROLS UNDER THE CSA.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an application under subsection (b) with respect to a drug for which the Secretary provides notice to the sponsor that the Secretary intends to recommend controls under the Controlled Substances Act, approval of such application shall not take effect until the interim final rule controlling the drug is issued in accordance with section 201(j) of the Controlled Substances Act.

''(2) DATE OF APPROVAL.—For purposes of this section, with respect to an application described in paragraph (1), the term 'date of approval' shall mean the later of—

''(A) the date an application under subsection (b) is approved under subsection (c); or

''(B) the date of issuance of the interim final rule controlling the drug.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE OF APPROVAL OF BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTS.—Section 351 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 262) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(n) DATE OF APPROVAL IN THE CASE OF RECOMMENDED CONTROLS UNDER THE CSA.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an application under subsection (a) with respect to a biological product for which the Secretary provides notice to the sponsor that the Secretary intends to recommend controls under the Controlled Substances Act, approval of such application shall not take effect until the interim final rule controlling the biological product is issued in accordance with section 201(j) of the Controlled Substances Act.

''(2) DATE OF APPROVAL.—For purposes of this section, with respect to an application described in paragraph (1), references to the date of approval of such application, or licensure of the product subject to such application, shall mean the later of—

''(A) the date an application is approved under subsection (a); or

''(B) the date of issuance of the interim final rule controlling the biological product.''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE OF APPROVAL OF ANIMAL DRUGS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 512 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360b) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(q) DATE OF APPROVAL IN THE CASE OF RECOMMENDED CONTROLS UNDER THE CSA.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of an application under subsection (b) with respect to a drug for which the Secretary provides notice to the sponsor that the Secretary intends to recommend controls under the Controlled Substances Act, approval of such application shall not take effect until the interim final rule controlling the drug is issued in accordance with section 201(j) of the Controlled Substances Act.

''(2) DATE OF APPROVAL.—For purposes of this section, with respect to an application described in paragraph (1), the term 'date of approval' shall mean the later of—

''(A) the date an application under subsection (b) is approved under subsection (c); or

''(B) the date of issuance of the interim final rule controlling the drug.''.

(B) CONDITIONAL APPROVAL.—Section 571(d) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360ccc(d)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(4)(A) In the case of an application under subsection (a) with respect to a drug for which the Secretary provides notice to the sponsor that the Secretary intends to recommend controls under the Controlled Substances Act, conditional approval of such application shall not take effect until the interim final rule controlling the drug is issued in accordance with section 201(j) of the Controlled Substances Act.

''(B) For purposes of this section, with respect to an application described in subparagraph (A), the term 'date of approval' shall mean the later of—

''(i) the date an application under subsection (a) is conditionally approved under subsection (b); or

''(ii) the date of issuance of the interim final rule controlling the drug.''.

(C) INDEXING OF LEGALLY MARKETED UNAPPROVED NEW ANIMAL DRUGS.—Section 572 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360ccc–1) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(k) In the case of a request under subsection (d) to add a drug to the index under subsection (a) with respect to a drug for which the Secretary provides notice to the person filing the request that the Secretary intends to recommend controls under the Controlled Substances Act, a determination to grant the request to add such drug to the index shall not take effect, and the Secretary shall not list the drug on such index, until the interim final rule controlling the drug is issued in accordance with section 201(j) of the Controlled Substances Act.''.

(4) DATE OF APPROVAL FOR DESIGNATED NEW ANIMAL DRUGS.—Section 573(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 360ccc–2(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(3) For purposes of determining the 7-year period of exclusivity under paragraph (1) for a drug for which the Secretary intends to recommend controls under the Controlled Substances Act, the drug shall not be considered approved or conditionally approved until the date that the interim final rule controlling the drug is issued in accordance with section 201(j) of the Controlled Substances Act.''.

(b) SCHEDULING OF NEWLY APPROVED DRUGS.—Section 201 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 811) is amended by inserting after subsection (i) the following:

''(j)(1) With respect to a drug referred to in subsection (f), if the Secretary of Health and Human Services recommends that the Attorney General add the drug to schedule II, III, IV, or V pursuant to subsections (a) and (b), the Attorney General shall, not later than 90 days after the date described in paragraph (2), issue an interim final rule controlling the drug in accordance with such subsections and section 202(b) using the procedures described in paragraph (3).

''(2) The date described in this paragraph shall be the later of—

''(A) the date on which the Attorney General receives the scientific and medical evaluation and recommendations from the Secretary of Health and Human Services in accordance with subsection (b); or

''(B) the date on which the Attorney General receives notification from the Secretary of Health and Human Services that the Secretary has approved an application under section 505(c), 512, 571, or 572 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or section 351(a) of the Public Health Service Act with respect to the drug described in paragraph (1).

''(3) A rule issued by the Attorney General under paragraph (1) shall be in accordance with the procedures provided in subsection (a), except that the rule shall become immediately effective as an interim final rule without requiring the Attorney General to demonstrate good cause therefor. After publication of the interim final rule, the Attorney General shall issue a final rule in accordance with the procedures provided in subsection (a).''.

(c) EXTENSION OF PATENT TERM.—Section 156 of title 35, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)(1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting '', or in the case of a drug product described in subsection (i) within the sixty-day period beginning on the covered date (as defined in subsection (i))'' after ''marketing or use''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(i)(1) For purposes of this section, if the Secretary of Health and Human Services provides notice to the sponsor of an application or request for approval, conditional approval, or indexing of a drug product for which the Secretary intends to recommend controls under the Controlled Substances Act, beginning on the covered date, the drug product shall be considered to—

''(A) have been approved under the relevant provision of the Public Health Service Act or Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; and

''(B) have permission for commercial marketing or use.

''(2) In this subsection, the term 'covered date' means the later of—

''(A) the date an application is approved—

''(i) under section 351(a)(2)(C) of the Public Health Service Act; or

''(ii) under section 505(b) or 512(c) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act;

''(B) the date an application is conditionally approved under section 571(b) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act;

''(C) the date a request for indexing is granted under section 572(d) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; or

''(D) the date of issuance of the interim final rule controlling the drug under section 201(j) of the Controlled Substances Act.''.

SEC. 3. ENHANCING NEW DRUG DEVELOPMENT.

Section 303 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 823) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(i)(1) For purposes of registration to manufacture a controlled substance under subsection (d) for use only in a clinical trial, the Attorney General shall register the applicant, or serve an order to show cause upon the applicant in accordance with section 304(c), not later than 180 days after the date on which the application is accepted for filing.

''(2) For purposes of registration to manufacture a controlled substance under subsection (a) for use only in a clinical trial, the Attorney General shall, in accordance with the regulations issued by the Attorney General, issue a notice of application not later than 90 days after the application is accepted for filing. Not later than 90 days after the date on which the period for comment pursuant to such notice ends, the Attorney General shall register the applicant, or serve an order to show cause upon the applicant in accordance with section 304(c), unless the Attorney General has granted a hearing on the application under section 1008(i) of the Controlled Substances Import and Export Act.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

I will include an exchange of letters between the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 639 seeks to improve the transparency and consistency of the Drug Enforcement Administration's first scheduling of new FDA-approved drugs under the Controlled Substances Act, the CSA, and, secondly, its registration process for the manufacture of controlled substances for use in clinical trials. Ultimately, this will allow new and innovative treatments to get to patients who desperately need them.

Due to the cost and uncertainty of the drug development process, there is broad agreement that a predictable timeline for approval decisions is a necessary component to successful drug development.

Industry, the FDA, and Congress have taken steps to provide more transparency and consistency in the drug approval process through the negotiation and authorization of the Prescription Drug User Fee program and a commitment to review goals embedded in the PDUFA agreements.

However, drugs that contain substances that have not been previously marketed in the U.S. and that have abuse potential must also be scheduled under the Controlled Substances Act, the CSA, by the DEA before they can reach patients.

Under the CSA, there is no deadline for the DEA to make a scheduling decision, and the delays in DEA decisions have increased significantly. Between 1997 and 1999 and 2009 and 2013, the average time between FDA approval and DEA's final scheduling increased from an average of 49.3 days to an average of 237.6 days. Recently, a company had to wait over 13 months after FDA approval to receive a final scheduling recommendation from the DEA.

The lack of predictability in the timing of DEA scheduling decisions leads to unnecessary uncertainty in the drug development process and needless delays in patient access to new therapies.

Section 2 of H.R. 639, as amended by the full committee, would require DEA to issue an interim final rule, scheduling the new drug no later than 90 days after it is approved or when it receives the FDA's scheduling recommendation, whichever comes later. After receiving the FDA's recommendation, the DEA would continue to conduct its own analysis prior to scheduling the drug, but patients would now have peace of mind in knowing this will no longer be an open-ended process. Of note: since 1996, the DEA has not made any scheduling decision for a new drug that was contrary to the FDA recommendation.

Further, section 3 of this bill would bring much-needed certainty to another open-ended DEA process. Manufacturers of controlled substances are required to be registered with the DEA. The requirement to register extends to manufacturers of controlled substances intended to be used in clinical trials for products not yet approved by the FDA. There is no timetable for the DEA to grant approval of registration applications, and there is not a process for the applicant to determine the reasons for delay in the application. The lack of transparency, predictability, and timeliness in the registration process leaves companies unable to properly plan clinical trial schedules for prospective new therapies.

For registration applications related to schedule III, IV, and V drugs that will only be used in clinical trials, section 3, as amended by the full committee, would require the DEA to register the applicant or serve an order to show cause on why the applicant shall not be registered within 180 days of the filing of the application.

For drugs in schedule I and II that will only be used in a clinical trial, the DEA would be required to issue a notice of application not later than 90 days after an application is accepted for filing. Ninety days after the end of the comment period, pursuant to the notice, the DEA would be required to register the applicant or serve an order to show cause on why the registrant should not be registered.

Such a solution does not force the DEA to make a particular decision but will provide transparency to the process so companies can better plan when regulatory decisions will be made.

I would urge all Members to support this critical piece of legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
March 16, 2015.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN UPTON: I am writing with respect to H.R. 639, the ''Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act.'' As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 639 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 639 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 639, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 639.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2015.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODTETTE: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 639, the ''Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act.'' As you noted, there are provisions of the bill that fall within the Committee on the Judiciary's Rule X jurisdiction.

I appreciate your willingness to forgo action on H.R. 639, and I agree that your decision is not a waiver of any of the Committee on the Judiciary's jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that the Committee will be consulted appropriately and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward. In addition, I understand the Committee reserves the right to seek the appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, for which you will have my support.

I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Congressional Record during consideration of H.R. 639 on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 639, the Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act. This legislation was introduced by the chair of our Health Subcommittee, JOE PITTS of Pennsylvania; the ranking member of the full committee, FRANK PALLONE of New Jersey; and myself to provide a solution to delays experienced by patients in need.

Currently, new drugs and substances that previously have not been marketed in the United States and that have abuse potential must be scheduled by the Drug Enforcement Administration prior to being marketed.

The amount of time the DEA has taken before acting on FDA recommendations has significantly lengthened in recent years, which delays the availability of new therapies.

This legislation will improve patient access by bringing clarity and transparency to the process of scheduling a new FDA-approved therapy.

I was pleased to join the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) in supporting this legislation to continue the great work they started last Congress. I thank them and their staff for working on this important access issue.

I want to acknowledge the leadership of Chairman UPTON and the work of the committee's minority and majority staff in advancing this bill through the Energy and Commerce Committee. I

support this bipartisan bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support this bipartisan legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the cost estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office for H.R. 639.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2015.

Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 639, the Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Julia Christensen.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF.

Enclosure.

AS ORDERED REPORTED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE ON FEBRUARY 12, 2015

H.R. 639 would modify the administrative procedures followed by the Department of Justice in regulating new drugs that are already approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and in authorizing drugs to be used in clinical trials. The legislation would aim to streamline the current review and approval process. CBO estimates that implementing the bill would have no significant effect on spending subject to appropriation. Enacting the legislation would affect direct spending and revenues related to federal health care costs; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures apply. CBO estimates that that those effects would also not be significant over the 2015–2025 period.

The legislation would change the effective date of FDA approval for certain new drugs that undergo review by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to determine if the drug should be marketed with restrictions as a controlled substance. Such a change could extend certain regulatory periods during which FDA will not accept marketing applications or permit another manufacturer to market a version of an affected drug and could also result in the extension of patent terms for certain products. Extending such periods of marketing exclusivity could delay the entry of lower-priced generic drugs on the market, and such a delay would increase the average cost for prescription drugs. Any increase in health care costs resulting from delaying the market entry of generic drugs would affect direct spending and revenues by increasing the cost of prescription drugs for federal health programs and private health insurance.

CBO expects that the bill's provisions would apply to a limited number of drugs subject to DEA classification after enactment. Because most drugs generally retain patent protections after FDA approval for more than 10 years, CBO anticipates that the likelihood that drugs affected by the bill will face generic competition before 2025 under current law would be small. As a result, we estimate that enacting the bill would not significantly affect direct spending or revenues over the 2015–2025 period. Beyond 2025, however, the potential for the legislation to delay the market entry of generic drugs would be greater, and the effect on direct spending and revenues would increase in later years.

H.R. 639 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. The bill would impose a private-sector mandate, as defined under UMRA, on manufacturers of generic drugs by delaying the entry of those products in the market. The cost of the mandate would be the net loss of income, which could be significant depending on the drug. Based on information from industry sources, CBO estimates that the cost of the mandate would probably fall below the annual threshold established in UMRA for private-sector mandates ($154 million in 2015, adjusted annually for inflation).

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Julia Christensen and Mark Grabowicz (for federal costs) and Amy Petz (for private sector costs). The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to lend my support to H.R. 639, the Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act. This important public health bill aims to bring better reliability and transparency to medical therapies, while continuing to ensure that they reach patients in need quickly, but most importantly safely and effectively.

When a new drug is approved by the FDA, a company can begin marketing the product upon its approval. However, for a subset of drugs, FDA recommends to the DEA they be included in the Controlled Substance Act—or "scheduled," if there is abuse potential. Until DEA makes a final decision, a drug cannot be released to the public.

Unfortunately, there is no deadline for the DEA to make a decision. As a result, the process has lengthened over time, in some instances lasting years before a decision is made. So even if a drug is considered safe and effective, patients and physicians are being forced to wait to access these therapies. This bill would continue to allow DEA to conduct its own analysis, but would remove much of the uncertainty from the process. It also would speed up the DEA registration process allowing the manufacture and distribution of controlled substances for use only in clinical trials.

I want to thank Chairman PITTS for working with me on this bill last Congress, and committing to move forward early this Congress. Thank you to Mr. GREEN as well for joining us on this important bill.

I am glad that we have been able to work with both DEA and FDA, our Senate counterparts and the bill sponsors, to ensure that the goals of this bill is met.

I urge members to support H.R 639 and I look forward to its swift passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 639, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING TRAUMA CARE FOR ALL AMERICANS ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 647) to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 647

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 "Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act".

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF TRAUMA AND EMERGENCY CARE PROGRAMS.

(a) TRAUMA CENTER CARE GRANTS.—Section 1245 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–45) is amended in the first sentence—

(1) by striking "2009, and such" and inserting "2009, such"; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: ", and $100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020".

(b) TRAUMA SERVICE AVAILABILITY GRANTS.—Section 1282 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–82) is amended by striking "2015" and inserting "2020".

SEC. 3. ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAMS UNDER ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE.

Section 2811(c)(2)(F) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300hh–10(c)(2)(F)) is amended by striking "trauma care under parts A through C of title XII" and inserting "trauma care under parts A through D of title XII and part H of such title".

SEC. 4. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS RELATING TO TRAUMA CENTER GRANTS.

(a) CLARIFICATION ON ELIGIBLE TRAUMA CENTERS.—Section 1241(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–41(a)) is amended by striking "qualified public, nonprofit Indian Health Service, Indian tribal, and urban Indian trauma centers" and inserting "qualified public trauma centers, qualified nonprofit trauma centers, and qualified Indian Health Service, Indian tribal, and urban Indian trauma centers".

(b) TRAUMA CENTER GRANTS QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUBSTANTIAL UNCOMPENSATED CARE COSTS.—Section 1241(b)(3)(B) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–41(b)(3)(B)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking "35" and inserting "30"; and

(2) in clause (ii), by striking "50" and inserting "40".

(c) CLARIFICATION RELATING TO TRAUMA CENTER GRANTS.—The heading for part D of title XII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–41 et seq.) is amended to read as follows:

"PART D—TRAUMA CENTERS".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House today will consider two bills relating to Federal support for trauma care. These bills have both passed the Energy and Commerce Committee at the subcommittee and full committee levels on voice votes.

Trauma is the leading cause of death under the age of 65. It is expensive, costing over $400 billion per year, third only to heart disease and cancer. It affects individuals of all ages—35 million Americans annually, or one person every 15 minutes.

Over many years, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) and I have worked closely on this issue to update the law and ensure the reauthorization of crucial trauma grant programs occurs. As a result of this coordination, today we will be voting on two bills that continue our long bipartisan record of support for efforts to shore up the Nation's trauma systems and centers.

The Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act, H.R. 647, will authorize two grant programs, which will expire this year, that provide critically needed Federal funding to help cover uncompensated costs in trauma centers, support core mission trauma services, provide emergency funding to trauma centers, and address trauma center physician shortages in order to ensure the future availability of trauma care for all our citizens.

Trauma can happen at any time to anyone. It can happen to a family in a highway crash or a gunshot victim or a construction worker who is injured at the worksite. Trauma centers must be available for all victims of traumatic injury. Getting a trauma victim to a trauma center right away is the first step in saving that person's life.

These bills draw support from the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, the American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons, the American Burn Association, the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American College of Surgeons, the American Trauma Society, the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, the Association of Critical Care Transport, the American Heart Association, the American Stroke Association, Emergency Nurses Association, Society of Trauma Nurses, the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma, Eastern Association for the Surgery of Trauma, National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, the Orthopedic Trauma Association, and the Trauma Center Association of America.

I strongly urge the House to support both of these bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 647, the Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act. My colleague and fellow Texan, Dr. MIKE BURGESS, and I have introduced this legislation. I thank him for his leadership and partnership on this issue.

The bill would reauthorize vital programs to prevent more trauma center closures and improve access to trauma care.

The trauma center care grants were created to prevent trauma center closures by supporting their core missions, covering a portion of the losses from uncompensated care, and providing emergency awards to centers at risk of closing.

The trauma service availability grants are awarded through the States to address shortfalls in trauma services and improve access and availability of trauma care in underserved areas.

□ 1545

Despite our best prevention efforts, trauma injury will continue to occur. Unfortunately, access to trauma care is threatened by losses associated with the high cost of treating severely injured patients, including those unable to pay for their care, and a growing shortage of trauma-related physicians.

The public expects that appropriate trauma care will always be available to them wherever they reside or travel, yet this is not a reality. Profound challenges face our Nation's trauma centers, trauma systems, and the physicians who treat the most vulnerable patients. Thus, I urge swift passage of this important legislation.

Again, I want to thank Representative BURGESS for championing this effort with me, and his staff, J.P. Paluskiewicz, for their hard work. I also want to acknowledge the leadership of Chairman UPTON, Chairman PITTS, Ranking Member PALLONE and the work of the committee's staff in advancing this bill through the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I support this bipartisan bill. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I would just point out the gentleman's name is J.P. Paluskiewicz, and we do, indeed, thank him for his efforts on the bill.

I have no more speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have no more speakers.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out many people nowadays are familiar with what is called the golden hour, that first hour that occurs after a traumatic injury where the ability to save life and limb is vastly increased if a person can be delivered to a center within that golden hour's time. It is imperative to reauthorize these programs. They are critically needed for our citizens. Mr. Speaker, I urge an ''aye'' vote on the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 647.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

TRAUMA SYSTEMS AND REGIONALIZATION OF EMERGENCY CARE REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 648) to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 648

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 ''Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act''.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF CERTAIN TRAUMA CARE PROGRAMS.

Section 1232(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–32(a)) is amended by striking ''2014'' and inserting ''2020''.

SEC. 3. IMPROVEMENTS AND CLARIFICATIONS TO CERTAIN TRAUMA CARE PROGRAMS.

(a) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR COMPETITIVE GRANTS FOR REGIONALIZED SYSTEMS FOR EMERGENCY CARE RESPONSE.—Section 1232(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–31(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) for a fiscal year after fiscal year 2015, not more than 50 percent of such amounts remaining for such fiscal year after application of paragraphs (1) and (2) shall be allocated for the purpose of carrying out section 1204.''.

(b) CLARIFICATIONS UNDER TRAUMA SYSTEMS FORMULA GRANTS REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO THE AMERICAN BURN ASSOCIATION.—Section 1213 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300d–13) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(3), by inserting ''and (for a fiscal year after fiscal year 2015) contains national standards and requirements of the American Burn Association for the designation of verified burn centers,'' after ''such entity,'';

(2) in subsection (b)(3)(A), by striking ''and the American Academy of Pediatrics,'' and inserting ''the American Academy of Pediatrics, and (for a fiscal year after fiscal year 2015) the American Burn Association,''; and

(3) in subsection (c)(1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ''and not later than 1 year

after the date of the enactment of the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act'' after ''Act of 2007''; and

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''and the American Academy of Pediatrics'' and inserting ''the American Academy of Pediatrics, and (with respect to the update pursuant to the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act) the American Burn Association''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Part B of title XII of the Public Health Service Act is amended—

(1) in section 1218(c)(2) (42 U.S.C. 300d–18(c)(2)), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''1232(b)(3)'' and inserting ''section 1232(b)''; and

(2) in section 1222 (42 U.S.C. 300d–22), by striking ''October 1, 2008'' and inserting ''October 1, 2017''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act, H.R. 648, is identical to H.R. 4080 that passed the House last year unanimously. This legislation has also passed both the subcommittee and the full committee. This support extends back to 1990 when the grant was created and authorized.

This reauthorization allows funding for trauma systems development and the regionalization of emergency care. These programs are designed to improve patient outcomes, and they are designed to save lives and cut costs, objectives where I believe there is bipartisan agreement.

Trauma systems are organized efforts in a defined geographic area that deliver the full range of care to injured patients. Many members of the subcommittee have trauma systems in their districts or ones nearby that are able to serve their constituents.

Regionalizing emergency care allows States to coordinate their resources and helps first responders act faster, leading to lower costs and better outcomes. A study released last year found that patients living near a recently closed trauma facility were 20 percent more likely to die from their injuries. Two years after closure, the likelihood of death increased to 29 percent, emphasizing the importance of these grants.

This legislation is broadly supported by medicine, sharing the list of supporting organizations that I previously read on H.R. 647. It is bipartisan. I would stress it has gone through regular order.

I want to thank Chairman UPTON and Chairman PITTS, as well as Ranking Member PALLONE and Ranking Member GREEN, for their help and support on this legislation. I want to thank the Energy and Commerce staff on both sides of the dais: Clay Alspach, Katie Novaria, as well as Hannah Green, and a special thanks to Adrianna Simonelli, who championed both of these bills as my legislative fellow and who is now working on the committee.

Mr. GREEN and I have worked on these issues literally for years, and I appreciate his continued partnership on this bill. I want to thank his staff, Kristen O'Neill. Finally, I do want to thank J.P. Paluskiewicz, who shepherded this bill through the entire process.

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 648, the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act. I am proud to be the lead sponsor of this bill, along with my colleague, Dr. BURGESS, and I want to thank him for his leadership and commitment to this issue.

The bill reauthorizes the programs that provide grants to States for planning, implementing, and developing trauma care systems and establishing pilot projects to design innovative models of emergency care systems.

Ideally, trauma and emergency care systems respond quickly and efficiently to ensure that seriously injured individuals receive the care they need within the golden hour, the time period in which medical intervention is most effective at saving lives. However, unintentional injury remains the leading cause of death for Americans ages 44 years and younger, and access to trauma centers is inconsistent throughout the country. In fact, 45 million Americans lack access to a trauma center within the first hour after injury.

Emergency departments and trauma centers are overcrowded. The emergency care system is splintered, and surgical specialists are often unavailable to patients when they need them. This legislation helps establish a system that saves lives and improves the functioning of our trauma care systems.

Again, I want to thank Representative BURGESS for championing this effort with me and his staff for their efforts. I also want to acknowledge the leadership of Chairman UPTON, Chairman PITTS, Ranking Member PALLONE, and the work of the committee's staff in advancing this bill through the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bipartisan bill. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, let me just conclude by strongly urging all Members of the House to vote in favor of this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 648.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Small Business:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2015.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: I write today to resign from the House Small Business Committee. While I appreciate the honor of being appointed, in order to best serve the constituent of Texas' 23rd congressional district, I believe I must focus on my existing committee assignments.

With my background in the intelligence community, cybersecurity, and representing the district with the largest length of U.S.-Mexico Border, my ability to focus on my Information Technology Subcommittee Chairmanship and Border and Maritime Subcommittee Vice-Chairmanship is where I believe I can be of most value to my constituents and colleagues in the House.

I appreciate your timely consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

WILL HURD,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1630

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

NOTICE OF OBSERVATION TREATMENT AND IMPLICATION FOR CARE ELIGIBILITY ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 876) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require hospitals to provide certain notifications to individuals classified by such hospitals under observation status rather than admitted as inpatients of such hospitals, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 876

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 ''Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility Act'' or the ''NOTICE Act''.

SEC. 2. MEDICARE REQUIREMENT FOR HOSPITAL NOTIFICATIONS OF OBSERVATION STATUS.

Section 1866(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395cc(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (V), by striking at the end ''and'';

(2) in the first subparagraph (W), by striking at the end the period and inserting a comma;

(3) in the second subparagraph (W)—

(A) by redesignating such subparagraph as subparagraph (X); and

(B) by striking at the end the period and inserting '', and''; and

(4) by inserting after such subparagraph (X) the following new subparagraph:

''(Y) beginning 12 months after the date of the enactment of this subparagraph, in the case of a hospital or critical access hospital, with respect to each individual who receives observation services as an outpatient at such hospital or critical access hospital for more than 24 hours, to provide to such individual not later than 36 hours after the time such individual begins receiving such services (or, if sooner, upon release)—

''(i) such oral explanation of the written notification described in clause (ii), and such documentation of the provision of such explanation, as the Secretary determines to be appropriate;

''(ii) a written notification (as specified by the Secretary pursuant to rulemaking and containing such language as the Secretary prescribes consistent with this paragraph) which—

''(I) explains the status of the individual as an outpatient receiving observation services and not as an inpatient of the hospital or critical access hospital and the reasons for such status of such individual;

''(II) explains the implications of such status on services furnished by the hospital or critical access hospital (including services furnished on an inpatient basis), such as implications for cost-sharing requirements under this title and for subsequent eligibility for coverage under this title for services furnished by a skilled nursing facility;

''(III) includes such additional information as the Secretary determines appropriate;

''(IV) either—

''(aa) is signed by such individual or a person acting on such individual's behalf to acknowledge receipt of such notification; or

''(bb) if such individual or person refuses to provide the signature described in item (aa), is signed by the staff member of the hospital or critical access hospital who presented the written notification and includes the name and title of such staff member, a certification that the notification was presented, and the date and time the notification was presented; and

''(V) is written and formatted using plain language and is made available in appropriate languages as determined by the Secretary.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 876, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, this is commonsense legislation dealing with the Medicare program that is bipartisan that the Committee on Ways and Means marked up a couple of weeks ago.

I want to just commend my colleagues Congressman YOUNG from Indiana and Congressman DOGGETT from Texas for their work on this.

This is common sense. This tells patients what the rules are so that they know what is going to happen when they are in the hospital, so they know what kind of billing they are going to have.

I yield whatever time he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), the coauthor of this legislation, for the purpose of describing this legislation.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for taking up this important piece of legislation today. I also want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) for his leadership on this issue.

When seniors require a hospital stay, they are rightfully more concerned with their recovery than with understanding how the hospital classifies their status as a patient; but when that classification can impact future coverage of health care services related to their recovery, they deserve to be made aware of the potential ramifications.

This act, the NOTICE Act, would require hospitals to provide meaningful written and oral notification to patients who are in the hospital under observation for more than 24 hours. This notice would alert the beneficiary or person acting on their behalf of the Medicare patient's admission status and the financial implications of that classification so he or she can advocate on their own behalf while in the hospital.

No one should be caught off guard by a large medical bill just because they weren't aware of the status codes or the billing procedures. In a time of sickness and stress, families should focus on the recovery of their loved ones instead of dealing with the hidden costs due to lack of notice.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill and yield myself such time as I might consume.

The NOTICE Act, as the name suggests, is about giving notice. In this case, it gives notice to patients when they are about to be billed personally, perhaps for many thousands of dollars, because they were characterized as under observation rather than regular inpatient status without them even knowing.

I am pleased to have worked on this legislation since last summer with Mr. YOUNG when we originally filed the bill, and I am appreciative of Chairman RYAN's prompt consideration of it in our committee.

This is a consumer protection bill designed to provide at least limited protection to health care consumers. Currently, a hospital may either admit a patient as an inpatient or keep them under observation. This categorization might apply to heart murmur, irregular heartbeat, indigestion, or other symptoms that would cause a senior or an individual with a disability who is covered by Medicare to go into the hospital.

It probably makes little or no difference in the way the hospital treats the physical condition, but it can make a very big difference in terms of how the patient's pocketbook is cared for. Indeed, the effect of being under observation is that the patient gets stuck with the bill for any skilled nursing home care that is required for rehabilitative services after the stay at the hospital.

Medicare will pay for that needed care if a Medicare recipient patient is hospitalized for more than 3 days as an inpatient, but Medicare will not pay for skilled nursing home care if someone is simply under observation. Since Medicare has paid nothing, there is also no gap to be covered by Medigap; and instead of being in a gap, folks like this are really left in just a giant black hole. A Medicare patient that is sucked into this hole will be billed for the entire cost of rehabilitation at the nursing home, which can run into tens of thousands of dollars.

This practice is happening more and more across America, though it is largely unknown to most people until they get caught up in it. In 2012, Medicare patients had more than 600,000 observation stays that lasted 3 days or more. According to one study, over a 6-year span, the number of stays under observation has increased by 88 percent. Many Medicare patients are being put under observation for a length of time that exceeds the guidelines that have been set by Medicare.

Last year on the NBC Nightly News, Kate Snow profiled Ms. Kelley-Nelum, who discovered that this costly classification had a big impact on her hospitalized husband. After repeated questioning and demanding to know why

her husband was under observation, she got the hospital to reclassify him. She later learned that had that not occurred, had she not been persistent in standing up for her ill husband, that they would have faced about $22,000 in out-of-pocket rehabilitation bills.

Last year, with so many patients facing insurmountable out-of-pocket costs for skilled nursing care after unknowingly being placed under observation, The New York Times actually ran a piece that was designed to provide guidance to health care consumers about how to get out of this observation category. The first step is knowing you are in it, and this bill provides for that meaningful disclosure.

This legislation is endorsed by AARP, by the Alliance for Retired Americans, the Center for Medicare Advocacy, the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers, LeadingAge, American Health Care Association, and the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare.

I include in the RECORD letters from two of those groups in support of the legislation.

AARP,
February 24, 2015.

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT,
Rayburn Office Building,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. TODD YOUNG,
Longworth Office Building,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE DOGGETT AND REPRESENTATIVE YOUNG: On behalf of the nearly 38 million AARP members and the millions more Americans with Medicare, we are pleased to endorse the Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility (NOTICE) Act of 2015 (H.R. 876). Thank you for working together to address the growing problem of Medicare beneficiaries paying high out-of-pocket costs due to hospital stays in which they were classified as an outpatient, rather than being formally admitted as an inpatient.

As you know, the use of ''observation status'' has become more prevalent in recent years, and the duration of observation stays has grown longer. While there may be several reasons for these trends, it is clear that Medicare beneficiaries are spending more and more time in the hospital without being formally admitted. Admission as an inpatient activates Medicare Part A cost-sharing and a three-day stay requirement for skilled nursing facility (SNF) coverage; in contrast, observation status is billed under Part B, and can expose beneficiaries to unexpectedly high out-of-pocket costs amounting to thousands of dollars.

Beneficiaries must be informed and made aware of how any changes to their status will affect them. This legislation would require hospitals to provide meaningful written and oral notification to patients who are in the hospital ''under observation'' for more than 24 hours. While this does not solve all the problems regarding cost-sharing and access to SNF coverage, it is an important step to ensuring Medicare beneficiaries have access to information about their care. Clearly understanding their admission status will help patients, and their caregivers, better plan treatment options with their health care providers.

Again, thank you for your continued work to protect Medicare beneficiaries. If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Ariel Gonzalez, Director of Federal Health and Family.

Sincerely,

JOYCE A. ROGERS,
Senior Vice President,
Government Affairs.

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2015.

Hon. LLOYD DOGGETT,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

CONGRESSMAN DOGGETT: I serve as the president and chief executive officer of AHCA/NCAL, the nation's largest association of long term and post-acute care providers. The association advocates for quality care and services for the frail, elderly, and individuals with disabilities. Our members provide essential care to millions of individuals in more than 12,000 not for profit and for profit member facilities.

AHCA/NCAL, its affiliates, and member providers advocate for the continuing vitality of the long term care provider community. We are committed to developing and advocating for public policies that support quality care and quality of life for our nation's most vulnerable. Therefore, we are in support of the legislation, Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility (NOTICE) Act, that you and Congressman Todd Young (R–IN–9) have introduced again this Congress.

The NOTICE Act requires hospitals to give formal notice to patients within a period of time after classifying them as an inpatient or as an outpatient under observation. More specifically, the legislation works to ensure that hospitals notify patients entitled to Medicare part A coverage of their outpatient status within 36 hours after the time of their classification or, if sooner, upon discharge.

Often times, patients have no idea what their status is in a hospital or the importance of it. This can lead to thousands of dollars in out-of-pocket medical expenses should they need skilled nursing center care following their hospital stay. The observation stays issue is a financial burden on seniors and their families. It can cause unnecessary spend-down, accelerating the time frame in which seniors will have to turn to programs such as Medicaid to pay for their care.

This legislation is a positive step forward, and raises attention to a complex and critical issue hurting the nation's seniors. AHCA/NCAL applauds Congressmen Doggett and Young for serving as champions for seniors and those individuals who need our services the most.

Sincerely,

MARK PARKINSON,
AHCA/NCAL President & CEO.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I also appreciate the help we have received from the Center for Medicare Advocacy. They have had reports, again, from people all over the country being placed in this situation.

The hospitals may act in the best interests of a patient's health but not always in the best interest of the patient's pocketbook. The NOTICE Act will equip patients and their loved ones with the knowledge that they need to be effective advocates and avoid crippling financial repercussions.

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the gentleman from Texas if they have any other speakers? We are prepared to close.

Mr. DOGGETT. I have one speaker on the way. If you are prepared to close and he is not arriving, then we will close.

Do you have any other speakers?

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I will just say a few things. I yield myself such time as I may consume, Mr. Speaker.

This is basically common sense. What is happening is people on Medicare are going to the hospital. They don't know what their status is, whether they are considered inpatient or outpatient. As far as they are concerned, it is the same thing. The problem is they are being declared one or the other, unbeknownst to them, and that has a huge difference in the billing that they receive.

So what this bill simply says is you will know your status so that you can make an informed decision as a patient in a hospital, because there are huge financial implications to that status. This is very simple. It is good government.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds and will welcome my colleague, JOE COURTNEY, who has long sought to respond legislatively to protect health care consumers from the financial pain of this observation status.

While the passage of the NOTICE Act is an important step, Representative COURTNEY has an Improving Access to Medicare Coverage Act that would treat observation stays the same as inpatient stays. I support his legislation as he has supported, from the beginning, this initiative, and I appreciate his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to, first of all, salute Congressman DOGGETT for his effort in terms of bringing this legislation forward. As the chairman of the committee said, this is really about giving patients a fighting chance to challenge this coding, a change that happens while people are in the hospital and have absolutely no idea that they are not being treated as full part A inpatient patients at hospital facilities.

The impact of being coded as observation versus inpatient may sound extremely arcane, but what that means is that at time of discharge, if a patient is medically prescribed to go to a nursing home for rehab care for a broken bone or for home health services for a heart condition, they are not covered by Medicare if they are in the observation bucket as opposed to the inpatient bucket.

The inspector general's office for Medicare issued a report in 2012 that 600,000 patients across the country with long-stay hospital visits over 3 days fell into this black hole, this no man's land where, again, their doctors are telling them that they need to have rehab services so that people can walk again and deal with activities of daily living; but the price for doing that, because you are in observation status,

can be tens of thousands of dollars, which is where long-term care facilities, nursing home coverage for private-pay patients, out-of-pocket patients, exist today.

This bill at least gives patients the opportunity to challenge that decision. But the fact of the matter is, what we need to do is to restore the 3-day rule, which is in statute. It has been there since 1965. Observation status is something new within the last 10 years, and what we need to do as a Congress is to restore that 3-day rule, which says to a patient: If you are coded observation or if you are coded inpatient, it should not interfere with your medically prescribed course of treatment at the time that you are discharged from the hospital.

That, unfortunately, is not going to be fixed as a result of this legislation. We should build on this legislation and again restore Medicare's promise, which, again, from day one, has said that medically prescribed care will be covered by the system at time of discharge from a hospital for longer than 3 days.

The horror stories of people who in some instances were in hospital for 9 days with broken bones, broken hips, who, again, are staring at a 10 to $15,000 fee to be admitted to a nursing home—again, 600,000 cases in 2012.

So again, we need to build on this legislation, but fundamentally, we need to restore the 3-day rule which has been in statute since 1965. We will be introducing that legislation later this week. It will be a bipartisan bill. We think we can withstand the test of any pay-fors to make sure that it allows the Medicare system's finances to stay in a stable condition. In the meantime, we should pass this legislation today.

Again, I want to salute the Member from Texas for his leadership on this issue.

□ 1645

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I concur with the gentleman from Connecticut.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I agree, Mr. Speaker.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 876, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

MEDICARE DMEPOS COMPETITIVE BIDDING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 284) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require State licensure and bid surety bonds for entities submitting bids under the Medicare durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) competitive acquisition program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 284

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 ''Medicare DMEPOS Competitive Bidding Improvement Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REQUIRING BID SURETY BONDS AND STATE LICENSURE FOR ENTITIES SUBMITTING BIDS UNDER THE MEDICARE DMEPOS COMPETITIVE ACQUISITION PROGRAM.

(a) BID SURETY BONDS.—Section 1847(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

''(G) REQUIRING BID BONDS FOR BIDDING ENTITIES.—With respect to rounds of competitions beginning under this subsection for contracts beginning not earlier than January 1, 2017, and not later than January 1, 2019, an entity may not submit a bid for a competitive acquisition area unless, as of the deadline for bid submission, the entity has obtained (and provided the Secretary with proof of having obtained) a bid surety bond (in this paragraph referred to as a 'bid bond') in a form specified by the Secretary consistent with subparagraph (H) and in an amount that is not less than $50,000 and not more than $100,000 for each competitive acquisition area in which the entity submits the bid.

''(H) TREATMENT OF BID BONDS SUBMITTED.—

''(i) FOR BIDDERS THAT SUBMIT BIDS AT OR BELOW THE MEDIAN AND ARE OFFERED BUT DO NOT ACCEPT THE CONTRACT.—In the case of a bidding entity that is offered a contract for any product category for a competitive acquisition area, if—

''(I) the entity's composite bid for such product category and area was at or below the median composite bid rate for all bidding entities included in the calculation of the single payment amounts for such product category and area; and

''(II) the entity does not accept the contract offered for such product category and area,

the bid bond submitted by such entity for such area shall be forfeited by the entity and the Secretary shall collect on it.

''(ii) TREATMENT OF OTHER BIDDERS.—In the case of a bidding entity for any product category for a competitive acquisition area, if the entity does not meet the bid forfeiture conditions in subclauses (I) and (II) of clause (i) for any product category for such area, the bid bond submitted by such entity for such area shall be returned within 90 days of the public announcement of the contract suppliers for such area.''.

(b) STATE LICENSURE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1847(b)(2)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3(b)(2)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(v) The entity meets applicable State licensure requirements.''.

(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the amendment made by paragraph (1) shall be construed as affecting the authority of the Secretary of Health and Human Services to require State licensure of an entity under the Medicare competitive acquisition program under section 1847 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3) before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) GAO REPORT ON BID BOND IMPACT ON SMALL SUPPLIERS.—

(1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study that evaluates the effect of the bid surety bond requirement under the amendment made by subsection (a) on the participation of small suppliers in the Medicare DMEPOS competitive acquisition program under section 1847 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–3).

(2) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date contracts are first awarded subject to such bid surety bond requirement, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under paragraph (1). Such report shall include recommendations for changes in such requirement in order to ensure robust participation by legitimate small suppliers in the Medicare DMEPOS competition acquisition program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 284, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I simply want to, again, commend our committee, Republicans and Democrats, for working on a bipartisan basis to fix a problem in the Medicare Program that needs fixing.

I want to specifically highlight Mr. TIBERI, a senior member of our committee from Ohio, along with Mr. LARSON, a senior member of the committee from the Democratic side of the aisle, for working together to fix a very deep flaw in a competitive bidding system which needs a lot of work to be improved.

At this time, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TIBERI) for the purpose of describing and explaining the need for this legislation.

Mr. TIBERI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your support of H.R. 284, the Medicare Competitive Bidding Improvement Act which, as you said, I introduced with my friend and colleague from Connecticut, Mr. JOHN LARSON.

The bill does fix a fundamental flaw in the Medicare durable medical equipment Competitive Bidding Program by simply requiring that bids be binding. It will promote fairer competition. More importantly, it protects our seniors and supports small businesses.

DME includes items like home oxygen, blood sugar monitors, and walkers for seniors. The Competitive Bidding Program was intended to reduce out-of-pocket costs for these seniors.

However, over the last several years, it has become very clear, Mr. Speaker, that the bidding process is extremely flawed, in large part because the bids are not binding. This encourages low-ball bidding—or suicide bidding—which artificially drives down prices and will eventually lead to market failure because there is no performance on many of these bids, meaning seniors don't get their equipment.

I have heard from seniors, beneficiaries, and small business suppliers in my State of Ohio that the program is impeding access to needed items for seniors, like the ones I just described, ultimately harming their health and making costs more expensive for our seniors and the program itself. This is absolutely unacceptable.

The goal of the bill is to reduce the number of bad actors who are now participating in the program by simply imposing a penalty if the supplier who wins the bid doesn't accept the contract to the bid they won.

The bill will help ensure that these suppliers submit bids in good faith, creating more certainty for those suppliers, and, most importantly, making sure that seniors get the supplies and the equipment that they need and qualify for, increasing access to more quality products and services at the end of the process.

If this bill is signed into law, seniors across the country will no longer have to worry about whether the company in their area will provide the information and, more importantly, the equipment to which they bid on and actually be able to provide that wheelchair, walker, or oxygen tank that that senior so desperately needs.

As the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee mentioned, the bill has bipartisan support. It is a commonsense bill that actually passed the Ways and Means Committee unanimously. It was scored by the Congressional Budget Office to actually save taxpayer dollars over the next 10 years.

I encourage my colleagues to support the bill, and I thank Mr. LARSON for his partnership.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I know that this legislation has been in the works by Representatives TIBERI and my good friend Mr. LARSON from the State of Connecticut. Unfortunately, he could not be here to speak on his own bill due to unforeseen circumstances, so I am but a poor fill-in for Mr. LARSON.

The bill is a commonsense bill that will save a lot of money. The durable medical equipment Competitive Bidding Program has reduced well-documented overpayments to DME providers.

It is estimated that it would result in $42 billion in savings over a 10-year period, with $26 billion in savings for the Federal Government and more than $17 billion in out-of-pocket savings for beneficiaries themselves.

This legislation, as I mentioned, was introduced in the Ways and Means Committee by Representatives TIBERI and LARSON. What they are essentially trying to get at is the issue of low-ball bidders, and what this legislation would do is require bonds for companies who wish to participate in the program.

The Ways and Means Committee did pass this bill out of the committee on a unanimous voice vote, and I, as well, support its passage. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 284 as a commonsense solution that will save money in the long run.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to say the gentlewoman understates the point. She is a perfectly fine fill-in for Mr. LARSON.

I congratulate my colleagues on the committee for seeing a problem and rushing to fix this problem. This is what we are supposed to do here.

We are legislating a solution to make sure that senior citizens have access to the highest quality, lowest price durable medical equipment. There is a flaw in the law in how that is being done, and this bill rectifies that.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 284, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1191) 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, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1191

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 ''Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act''.

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND CERTAIN NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4980H(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (6), (7), and (8), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

''(5) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

''(A) EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS.—Qualified services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to an eligible employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the terms 'qualified services', 'bona fide volunteer', and 'eligible employer' shall have the respective meanings given such terms under section 457(e).

''(B) CERTAIN OTHER GOVERNMENT AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to a specified employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee.

''(ii) BONA FIDE VOLUNTEER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'bona fide volunteer' means an employee of a specified employer whose only compensation from such employer is in the form of—

''(I) reimbursement for (or reasonable allowance for) reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of services by volunteers, or

''(II) reasonable benefits (including length of service awards), and nominal fees, customarily paid by similar entities in connection with the performance of services by volunteers.

''(iii) SPECIFIED EMPLOYER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'specified employer' means—

''(I) any government entity, and

''(II) any organization described in section 501(c) and exempt from tax under section 501(a).

''(iv) COORDINATION WITH SUBPARAGRAPH (A).—This subparagraph shall not fail to apply with respect to services merely because such services are qualified services (as defined in section 457(e)(11)(C)).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1191, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

This is a very commonsense bill aimed at protecting our volunteer firefighters across America. I want to congratulate the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) for bringing this issue to our attention. It is something that he, as a former mayor, is very familiar with.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) for the purposes of explaining his bill.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 1191, the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

I had hoped by now that we would not have to be on the floor of this body talking about my legislation once again. This is the third time I have brought this bill to the floor of the House.

It is intended to protect volunteer firefighters and emergency services personnel from ObamaCare. The first two times I introduced it, it passed the House by a combined vote of 811–0.

I know that there are very few pieces of legislation that attract such amazing bipartisan support, and for that, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Today, I come asking for your support again.

Let me tell you why this bill is necessary. In 2013, a firefighter from back home named Bob Timko approached me at a parade in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. He told me about a serious problem regarding volunteer firefighters and the Affordable Care Act, or ACA.

Because the Internal Revenue Service specifically considered volunteer firefighters employees for Federal tax purposes, there was the fear that they would fall under the employer mandate of the ACA. If volunteer fire companies were subject to the employer mandate, they could be liable for crippling new health care costs, causing many to have to close their doors.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the threshold for the employer mandate is 50 employees. That raised the question of how volunteer firefighters would be counted. Would they be counted as employees just under the fire company, or would they be counted as municipal employees?

If that were the case, many volunteer fire companies could easily achieve 50 employees. If they did, these companies could be forced to pay health insurance costs for their volunteers or pay a fine.

This is very important in my home State of Pennsylvania. Ninety-seven percent of our fire companies depend either mostly or entirely on volunteers. Across the country, 87 percent of fire companies depend on volunteers.

As a former mayor, I can tell you that volunteer firefighters are part of the essential fabric of our communities. These are people who risk their lives every day to protect their friends, families, and people they don't even know. I can tell you that no one becomes a volunteer firefighter because they want health insurance. While they are on duty, they are, of course, covered by workman's compensation insurance.

Our volunteer firefighters have a hard enough time raising money needed for basic equipment. They cannot afford to pay for health insurance—or pay a fine—on top of it.

Last year, the IRS finally decided—after months of pressure from Members of the House, from firefighters, and from the media—that they will not consider volunteer firefighters ''employees'' for Federal tax purposes, but I don't think we should leave something as important as public safety in the hands of unelected bureaucrats at the IRS. Our brave volunteer emergency personnel deserve certainty.

As I said, this is the third time we have had this bill before this body. The first time, in 2014, it passed the House of Representatives 410–0. When it got to the Senate, they used it to attach unrelated language about emergency unemployment insurance. The bill died.

The second time, just earlier this year, it passed the House of Representatives 401–0. This time, the Senate stripped all of my language out of the bill. It got turned into a 1-week funding measure for the Department of Homeland Security.

This is a bill that deserves to become law. This legislation has the strong support of the National Volunteer Fire Council, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Congressional Fire Services Institute.

I appreciate their support and the work of all the men and women they represent who protect us every day in our hometowns. We all agree that public safety is too important of an issue to play politics with.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this bill, and I ask all Members to vote ''yes.''

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am heartened that my Republican colleagues are acting on legislation to improve the Affordable Care Act, rather than to simply repeal it.

Technical corrections have long been part of the legislative process for such fundamental pieces of legislation, and this bill does the same.

Volunteer first responders are absolutely critical to the safety and security of communities across the country. Seventy percent of all firefighters across the country are volunteers. For the communities aided by volunteer first responders, the services donated annually by these volunteers are estimated to be worth more than $140 billion.

This legislation allows communities to continue to benefit for the time and commitment of our firefighters and other first responders.

□ 1700

Treasury has responded to the concerns that Mr. BARLETTA and many other Members raised through their final regulations. But this legislation makes permanent the reasonable solution that the administration put forward.

Mr. Speaker, I will insert into the RECORD a letter from the Department of the Treasury specifically outlining the regulations that address those concerns.

This bill is bipartisan, and it is noncontroversial. It, as I said, codifies a regulation that has already been issued by the administration.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY,
Washington, DC, January 10, 2014.

Hon. STEVE ISRAEL,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE ISRAEL: I am writing regarding your interest in how the employer shared responsibility provisions of the Affordable Care Act will apply to volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical personnel. In particular, you have urged the Treasury Department to consider not requiring the volunteer hours of these personnel to be counted in determining an employer's full-time employees or full-time equivalent employees for purposes of the employer shared responsibility rules. We appreciate your efforts and leadership on behalf of the volunteer emergency responder community, and want to assure you that we share your concern that emergency volunteer service be accorded appropriate treatment.

Treasury and the IRS issued proposed regulations providing guidance on the employer shared responsibility provisions under section 4980H of the Internal Revenue Code (Code) in December 2012 and invited public comments. Numerous comments were received from individuals and local fire and EMS departments that rely on volunteers, from the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), and from Members of Congress. The comments generally suggested that the final employer responsibility rules not count volunteer hours of nominally compensated volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel in determining an employer's full-time employees or full-time equivalent employees.

Treasury and the IRS carefully reviewed those comments and spoke with IAFC representatives to gain a better understanding of the specific issues presented by volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency personnel under the employer responsibility provisions. Treasury and the IRS also reviewed pertinent rules that apply to such volunteer personnel under other laws. These include the statutory provisions applicable to bona fide volunteers for different purposes under Code section 457(e)(11) (relating to deferred compensation plans of state and local governments and tax-exempt organizations) and rules governing the treatment of volunteers for purposes of the wage and hour laws. As a result of that review and further analysis concerning the appropriate treatment of volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency personnel under section 4980H, the forthcoming final regulations generally will pot require volunteer hours of bona fide volunteer firefighters and volunteer emergency medical personnel at governmental entities or tax-exempt organizations to be counted when determining an employer's full-time employees or full-time equivalent employees.

The forthcoming final regulations, which we expect to be issued very shortly, should provide timely guidance for the volunteer emergency responder community. Under the transition relief announced by Treasury in July of 2013, no employer shared responsibility payments will be assessed for 2014; such payments will be assessed only for 2015 and subsequent years (see IRS Notice 2013–45).

I hope this information is helpful. And thank you for the important insights you have provided with this issue. If you have

any questions, please contact me, or ask a member of your staff to contact Sandra Salstrom at 202–622–1900.

Sincerely,

ALASTAIR M. FITZPAYNE,
Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs.

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

I want to thank Mr. BARLETTA for bringing this to our attention. This is a problem with the law and, therefore, the law needs to change. It is insufficient that we have some regulatory forbearance from the administrative branch because the law has to be changed, and that is why this legislation is necessary.

Again, I just wanted to thank Mr. BARLETTA for his leadership on this issue. We need to do right by our volunteer firefighters, and this does that.

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 284. I have heard from many stakeholders in eastern Connecticut about this issue, and believe that this bill is a commonsense approach to making needed improvements to the competitive bidding process for durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies.

Requiring bidding entities to meet state licensure requirements in product category areas and obtaining reasonable bid surety bonds for each area are sensible prerequisites to improving the competitive acquisition program. Requiring vendor bidders to be licensed, means that they have attained basic standards of education and training, which patients can rely on. These reforms will ensure that the competitive DME bidding process produces a more stable supply chain of life saving equipment for Medicare patients.

I am proud to support this legislation, and urge bipartisan support for this bill today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1191, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 647, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 648, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 876, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING TRAUMA CARE FOR ALL AMERICANS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 647) to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 389, nays 10, not voting 33, as follows:

[Roll No. 113]

YEAS—389

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—10

Amash
Foxx
Huelskamp
Jones
LaMalfa
Massie
McClintock
Sanford
Sensenbrenner
Westmoreland

NOT VOTING—33

Becerra
Capuano
Carney
Clarke (NY)
Conyers
DeFazio
Fincher
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hinojosa
Holding
Jeffries
Kaptur
Lipinski
Lummis
Mulvaney
Pascrell
Payne
Posey
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott, Austin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Turner
Waters, Maxine
Wilson (SC)

□ 1855

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

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

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I was hosting French Ambassador Gérard Araud in South Carolina where we visited French business investments across the Second Congressional District creating thousands of jobs. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye'' on H.R. 647—Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act.

TRAUMA SYSTEMS AND REGIONALIZATION OF EMERGENCY CARE REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 648) to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 382, nays 15, not voting 35, as follows:

[Roll No. 114]

YEAS—382

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek
Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—15

Amash
Foxx
Garrett
Huelskamp
Hunter
Jones
Marchant
Massie
McClintock
Ribble
Rouzer
Sanford
Sensenbrenner
Westmoreland
Yoho

NOT VOTING—35

Becerra
Capuano
Carney
Clarke (NY)
Conyers
DeFazio
Fincher
Fortenberry
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hinojosa
Holding
Jeffries
Kaptur
Lipinski
Lummis
Meadows
Mulvaney
Pascrell
Payne
Posey
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott, Austin
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Turner
Waters, Maxine
Wilson (SC)

□ 1903

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I was hosting French Ambassador Gérard Araud in South Carolina where we visited French business investments across the Second Congressional District creating thousands of jobs. Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye'' on H.R. 648—Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act.

NOTICE OF OBSERVATION TREATMENT AND IMPLICATION FOR CARE ELIGIBILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 876) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require hospitals to provide certain notifications to individuals classified by such hospitals under observation status rather than admitted as inpatients of such hospitals, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 395, nays 0, not voting 37, as follows:

[Roll No. 115]

YEAS—395

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Benishek

Bera
Beyer
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boustany
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capps
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clawson (FL)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellison
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—37

Becerra
Capuano
Carney
Clarke (NY)
Conyers
DeFazio
Edwards
Fincher
Fortenberry
Granger
Graves (MO)
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hinojosa
Holding
Jeffries
Kaptur
Lipinski
Lummis
Meadows
Mulvaney
Pascrell
Payne
Posey
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Speier
Turner
Waters, Maxine
Wilson (SC)

□ 1910

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I was hosting French Ambassador Gérard Araud in South Carolina where we visited French business investments across the Second Congressional District creating thousands of jobs. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 876—Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility Act, as amended.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 113 on the Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act, H.R. 647, I am not recorded because of prior commitments in the Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall No. 114 on the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act, H.R. 648, I am not recorded because of prior commitments in the Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

On rollcall No. 115 on the Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility Act, H.R. 876, I am not recorded because of prior commitments in the Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, on today, March 16, 2015, I was unavoidably detained in my district and missed the three rollcall votes of the day. Had I been present I would have voted:

"aye"—rollcall vote No. 113—H.R. 647—Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act;

"aye"—rollcall vote No. 114—H.R. 648—Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act;

"aye"—rollcall vote No. 115—H.R. 876—Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, on March 16, 2015 I was unable to be present and missed the following votes:

On rollcall vote No. 113, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 647, the Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act, I would have voted "aye";

On rollcall vote No. 114, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 648, the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act, I would have voted "aye";

On rollcall vote No. 115, on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 876, the Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility Act, I would have voted "aye."

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE EXPENSES OF CERTAIN COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN THE 114TH CONGRESS

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, from the Committee on House Administration, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–44) on the resolution (H. Res. 132) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

AUTHORIZING USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO WORLD WAR II MEMBERS OF THE DOOLITTLE TOKYO RAIDERS

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table (S. Con. Res. 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, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HILL). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

S. CON. RES. 7

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT 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.

The concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1102

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove the name of the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER) from H.R. 1102, the Police Accountability Act.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1041

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 1041.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1915

RECOGNIZING DR. ERICK HUECK OF MIAMI SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize an outstanding educator in my south Florida Congressional District, Dr. Erick Hueck, a chemistry teacher at Miami Senior High School. Dr. Hueck has been an accomplished teacher for more than 25 years, and he has the awards to prove it, including the Miami-Dade Teacher of the Year Award and the Governor's Teacher of the Year Award, among many others.

But more than these accolades, Mr. Speaker, Dr. Hueck is known to his students as a mentor and a role model, someone to whom they can come for both academic and life wisdom and who is making learning and science fun.

Dr. Hueck is a positive influence, giving his students the knowledge, the confidence, and the opportunity to follow their dreams.

Thank you, Dr. Hueck. We are all so very proud of you.

Go Stingarees.

BIPARTISANSHIP

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, American families expect us to work hard to keep them safe. It is our job to work together in addressing their national security concerns, not to diminish our government's standing for political sport.

In 2 short months, this Congress has allowed party extremists to push us to the brink of having no Homeland Security funding, and now we must deal with the dynamic created by misguided Senators whose attempts to undermine the President on Iran have set a dangerous precedent that compromises the authority of future Presidents to negotiate on matters of foreign and national security policy.

I ask my colleagues: What are we doing? We can't cater to political extremes here at home and protect American families from real extremist threats abroad. Let's move beyond the politics that divide us and commit to working with the President to ensure that Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon. The Illinois families I represent deserve it, and the American people demand it.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JEFFREY BUCK, LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of 18-year-old Lawrence Township volunteer firefighter Jeffrey Buck.

On March 3, Jeff was battling a house fire in Clearfield, Pennsylvania, when the porch roof collapsed on him and two fellow firefighters. For the next 6 days, Jeff was in critical condition, on and off sedation, and on March 9, Jeff succumbed to his injuries.

Mr. Speaker, it is tragedies like this that remind us how selflessly these brave volunteers act in order to protect their neighbors and our communities.

This is a sad time for Clearfield and the entire Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. On Friday afternoon, I attended the memorial service for Mr. Buck in Clearfield, and it was truly remarkable to see the entire community come together and unite in the wake of this terrible tragedy.

I ask my colleagues to join me in offering their prayers and deepest sympathies to Jeff's family, friends, and fellow first responders.

HONORING MALCOLM JAMES ''JIMMY'' KEEP, VETERAN OF WORLD WAR II

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Malcolm James ''Jimmy'' Keep, a lifelong Memphian and a veteran of World War II who fought bravely against Japanese forces in Guam, Saipan, and Iwo Jima. Keep, now 88 years of age, served with the 4th Marine Division after joining the Marines at age 17 in 1943.

Tomorrow, Mr. Keep and his son, Mickey, will travel to Iwo Jima, with the help of a Memphis-based nonprofit organization called Forever Young Senior Veterans, to join 70 other Marine veterans for a 70th anniversary gathering.

Jimmy Keep was assigned to reconnaissance duty early in his career and recalls fighting on Saipan as the bloodiest thing he had ever seen. He came under enemy fire from all sides on Iwo Jima when his amphibious tank was disabled, causing him and his partner, Charlie, to evacuate on foot. The two escaped unharmed, earning them the nickname ''rain-walkers.'' If they could survive that kind of heavy fire, they could surely walk through rain without getting wet.

On Iwo Jima, Keep cleared out huge tunnels that were used by the enemy to launch attacks on the Marines, and he helped carry a fellow marine who was injured back to the beach. He told him: ''You're getting off this rock. I'll trade places with you.''

Jimmy Keep is a true hero. I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring Malcolm James ''Jimmy'' Keep for his service and bravery as a marine with the 4th Marine Division during the Pacific campaigns in World War II. He will have the Memphis Grizzlies flag when he gets there at Iwo Jima, and that will be part of his contribution to Memphis.

CONGRATULATING THE OAK GROVE MIDDLE SCHOOL ROBOTICS TEAM

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the robotics team at Bloomington's Oak Grove Middle School, the Typhoons, for taking first place in the Minnesota First Tech Challenge State Championships last month. This is the first year that the Oak Grove team had the opportunity to compete in State competition, but they still managed to beat out 47 other teams for first place. The team is now qualified to compete in the upcoming North Super Regional Championships coming up in Des Moines.

Mr. Speaker, as our economy continues to be driven by advancements in new technologies, it is important that our youth and young people have the opportunity to learn and explore in the science, math, technology, and engineering fields.

Robotics clubs and competitions bring out the best of students' imagination, ingenuity, and skill. They inspire students to pursue educational opportunities that will help them compete for the jobs of tomorrow. That is

why, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the teachers, the staff, and the mentors that have made STEM a priority at Oak Grove, and also congratulations to all the students on a job well done.

2016 BUDGET PRIORITIES

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, our Vice President, JOE BIDEN, once said: ''Don't tell me what you value. Show me your budget, and I'll tell you what you value.''

This body's routine budgeting practices have faded away in the last 4 years only to be replaced by partisan bickering that uses austere budgets as messaging tools. These budgets invariably go nowhere, while the most vulnerable individuals and families in our communities see their needs grow larger and their potential to make their own success grow smaller.

Our national priorities should be simple enough: public investment in quality education accessible by every student, infrastructure, job training programs, research, and a national energy policy that encourages innovation and new jobs. The strategy we have seen of cutting our way to prosperity simply does not work. The more we do it, the more we cut ourselves down while more nations pass us by.

As we work our way through the 2016 budgeting process, instead of telling our constituents our values, let's show them what we value by producing an ambitious budget that creates opportunity for our American middle class and those struggling to enter it or to stay in it.

THE DEPLORABLE ACTIONS OF THE MADURO REGIME

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the Maduro regime in Venezuela has moved to expel opposition leaders from the National Assembly, arrested the mayor of Caracas on charges of conspiracy to commit violent acts, and has detained opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez for treason. The government issued a policy allowing police to use deadly force to control protests, which has resulted in the death of a 14-year-old student on his way to school. Over the weekend, Maduro's cronies in the legislature gave him dictatorial powers to more harshly crack down on internal dissent. Venezuela is sadly teetering closer towards a Cuba-style dictatorship.

I condemn these acts of repression which are a desperate attempt by Maduro and his henchmen to cling to power, despite policy failures that have led to shortages of food and medical supplies, long lines at shops, and soaring inflation.

These sanctions announced last week are a long overdue first step to holding the Maduro regime accountable for its grotesque disregard for human rights. But more must be done to ensure that these thugs answer for their crimes.

I stand in solidarity with the peaceful, democratic Venezuelan opposition there and in the U.S. that oppose thuggish rule. They have been instrumental in spreading information about Maduro's deplorable actions.

LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks ago, maybe even a few months ago, I had the privilege of listening partly to the testimony of Attorney General nominee Loretta Lynch, a brilliant expression of a seasoned and competent, qualified and wise attorney that has served this Nation for many, many years. Formerly, as the U.S. attorney in Brooklyn, New York, she has been one who has received accolades from all over the Nation.

Now, unfortunately, the Senate, the other body, chooses to create a constitutional crisis. As she lingers waiting for a confirmation vote, already approved by the Judiciary Committee with a bipartisan vote, it begs the question: Why we are having this kind of treatment of the appointees of President Obama?

So I ask the other body if they would do what is right for the American people as we look for law enforcement leadership, as we continue to look for direction on antitrust issues, voting rights issues, women's rights issues, human rights issues, and many issues dealing with terrorism that fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Justice. It is time, and now, for this confirmation to be done and approved and for this former U.S. attorney to be sworn in as the United States Attorney General in the Department of Justice.

THANKING TIM BUTLER, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE 87TH HOUSE DISTRICT IN THE ILLINOIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank a former staffer for his service to this House, my office, and to the people of Illinois. Tim Butler, who most recently served as my district chief of staff, left my office recently to represent the people of the 87th House District in the Illinois General Assembly.

Tim was an asset to my team from day one, as we set out to make sure every constituent in the Thirteenth District knew we were there to serve them by getting answers from Federal departments like the VA, listening and acting on legislative ideas, and much more. Under Tim's leadership, we opened five district offices, helped more than 1,500 constituents through casework, and launched 10 advisory boards, just to name a few of our team's accomplishments during my first term.

Tim began his service in the House in 1991 with the Committee on Education and Labor, and after leaving the committee, he worked for then-Congressman Ray LaHood for 14 years. It was during his time with Congressman LaHood and my time as projects director for Congressman SHIMKUS that Tim and I met and became friends. With his dedication and record of success helping constituents in Congressman LaHood's office, I knew he would be a perfect fit for mine.

Tim's leadership in my office will be missed, but I know he will provide the same level of exemplary constituent services representing the people of the 87th District in the Illinois General Assembly.

I thank Tim for his service to this House, and I congratulate him on his new opportunity to serve the people of Illinois.

THE BATTLE WAGES ON: SECURING EQUAL VOTING RIGHTS IN THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege to be before you this evening on the heels of our Nation's recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Selma marchers which tore down many obstructive barriers to voting for African Americans and which led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

We have grown as a nation since the night Jimmie Lee Jackson was murdered peacefully marching for voting rights in Alabama, and we are not the America we were when Mamie Till made the world see what had been done to her baby. But we are still living in dynamic times for our democracy. Selma has changed, but the issues of Ferguson, Missouri, remain.

Nearly 60 years after Emmett Till was buried, Black mothers still worry about the value of their son's lives when they leave home. We are reminded of this every time we look into the eyes of Trayvon Martin's mother. We are better today than we were then,

and the changes we made to our laws paved our path to prosperity. The President spoke of this in Selma, and Republicans and Democrats alike were united in our feeling that we must uphold the promise of the Nation we inherited because of Selma.

□ 1930

The U.S. Senate should vote to confirm very qualified and exceptional U.S. Attorney Loretta Lynch as the next Attorney General. The CBC devoted an hour of floor testimony last month in defense of her confirmation, but in her role as Attorney General, Loretta Lynch will be tasked with defending the Federal laws that protect the right to vote, and that brings us to our topic this evening.

Tonight's Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour is entitled: ''The Battle Wages On: Securing Equal Voting Rights in the United States.'' This topic is truly timely. This conversation needs to take place now. Work remains to secure equal voting rights in the United States.

Actions like the Supreme Court's decision to gut the Voting Rights Act remind us that the equality that should exist at the ballot is still lacking and why I dream of a day when the Voting Rights Act is no longer necessary. The truth is that voter discrimination and suppression remain as tragic legacies of our past.

In the past few years, many States have introduced restrictive legislation that diminishes an individual's access to the voting booth. The Justice Department may have the tools to fix this problem and go after places that are discriminating against certain voters.

In some places, getting a voter ID that you can use to vote can cost up to $150, and that can be a burden for someone who is on a fixed income and not driving anymore and doesn't have a license.

Discriminatory laws and policies that hamper access to the ballot box are reasons that the protections and the Voting Rights Act are necessary. The VRA must remain intact as its principles are powerful democratic agents that make our Union more perfect.

With that, I would like to kick off this Special Order hour by yielding to my colleague and anchor, a man who has dedicated his life to the issues of justice in America—a lawyer, judge, and statesman who has defended voting rights—the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Honorable G.K. BUTTERFIELD of North Carolina.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you very much, Congresswoman KELLY. Thank you for your leadership, and thank you for what you mean to the Congressional Black Caucus.

The Congressional Black Caucus is now the largest caucus in our history. We are very proud to announce that we have 46 members now in CBC, representing more than 30 million people from 23 States, in addition to the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands, so I am delighted that you have taken this responsibility each week, Ms. KELLY, to come to the floor and manage this time.

Typically, Congressman DONALD PAYNE would be joining Congresswoman KELLY tonight, but Mr. PAYNE is not able to come to the floor tonight to help with this Special Order due to, what I am told, is complications from foot surgery, so we wish Congressman PAYNE a very speedy recovery.

Ms. KELLY, I wanted to particularly thank you for selecting this subject this evening. This is a very timely conversation that we must have in this Congress, and that is the whole subject of the Voting Rights Act. The topic that you have chosen, ''The Battle Wages On: Securing Equal Voting Rights in the United States,'' is so very appropriate; and, hopefully, in the next 2 or 3 minutes, I want to tell you why.

Let me just start by explaining the whole voting rights story. Some of my colleagues may not fully appreciate it and understand that when we talk about voting rights, we just don't talk about 1965.

In order to fully appreciate the voting rights history in this country, we must go back to the end of slavery when 4 million slaves became free. They did not have the right to vote. Once the 15th Amendment was added to the Constitution, then all of the former slave men got and obtained the right to vote.

They got engaged. They got involved in the political process. From 1870 until 1900, a period of some 30 years, African American males, particularly in the South, were fully engaged in the political process.

But do you know what? In 1900, Mr. Speaker, in 1900, that right to vote came to an end. It came to an end because of Southern States like South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, and the like, all of these Southern States passed disfranchisement laws, particularly a literacy test.

This literacy test had the practical effect of denying the former slaves and their descendants the right to vote. Not only did you have to read and write in order to be able to register to vote, you had to convince the registrar that you were literate.

The practical effect of that was that the whole voting rights movement during those days came to an abrupt end in 1901 when Congressman George H. White, who was one of my predecessors in North Carolina, stood on this House floor on March 3, 1901, and made a very profound welfare speech to the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, that is the first era of voting rights in this country.

The next era, I would say, would be from 1901 to 1965, when African Americans, for the most part, were not allowed to register to vote because of the literacy test and were not meaningfully involved.

The next and final phase would be from 1965 until the present. In 1965, this Congress passed a historic 1965 Voting Rights Act, and it was a bipartisan bill. Democrats and Republicans promoted the bill all the way to the finish line with the help of then President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The 1965 voting rights, Mr. Speaker, did many great things, but the three things that I will highlight tonight are: Number one, it eliminated the literacy test; number two, it gave a right of action, it gave to African American communities all across the United States the right to bring legal action to file civil lawsuits in Federal court to challenge discriminatory election laws or practices or procedures; the third part of the Voting Rights Act was what we now refer to as section 5.

The Congress in 1965 set aside certain States in the country and certain subdivisions within a State to require them to get preclearance before election laws when new election laws went into effect.

Many of our Southern States did not like section 5, but it was put on the books for a purpose because, if given the opportunity, these States were going to pass discriminatory election laws that made it very difficult for African Americans to vote.

Section 5 has now been on the books since 1965. It has been strongly enforced by the Attorney General. Section 2 has been strongly enforced in courts all across the country. Now, we have 46 African Americans serving in Congress, we have thousands elected at State and local levels all across the country, and it was because of the Voting Rights Act in many respects.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we received a great surprise on June 25 of 2013. The U.S. Supreme Court declared that section 5 could not be enforced because the formula that gives life to section 5, which is section 4, the court said that section 4 needed to be updated and called on this Congress to amend section 4 to make it more contemporary in its application.

This Congress has failed to act. Now, this is the spring of 2015, and we have failed to act. Our voting rights are under continuous assault with more and more States and counties enacting voting laws that, on their face, appear to not be an impediment to voting. Many of these new laws are discriminatory, I want you to know. Some are intended to be. Others, though not intentional, will have a discriminatory result.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I am just unable to understand why my Republican colleagues refuse to support an amendment to section 5 to make this provision compliant with the Supreme Court decision.

Through the years, this Congress has been called upon to extend section 5, and it has done so in a bipartisan way. In 2006, as section 5 was about to expire then, there was a bipartisan bill passed by this Congress, signed by President

George W. Bush. There were 192 Republicans who voted for the bill.

I want to say that to you again, my colleagues: 192 Republicans voted to extend section 5 just a few years ago. I saluted them then; I salute them now. Sixty-six of those Republicans continue to serve in the House today, including the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. GOODLATTE.

Mr. Speaker, we must fix section 5 to comply with the Supreme Court's decision to update the formula. If we continue down this path and if we do nothing, the practical effect will be that jurisdictions will pass election laws or implement election practices or procedures that will discriminate, and we know it, and we must prevent it from happening.

The only remedy African American communities have to obtain redress from discriminatory practices will be to file very expensive litigation. In the meantime, the law, the new law goes into effect.

If section 5 was in place, there wouldn't be the need for expensive litigation. The jurisdiction would simply be required to make a showing to the Department of Justice, and the Attorney General would determine the effect of the change on minority voting strength. That is the way we have done it for the last 50 years.

I call on my Republican colleagues to please join with us in a bipartisan, bicameral effort to fix the formula so that section 5 can be enforced in our country.

Thank you, Ms. KELLY.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, Congressman BUTTERFIELD.

It is now my honor to introduce the gentlewoman from Alabama, one that was our gracious host last weekend, and we appreciate everything she did, TERRI SEWELL.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, on March 7, 2015, nearly 100 Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle went to Selma to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday and the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery. I was humbled to welcome so many of my colleagues in Congress to my hometown of Selma, Alabama.

It meant a lot to me and the State of Alabama to also welcome President and Mrs. Obama and their daughters, as well as President and Mrs. George W. Bush to Selma to commemorate the significant events in American history. The Selma movement for voting rights was a uniquely American story of how ordinary Americans working together achieved extraordinary social change.

I want to thank all of the Members and everyone who participated in the Faith & Politics pilgrimage to Alabama this year. I especially want to thank my Alabama colleagues—Senator SESSIONS, Representative MARTHA ROBY, Representative ROBERT ADERHOLT, Representative BRADLEY BYRNE, and Representative GARY PALMER—for their participation in the delegation. A special thanks to Congressman JOHN LEWIS and the Faith & Politics Institute for a job well done.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of JOHN LEWIS with JOHN LEWIS is an unforgettable experience that is truly transformative. The bipartisan participation by Republicans and Democrats alike was truly something to behold, especially given the hyperpartisanship of Washington.

It was something to see us gather together in Selma, Alabama, to honor the sacrifices of the foot soldiers who dared to fight for voter equality 50 years ago. I tried not to have any expectation from this bipartisan showing, but I must admit my hope was that all of us would be motivated by the experience of traveling with JOHN LEWIS, in his footsteps with him, to honestly look at modern-day threats to voting rights today.

Now that the spotlight is no longer on Selma, we must move beyond the bridge and see that there is still a need to fight to ensure that all Americans can participate equally in the political process.

New barriers to voting rights have been legitimized in State legislatures across this country. Photo ID laws and efforts nationwide to get rid of early voting or weekend voting are modern-day efforts that have had the profound effect of restricting access to voting.

Any effort that restricts or decreases the likelihood of citizens to vote is a threat to the voting rights of all Americans. There is no denying that modern-day laws imposed to ostensibly prevent voter fraud has had the ''unintended consequence'' of making it much harder for certain sectors of the population to vote.

My father is a perfect example of an individual who has found it harder to vote because of these modern-day laws. Prior to the State of Alabama imposing a photo ID law to vote, my father, Andrew, a stroke victim who has been wheelchair bound for the last 10 years, had been voting by using his federally issued Social Security card, which does not have a photo; but once the law was imposed, my father—who no longer drives, who no longer works, is retired—had no way of getting a photo ID.

After the Alabama law changed, my mother and I made sure that my father would get a photo ID to vote. The effort was tremendous. We transported my father in a special wheelchair access van and got him into the old Dallas County courthouse, which was grandfathered in from having ADA laws and, therefore, no wheelchair ramp. Once inside the courthouse, the elevator to the registrar's office was being serviced, and we had to wait an hour in order to use it.

Once we finally got to the office of the board of registrars, there was only one person waiting on 25 people in line. My mother and father persevered. They persevered to make sure that my father got a photo ID that day because he was resolved in voting because his daughter was on the ballot for reelection.

□ 1945

Just think of all of the seniors or disabled citizens who do not have a relative or a person to take them to get a photo ID. This photo requirement definitely reduces the number of and the ability of certain segments of the society to exercise their right to vote.

In the Supreme Court ruling which invalidated the preclearance provisions of the VRA, the Court said that the formula used by Congress to determine the covered States was outdated, and it implied that there was no need for the Voting Rights Act today since, after all, there was an African American elected as President. Oh, how shortsighted the Supreme Court was. As long as there are vulnerable communities that face barriers to voting, there is still a need for Federal protection.

Just last year, after the Supreme Court ruling, the city of Evergreen, Alabama, came under Federal scrutiny for unfairly excluding African Americans from the voting rolls and for attempting to further dilute their voting power with a redistricting plan that would pack its majority Black population into only two of the five municipal districts. Incidences like this in Evergreen, Alabama, remind us that progress is always illusive and that the injustice suffered on the Edmund Pettus Bridge 50 years ago has not been fully vindicated.

Mr. Speaker, beyond the bridge, there are still laws that explicitly or unintentionally limit the access of Americans to vote. Now that we have commemorated the movement that led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, what are we going to do to protect the progress that has been made and to expand access to the sacred right to vote?

On March 7, 2015, while en route to Selma, President Obama signed H.R. 431, the bill that awarded a Congressional Gold Medal to the foot soldiers of the Selma to Montgomery march of 1965. Finally, this Nation is acknowledging the bravery of these foot soldiers, who dared to make this Nation live up to its ideals of justice and equality for all. While a great honor, a medal is not adequate repayment for their sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, the greatest tribute that we as Members of Congress can give is to work honestly and earnestly on a bipartisan bill to restore Federal voting protections to vulnerable communities under the Voting Rights Act. While I applaud bipartisan efforts made in the Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2015, which creates a new formula that would determine which jurisdictions require Federal preclearance, this new formula that is in the current VRA Amendment Act omits key States, key States like North Carolina, South

Carolina, and Alabama. I can't imagine, Mr. Speaker, that the very State—Alabama—that prompted the Voting Rights Act that was signed into law 50 years ago would now not be afforded the protection of Federal oversight. The fight for voting rights was born in Alabama, and on my watch, it will not die there.

Voting rights advocates and everyday citizens must remain vigilant and do all that they can to safeguard against efforts to constrict democracy in State and local governments. Our democracy requires it. We can all pay a debt of gratitude to those foot soldiers by voting in every election—local, State, and Federal. We all have our part to play, and we in Congress can play a vital role.

To echo the President's call to action, President Obama said on that day:

> Selma shows us that America is not the project of any one person. The single most powerful word in our democracy is the word ''we.'' We the people are tasked with strengthening and safeguarding our democracy. We the people are responsible for ensuring our Nation lives up to its very principles.

On the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act and the historic march from Selma to Montgomery, I urge my colleagues—Democrats and Republicans alike—to recommit ourselves to the work that was done by our predecessors, to work together to restore the Voting Rights Act for all Americans. That is the least we can do on this, the 50th anniversary. I look forward to this august body taking up a voting rights amendment act that fully restores Federal protection to all vulnerable communities so that all Americans can definitely exercise that sacred right to vote.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you to the gentlewoman from Alabama. Thank you for sharing the challenges citizens like your dad can have in complying with the new Voting Rights Act law. Thank you for standing up.

At this time, I would like to introduce the fierce and gentle woman from the District of Columbia, ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

Ms. NORTON. I thank my good friend, Representative ROBIN KELLY from Illinois, for her leadership on this night, this first night back.

For Members back from Selma, I appreciate that our chair of the Congressional Black Caucus has been here to give us very important background and history. I particularly appreciate that we have just heard from a Member from Alabama, itself, Representative TERRI SEWELL, and all of that seems to me to be the appropriate prelude for what we are doing here tonight.

Mr. Speaker, yes, this is the first day we are back from this historic trip and are back from the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. There is no place for the almost 100 Members who went to Selma to be but on this floor this evening. I want to thank Attorney General Holder for taking the crippled Voting Rights Act and continuing to enforce it. The trip to Selma essentially set the stage for Members to come back and to regard our trip as a call to action and get down to work to revitalize the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

My thanks to Representative JIM SENSENBRENNER and to Representative JOHN CONYERS for cosponsoring a revised version of the act. My thanks to JOHN LEWIS, who has kept Selma and the Voting Rights Act alive by his annual trips with Members and others to Selma. I am appreciative of the almost 100 Members from both parties who went to Selma on the 6th and 7th.

What was the purpose of going?

It could not have been a celebration. You can celebrate the 1964 Civil Rights Act. It has not been dismembered. You can celebrate the 1968 fair housing law. It still is on the books. But you go to Selma to try to bring back to its full glory the Voting Rights Act of 1965, where setback with section 5 has rendered the act virtually obsolete for most of its original purposes.

I stress that the Supreme Court did not invalidate the 1965 Voting Rights Act. It invited the 100 Members who went to Selma and the others in this body to modernize the act. We may differ on how to do that. I do not think there can be any doubt that it has to be revised and that we have to meet the challenge that the Supreme Court has given us. After all, the Voting Rights Act has prevented, literally, hundreds of discriminatory voting practices, and there were countless practices that it simply deterred. I must say that I was disappointed that, early on in this session, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Representative GOODLATTE, indicated that he did not believe that the act was necessary, and he talked about the 11 Southern States that had been under the act.

The fact is that the preclearance Voting Rights Act requirements went far beyond those States. At the time of the Supreme Court decision in 2013, Arizona and Alaska were covered. Parts of California, New York, South Dakota, and Michigan were covered. In the past, parts of Hawaii, Colorado, New Hampshire, Idaho, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Wyoming, Maine, New Mexico, and Oklahoma have been covered. It is true that at the heart of the coverage were the 11 Southern States, but that is where the heart of the violations were, in fact, tracked. That is where the poll taxes were. That is where the violations were.

There has been a compromise bill that has been put forward by Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. CONYERS. In the very act of going to Selma, there was put upon us an obligation to come back and respond to that trip. The bill before us has tried to meet some of the objections that were raised. There is a rolling preclearance formula, for example, that does not require congressional reauthorization. There is a bail-in section of the act to reach those who had not been covered. There are a minimum number of violations over a period of time that have to be recorded in order for a state to come under the act.

As my good friend from Alabama, TERRI SEWELL, says, the act is not what all of us wanted, but it does mean that in the spirit of compromise and because of the necessity of this act, this act which democratized the South and is necessary now—perhaps not as necessary as it was 50 years ago—but no one can doubt, as a Supreme Court Justice himself said when he said he didn't doubt that there was still discrimination in voting practices, but he said it was up to the Congress to modernize the bill.

I don't see how almost 100 Republican and Democratic Members can have gone to Selma on the 50th anniversary without coming back to revise the act. We went emptyhanded. We went without a bill. I hope that what we got in Selma was the gumption to come back and to put forward a bill. Yes, the act has been dismembered by the Supreme Court, but the Court asked us to reshape it. It asked us to restore it. It was one thing to go without a bill. It is quite another to come back and do nothing about a bill.

The President did not hesitate to say where the responsibility, in fact, lies, and I am quoting from his speech in Selma:

> One hundred Members of Congress have come here today to honor people who were willing to die for the right it protects. If we want to honor this day, let these 100 go back to Washington and gather 400 more and, together, pledge to make it their mission to restore the law this year.

That is our mission. The trip to Selma, where we went in the name of the entire Congress, demands that we act before the end of this Congress.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you so much to the gentlewoman from Washington, D.C.

At this time, I would like to introduce the gentleman from South Carolina, our leader, JAMES CLYBURN.

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

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I often refer to this Hall as America's classroom. I do that because I do believe that, as we conduct ourselves here on this floor, it is to set an example for all citizens, especially our young citizens, who look in on our proceedings and get some idea about how they ought to conduct themselves as Americans going forward. One of those things, I think, that we ought to be very careful of is how we address the rights and responsibilities that we all have as citizens.

□ 2000

We teach our children in our classrooms and in our homes that the right to vote is basic to this democracy of ours. I know that all of us are aware that in our past it is a right that has not always been practiced, but in its

wisdom this body, acting collectively, decided back in 1965 that it would do something about making right the wrongs that have been heaped upon citizens for decades when it comes to voting. And so we did.

A formula was adopted that was based upon the 1964 results of the Presidential election. We have renewed time and time again that law, always updating under that formula; but several months ago the United States Supreme Court looked at the formula and decided that the formula had outlived its usefulness, but the Voting Rights Act was still needed. They invited the Congress to take a look at the formula and update it, as the chair said, and to make it more contemporary. We have worked for months.

I want to thank Mr. SENSENBRENNER of Wisconsin and Mr. CONYERS of Michigan for the work they have done to put together some amendments that would update that formula.

This time we decided to look back just a few years and to see, within the last 10 or 12 years, what jurisdictions have still continued to violate people's rights and who have been found guilty of doing so. Rather than apply the formula to everybody, what we will do is come up with a series of wrongs, put some numerical qualification on it, and make a new formula.

Now, that formula is not going to cover South Carolina today, but under the formula, any jurisdiction, any State that permits these kinds of atrocities and is found to have done so, they will be brought under the formula. So the formula applies to every jurisdiction in the country. I think that it is time for us to be honest that everybody will not do right, but we should have something in place so when a jurisdiction fails to do right, we will have a mechanism to address those ills.

Now, let me hasten to add—and I want all that are listening in to understand—this part of the Voting Rights Act is a preventive measure. It says that it allows for the Justice Department to move to prevent any kind of implementation of a change in the voting laws so that we won't have expensive litigation if something in it is not quite right. I believe that it is incumbent upon us to do what we can to employ methods that will not require citizens and the jurisdiction, their States, their cities and counties, to go to the expense of litigation when we can have an administrative procedure in place to take a look at what has been done and make a decision as to whether or not there is any possibility that someone's voting rights could be taken away. That is all this formula does. That is all section 5 is about.

I would hope that those of us who traveled to Selma last week to renew our commitment to making this country of ours a more perfect Union will sit down in the near future, and before we get to the 50th anniversary of the signing of that 1965 Voting Rights Act, which comes on August 6 of this year, sometime between now and August 6, let's put in place the kind of amendments that would allow the Voting Rights Act to maintain the life that it has given to so many communities for so many years.

I want to thank Ms. KELLY for putting together this Special Order.

Let me close by saying: The longer I live, the more I get in touch with those old adages that we grew up with, one of which was ''an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.'' I believe that these amendments that we are proposing are preventive measures, and it is much more valuable than for us to come back looking for a cure that could be very, very expensive.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN) for your important insight and your important comments.

Now it is my honor to introduce the gentlelady from Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank my colleagues and thank Congresswoman KELLY and Chairman BUTTERFIELD for the opportunity to carry forward the spirit of the 50th commemoration of the march over the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Let me also begin by thanking our colleague Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL and all of the Alabama delegation for their hospitality and their spirit of unity.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am so moved by that experience that I frankly believe that now is the time to move the bill that is bipartisan that is a response to the United States Supreme Court to the floor of the House, to the Committee on the Judiciary and to the floor of the House.

Leader CLYBURN was very apt in describing a very significant point that really answers the question of the Supreme Court. If I had my way, coming from the State of Texas, I frankly believe that the reauthorization that we did through the Committee on the Judiciary, of which I am a member, and which I was very much engaged in in 2006 and 2007, was a thorough expose of the value of the Voting Rights Act. We did 15,000 pages of testimony, and witness after witness from different perspectives indicated that the formula that we were using at that time on the preclearance was an effective formula. Of course, the Supreme Court challenged the data, and I would only argue that it is appropriate to update the data. I welcome that.

But we have gone even further. As has been articulated by the bill that has just been introduced by a number of us, we have crafted a formula that says it is an even playing field, an even playing field for a State to opt in because they have voting rights abuses for all people or to opt out because they have a smooth, evenhanded process for citizens in their State to vote.

So I believe it is important that the message get out of what the Voting Rights Act stands for and what it meant for those foot soldiers to cross that bridge. They crossed that bridge, and they were willing—and were bloodied, frankly—to do something nonviolent, and that is to petition their leaders at the voting box.

I can't imagine that there is any Member here in this place, in this august Congress, that would not want to go to their constituents, whether they live in South Dakota or Utah or Mississippi or New York or Texas, as I do, that there is an unfettered right to vote.

I will soon be introducing a Voting Rights Act that establishes the date that we signed the Voting Rights Act by the President that came from Texas, Lyndon Baines Johnson, with the leaders of Martin Luther King and JOHN LEWIS and many others standing at his side, to introduce that as being Voting Rights Act Day, to reinforce the value to Americans of the importance of voting.

Who would want to oppose the idea that voting is not important?

So I am looking forward to having Members join on the simple premise that it is important to vote in America and that it is important to commemorate the signing of the Voting Rights Act and make it Voting Rights Day. That inspiration came as we saw the thousands that were marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Let me just clarify for a moment, under section 5, the submitting jurisdiction under the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and H.R. 885, Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2015, has to prove that the proposed changes are not retrogressive, that they do not have the purpose and will not have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color. We have expanded that, again, to go by acts, by occurrences that would keep someone from voting.

So I believed that this past weekend, or the weekend of Bloody Sunday, was a moving moment that would draw us together, that would allow us to understand H.R. 885. And might I say this: I know that many of us will be willing to have teach-ins to ensure that our colleagues understand the importance of this legislation and that we do it in a bipartisan manner.

Let me conclude my remarks by saying, earlier today I stood on the floor and asked for a bipartisan approach to the approval of the Attorney General nominee by the other body. I say that from the spirit of recognition of the three branches of government. A President has nominated a very well-qualified, distinguished member of the bar, Loretta Lynch, to be the next Attorney General of the United States of America.

We understand differences of opinion with legislation. I have no quarrel with those differences. I happen to support the human trafficking bill and recognize that there is a disagreement on language that I agree with the disagreement, but that disagreement can

be worked out through ongoing talks and however they want to approach it or a vote on the floor. But Loretta Lynch, the Attorney General nominee, should not be held up captive to disagreements on legislation and moving toward a constitutional crisis.

All of this, Mr. Speaker, is wrapped up together. The Department of Justice enforces the Voting Rights Act, enforces the voting rights of Americans. As we look to the future, as we formulate the understanding of the three branches of government, to avoid a constitutional crisis of not having the leadership that is timely for the work that has to be done, I would hope the Senate would move forward, and I would hope that all of us would honor the Voting Rights Act and the message of Selma that we stand together under this wonderful flag and stand for voting rights for all.

Since its passage in 1965, and through four reauthorizations signed by Republican presidents (1970, 1975, 1982, 2006), more Americans, especially those in the communities we represent, have been empowered by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 than any other single piece of legislation.

Section 5 of the Act requires covered jurisdictions to submit proposed changes to any voting law or procedure to the Department of Justice or the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. for pre-approval, hence the term ''pre-clearance.''

Under Section 5, the submitting jurisdiction has the burden of proving that the proposed change(s) are not retrogressive, i.e. that they do not have the purpose and will not have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color.

In announcing his support for the 1982 extension of the Voting Rights Act, President Reagan said, ''the right to vote is the crown jewel of American liberties.''

And Section is the ''crown jewel'' of the Voting Rights Act.

But a terrible blow was dealt to the Voting Rights Act on June 25, 2013, when the Supreme Court handed down the decision in Shelby County v. Holder, 537 U.S. 193 (2013), which invalidated Section 4(b), the provision of the law determining which jurisdictions would be subject to Section 5 ''pre-clearance.''

FACTS OF SHELBY COUNTY V. HOLDER

In 2006, the City of Calera, which lies within Shelby County, enacted a discriminatory redistricting plan without complying with Section 5, leading to the loss of the city's sole African-American councilman, Ernest Montgomery. In compliance with Section 5, however, Calera was required to draw a nondiscriminatory redistricting plan and conduct another election in which Mr. Montgomery regained his seat.

According to the Supreme Court majority, the reason for striking down Section 4(b): ''Times change.''

Now, the Court was right; times have changed. But what the Court did not fully appreciate is that the positive changes it cited are due almost entirely to the existence and vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

And that is why the Voting Rights Act is still needed.

Let me put it this way: in the same way that the vaccine invented by Dr. Jonas Salk in 1953 eradicated the crippling effects but did not eliminate the cause of polio, the Voting Rights Act succeeded in stymying the practices that resulted in the wholesale disenfranchisement of African Americans and language minorities but did eliminate them entirely.

Before the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965, the right to vote did not exist in practice for most African Americans.

And until 1975, most American citizens who were not proficient in English faced significant obstacles to voting, because they could not understand the ballot.

Asian Americans and Asian immigrants also suffered systematic exclusion from the political process.

In 1964, the year before the Voting Rights Act became law, there were approximately 300 African-Americans in public office, including just three in Congress.

Few, if any, black elected officials were elected anywhere in the South.

Because of the Voting Rights Act, there are now more than 9,100 black elected officials, including 43 members of Congress, the largest number ever.

The Voting Rights Act opened the political process for many of the approximately 6,000 Latino public officials that have been elected and appointed nationwide, including 263 at the state or federal level, 27 of whom serve in Congress.

Now to be sure, the Supreme Court did not invalidate the preclearance provisions of Section 5; it only invalidated Section 4(b).

But that is like leaving the car undamaged but destroying the key that unlocks the doors and starts the engine.

According to the Court, the coverage formula in Section 4(b) had to be struck down because the data upon which it was based—registration rates and turn-out gaps—was too old and outdated.

But my colleagues in Congress and I refuse to let the Voting Rights Act die.

And so we went to work, crafting and drafting the legislation that would repair the damage done to the Voting Rights Act by the Supreme Court decision and capable of winning majorities in the House and Senate and the signature of the President.

After months of hard work, consultation, negotiation, and collaboration, we produced and have reintroduced in the 114th Congress, a bill, H.R. 885, ''Voting Rights Amendments Act of 2015'' that can achieve these goals.

To be sure, this legislation is not perfect, no bill ever is.

But—and this is important—the bill represents an important step forward because it: 1. is responsive to the concern expressed by the Supreme Court; and 2. establishes a new coverage formula that is carefully tailored but sufficiently potent to protect the voting rights of all Americans.

First, H.R. 885 specifies a new coverage formula that is based on current problems in voting and therefore directly responds to the Court's concern that the previous formula was outdated.

The importance of this feature is hard to overestimate. Legislators and litigators understand that the likelihood of the Court upholding an amended statute that fails to correct the provision previously found to be defective is very low and indeed.

H.R. 885 replaces the old ''static'' coverage formula with a new dynamic coverage formula, or ''rolling trigger,'' which works as follows: 1. for states, it requires at least one finding of discrimination at the state level and at least four adverse findings by its sub-jurisdictions within the previous 15 years; 2. for political subdivisions, it requires at least three adverse findings within the previous 15 years; but 3. political subdivisions with ''persistent and extremely low minority voter turnout,'' can also be covered if they have a single adverse finding of discrimination.

The effect of the ''rolling trigger'' mechanism effectively gives the legislation nationwide reach because any state and any jurisdiction in any state potentially is subject to being covered if the requisite number of violations are found to have been committed.

Prior to Shelby County v. Holder, the Voting Rights Act covered 16 states in whole or in part, including most of the states in the Deep South.

The rolling trigger contained in H.R. 885, unfortunately, does not; at least not initially. The only states that would be covered initially under the new bill are: 1. Texas 2. North Carolina 3. Louisiana 4. Florida 5. South Carolina.

To compensate for the fact that fewer jurisdictions are covered, our bill also includes several key provisions that are consistent with the needs created by a narrower Section 5 trigger.

For example, H.R. 885: 1. Expands judicial ''bail-in'' authority under Section 3 so that it applies to voting changes that result in discrimination (not just intentional discrimination); 2. Requires nationwide transparency of ''late breaking'' voting changes; allocation of poll place resources; and changes within the boundaries of voting districts; 3. Clarifies and expands the ability of plaintiffs to seek a preliminary injunction against voting discrimination; and 4. Clarifies and expands Attorney General's authority to send election observers to protect against voting discrimination.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is no ordinary piece of legislation.

For millions of Americans, and many of us in Congress, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is a sacred treasure, earned by the sweat and toil and tears and blood of ordinary Americans who showed the world it was possible to accomplish extraordinary things.

ABOUT TEXAS NAACP V. BERRY

(TEXAS PHOTO ID CASE; CONSOLIDATED WITH VEASEY V. PERRY)

1. The suit alleges that the State of Texas' photo ID requirement for in-person voting, enacted in 2011, was adopted for discriminatory reasons, in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments and Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, and has a discriminatory ''result'' in violation of Section 2. The case is consolidated with similar suits filed by the United States and other private plaintiffs.

2. Trial was held from September 2 to September 11, 2014, and closing arguments were presented on September 22, 2014.

3. On October 9, 2014, U.S. District Judge Nelva Gonzales Ramos issued a 147-page opinion in which she ruled that the Texas photo ID requirement violates both the U.S. Constitution and Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

4. Judge Ramos found that the law was enacted for the purpose of discriminating against African-American and Latino voters, and that it denies minority voters an equal opportunity to participate in the political process in violation of the Section 2 results standard.

5. Judge Ramos also found that the photo ID law unconstitutionally burdens the right to vote, and functions as an unconstitutional poll tax.

6. On October 14, 2014, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit granted Texas' motion to stay the district court's permanent injunction until Texas' appeal is briefed, argued and decided.

7. On October 15, 2014, the Lawyers' Committee and co-counsel filed an emergency application with the Supreme Court to reinstate the district court's injunction.

8. On October 18, 2014, the Supreme Court denied the application to vacate the stay; Justice Ginsburg filed a dissent, joined by Justices Sotomayor and Kagan.

9. Oral argument before the 5th Circuit is scheduled to take place during the last week in April.

10. Previously, in a lawsuit litigated under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, a three-judge district court in Texas v. Holder, 888 F. Supp. 2d 113 (D.D.C. 2012), ruled that Texas' photo ID law did not satisfy the nondiscrimination requirements of Section 5.

11. However, the district court ruling was vacated by the Supreme Court, 133 S. Ct. 2886 (2013), following the Court's decision in Shelby County v. Holder, 133 S. Ct. 2612 (2013), that the geographic coverage formula for Section 5 is unconstitutional.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. I thank the gentlelady from Texas for her remarks. Now it is my honor to yield to the gentlelady from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Congresswoman GWEN MOORE.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I was privileged just recently to stand hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder in Selma, Alabama, with 100 Members of Congress, with civil rights leaders, friends of the movement of all races from every State in the United States, with civil rights luminaries such as Mrs. Abernathy, Dorothy Cotton, Amelia Boynton—113 years old—Doris Crenshaw, and, of course, our very own colleague, JOHN LEWIS, who helped lead a march for a better life and more equality for all of America.

But it was very, very hard to celebrate. There was a very sober mood in the crowd as we realized that the voting rights of Americans, particularly African Americans, were under threat 50 years after the Voting Rights Act was signed. As the President said in his remarks:

> Right now, in 2015, 50 years after Selma, there are laws across the country designed to make it harder for people to vote.

□ 2015

> As we speak, more of such laws are being proposed. Meanwhile, the Voting Rights Act, the culmination of so much blood, so much sweat and tears, the product of so much sacrifice in the face of wanton violence, the Voting Rights Act stands weakened, its future subject to political rancor.

As we think of those martyrs like Viola Liuzzo, James Earl Chaney, Andy Goodman, and Michael Schwerner, it is very, very difficult to deal with the reality that States such as the one that I hail from, Wisconsin, is one of the States who has joined the map of shame and passed one of the strictest voter ID laws in the country.

In the following years since 2011, Wisconsin has been a battleground in fighting this pernicious law. In 2014, a Federal judge ruled that our voter ID law was unconstitutional and violated section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. It found that 300,000 Wisconsinites lacked the proper ID needed under the law and that the law would have a disparate impact on Blacks and Latinos.

Despite that powerful finding, the Federal district court was recklessly overturned by a three-judge panel in the Seventh Circuit. Right before our 2014 election, the United States Supreme Court stepped in and enjoined this law in an emergency stay to prevent them from implementing the voter ID law only 6 weeks before the 2014 election. Recently, members of the Congressional Black Caucus have sent an amicus brief, and I am optimistic that justice will prevail.

I know that there have been many African Americans and people of other races who have marched across that Edmund Pettus Bridge. As a woman, I know that the brave suffragettes fought equal treatment for over 70 years while they faced humiliation and shame from society.

History has made it so very, very clear that voting rights are so fundamental. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution protects voting rights; the 15th Amendment provided that males, even former slaves and males of any race, could vote; women's suffrage; with the 24th Amendment, poll taxes supposedly were eliminated, and the 26th Amendment allowed 18-year-olds to vote.

Of course, we have the Voting Rights Act of 1965. I think it is very, very clear, when you look at the history of this protection, that it is one of the most constitutionally protected rights that there is.

I would urge my colleagues here in this body to do more than hold hands and sing, ''We Shall Overcome,'' but to really pass laws to strengthen the Voting Rights Act.

We have all heard the adage that history repeats itself, and we have seen a race across the country for Republican legislatures and Governors to pass these voter ID laws, but I think we also have the power to shape our future by drawing from the lessons of the past: our civil rights movement, our march in Selma, where we stood hand in hand, arm in arm, and fought back against this tide of oppression.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. I thank the gentlewoman from Wisconsin. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

Now, it is my honor to yield to the gentlewoman from Florida, FREDERICA WILSON.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. In Miami-Dade County, I have a program called the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project. It is a program of Black and Hispanic boys who are trying to grow up into good men.

The Friday before Bloody Sunday, over 500 12th graders—graduating seniors—from that program went to a movie to watch a private screening of the movie ''Selma.''

I want to give a special shout-out to Nancy Sewell, who is the mother of TERRI SEWELL. As I watched the two of them on C–SPAN, MSNBC, and CNN, I was so proud of them.

These boys were prepared by men who experienced the civil rights battles and know the bitter history and violent battles we had to endure. I wish I had the resources to take all 500 of them to Selma.

During the movie, we planned a Twitter war. Thousands participated all across the Nation. Movie stars, rappers, sports legends, and the White House joined in the Twitter war. These boys will never be the same. They were visibly moved; and their applause, tears, hugs, and tweets proved their transformation.

The next day, on that Saturday, when the President spoke, the Twitter war continued. It was based at my home. So many of them watched and marveled at Representative JOHN LEWIS, a card-carrying, sworn-in member of the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project. They watched so proudly as he introduced the first Black President of the United States. In fact, he is the only President that they know. They are beyond proud.

Why did I do this? I wanted as many students as possible to experience the importance of voting, and I am not finished. All 8,000 of them will see the movie as soon as it is released for distribution. This generation of children needs to know the importance of voting. They need to know what their forefathers had to endure so that they could vote.

When I was on the Miami-Dade County School Board in 1996, we set up a process in partnership with the department of elections. Every eligible student is registered to vote in the 11th grade, and when they graduate and turn 18, their voter registration card is mailed to their homes. This is a policy that all school districts all across America should adopt.

While they repair the damage to the Voting Rights Act through legislation, graduating seniors in Miami-Dade public schools—Black, White, and Hispanic—will still have the opportunity to vote. Every single one of them will vote. I hope that other school districts will adopt this policy so that children will know and understand the importance of voting. It is their voice.

God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, let us as a people march on until victory is won.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you to the gentlewoman from Florida. Thank you for sharing your success stories. Hopefully, those can be duplicated.

At this time, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Congresswoman ALMA ADAMS.

Ms. ADAMS. Thank you, Congresswoman KELLY, for your leadership. I

appreciate what you are doing very much. Certainly, it is something that we need to do, and we must do.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stress the importance of equal voting rights for everyone. Just over a week ago, I traveled to Selma with several of my colleagues to retrace the steps of those who shed blood as they tried, again, to gain equal access to the ballot box.

As a professor for 40 years at Bennett College in North Carolina, I made sure that the students that passed through my classroom and our campus knew just how important it was to have their voices heard, and to this day, students know: ''Bennett Belles are voting belles.''

In 2013, the Supreme Court struck down a major provision of the Voting Rights Act limiting Federal oversight over State voting laws. Sadly, my home State of North Carolina quickly implemented voting laws that disenfranchise voters by making cuts to early voting, reenforcing strict ID requirements, and ending some preregistration programs which did not allow young high school students to be able to register to vote.

As I think about those who risked their lives in order to exercise their right to vote, I cannot believe that 50 years later, in 2015, that simple freedom given to us in the Constitution is still under attack.

It is time for all of us, Mr. Speaker, to come together to restore the Voting Rights Act, to ensure that every voter—no matter their race, no matter their class or creed—can make their voice heard and elect the leaders of their choice.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina, again, for her insight and comments.

Here we are, 50 years removed from Selma, 50 years after Americans—young and old, Black, White, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, Jewish—made a decision to stand up for what they knew was right. They stood up for democracy and demanded fair and unobstructed access to the ballot.

As you have heard this hour, the evolution to the America we are today has been a long and challenging journey. The Voting Rights Act has done much to make our Union more perfect, but the strength of the Voting Rights Act has been diminished. With new, discriminatory laws on the books, this Congress must act. This Congress can pass a bipartisan bill that extends section 5 of the Voting Rights Act.

As was the case in Selma, the law is not equal for all. We must unite, as we did then. I urge my colleagues to take up this important issue and strengthen the Voting Rights Act.

I would like to take this time to thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) and all my colleagues who took the time to speak to us this evening.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues Congressmen PAYNE and KELLY for leading the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order Hour.

Mr. Speaker, fifty years ago 600 men and women began a peaceful march in Selma, Alabama to demand their full and equal right to participate in our democracy. Their quest for equal voting rights was met with physical violence and racial hatred on what has become known as "Bloody Sunday."

The marchers were turned back that day, but they remained steadfast. With unwavering determination, residents of Selma, civil rights activists, and inspired people from across the nation completed the march from Selma to Montgomery. Their heroism was instrumental in the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; a watershed bipartisan action of the U.S. Congress.

Fifty years later, on the anniversary of Bloody Sunday, I stood with President Obama and my House and Senate colleagues to honor the legacy of those brave foot soldiers for justice. But unfortunately, the battle wages on. There is still much to be done to ensure the sacrifice of those marchers was not in vain.

The Supreme Court's decision in Shelby County v. Holder to strike down Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act left many Americans more vulnerable to voting discrimination. In the absence of this historic safeguard, numerous states have attempted to suppress voting through restrictive voter ID laws and limits on early voting. My home state of Ohio is one of them.

Congress must act to restore Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act and update critical voter protections. In 2015, no eligible citizen should be disenfranchised. No eligible citizen should be denied full participation in our democracy. Let us recommit to rejecting intolerance and injustice in all forms, and continue the fight for equal voting rights for all Americans.

APPOINTMENT OF INDIVIDUALS TO THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY AND INTEGRITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1011c, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, of the following individuals on the part of the House to the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity for a term of 6 years:

Upon the recommendation of the Minority Leader:

Dr. George T. French, Fairfield, Alabama

Dr. Kathleen Sullivan Alioto, New York, New York

Mr. Ralph A. Wolff, Oakland, California

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. GRANGER (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of a function in the district.

Mr. ROSKAM (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and the balance of the week on account of the passing of his father.

Mr. HINOJOSA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m.

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. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 639. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing; with an amendment (Rept. 114–41, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 647. A bill to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–42). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 648. A bill to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–43). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan: Committee on House Administration. House Resolution 132. Resolution providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress. (Rept. 114–44). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on the Judiciary discharged from further consideration. H.R. 639 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 1365. A bill to prevent the reclassification of certain ammunition as armor piercing ammunition; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. LUMMIS (for herself and Mr. LAMALFA):

H.R. 1366. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to set the retirement benefits age for today's eight-year-olds at age 70; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN (for herself and Mr. SABLAN):

H.R. 1367. A bill to amend the Expedited Funds Availability Act to clarify the application of that Act to American Samoa and

the Northern Mariana Islands; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. SALMON, Mr. PERRY, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. BLUM, and Mr. ISSA):

H.R. 1368. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent foreign diplomats from being eligible to receive health insurance premium tax credits and health insurance cost-sharing reductions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Foreign 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 Mrs. WALORSKI (for herself and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 1369. A bill to modify the treatment of agreements entered into by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish nursing home care, adult day health care, or other extended care services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 1370. A bill to direct the Chief of the Army Corps of Engineers to revise certain authorized purposes described in the Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System Master Water Control Manual; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 1371. A bill to improve the Compliance, Safety, Accountability initiative of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

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

H.R. 1372. A bill to amend title V of the Social Security Act to extend the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 1373. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to consider, within the annual rulemaking processes, the effect of regulatory changes to certain Medicare payment systems on provider consolidation; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CAPUANO (for himself, Mr. CLEAVER, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 1374. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide penalties for counterfeiting or selling Presidential inauguration tickets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ESTY (for herself, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HONDA, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ):

H.R. 1375. A bill to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a rule to require child safety packaging for liquid nicotine containers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRIFFITH (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. PETERS):

H.R. 1376. A bill to amend chapter V of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to permit provisional approval of fast track products; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself and Mr. STIVERS):

H.R. 1377. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for tax preferred savings accounts for dependent youth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. RUSH, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 1378. A bill to establish the Social Work Reinvestment Commission to provide independent counsel to Congress and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on policy issues related to recruitment, retention, research, and reinvestment in the profession of social work, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1379. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Board of Veterans' Appeals to develop evidence in appeal cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1380. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the eligibility for a medallion furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to signify the veteran status of a deceased individual; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. SPEIER):

H.R. 1381. A bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, and the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 to improve access to information in the legislative and executive branches of the Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, House Administration, the Judiciary, Ethics, and 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 Miss RICE OF NEW YORK (for herself, Mr. COOK, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. ABRAHAM, Ms. KUSTER, and Mrs. RADEWAGEN):

H.R. 1382. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in awarding a contract for the procurement of goods or services, to give a preference to offerors that employ veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California (for herself, Ms. MENG, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. COHEN, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 1383. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of certified adult day services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WALZ (for himself, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. JONES, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. STEWART, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. LATTA):

H.R. 1384. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H. Res. 150. A resolution expressing support for designation of July as National Sarcoma Awareness Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself and Ms. BONAMICI):

H. Res. 151. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of March 15, 2015, through March 21, 2015, as National Young Audiences Arts for Learning Week; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 1365.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Amendment II of the United State Constitution: A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Additionally, Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mrs. LUMMIS:

H.R. 1366.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 1367.

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 Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 1368.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 1369.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 1370.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, which states ''Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

The management of the Missouri River by the Army Corps of Engineers directly impacts commerce. The river is a sourre of barge traffic carrying a variety of goods.

By Mr. BARLETTA:

H.R. 1371.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 1372.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to ''provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 1373.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1: 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 Mr. CAPUANO:

H.R. 1374.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 3, Clause 1: ''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States;''

Article I, Section 3, Clause 6: ''To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;''

By Ms. ESTY:

H.R. 1375.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 1376.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HINOJOSA:

H.R. 1377.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: The Commerce Clause

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 1378.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1379.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1380.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. QUIGLEY:

H.R. 1381.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Miss RICE of New York:

H.R. 1382.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California:

H.R. 1383.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. WALZ:

H.R. 1384.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Section 8 of Article I 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. NORCROSS.

H.R. 93: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 131: Mr. RATCLIFFE.

H.R. 140: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 167: Mr. ZINKE.

H.R. 169: Mr. WHITFIELD, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 173: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 213: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 232: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. ADERHOLT, and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 235: Mr. TIPTON, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. DOLD, Mr. HIMES, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. JOLLY, and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 249: Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. DENHAM.

H.R. 250: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 310: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 317: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 353: Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 358: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. SIRES, Mr. JONES, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mrs. LOWEY, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 381: Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 386: Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 402: Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BUCHANAN, and Mr. BUCSHON.

H.R. 407: Ms. MOORE, Mr. KILMER, and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 444: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 451: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 453: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 465: Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. RUSSELL, and Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 472: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.

H.R. 500: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 509: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 513: Mr. COSTA and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 528: Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 531: Mr. VARGAS, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 540: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. LABRADOR, and Mr. FARR.

H.R. 546: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. DOLD, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 570: Ms. LEE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. NOLAN, and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 572: Ms. MENG.

H.R. 578: Mr. NUGENT, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 586: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 592: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 594: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. RATCLIFFE.

H.R. 595: Mr. CHAFFETZ.

H.R. 598: Mr. COSTA.

H.R. 601: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 610: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 612: Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mr. GUINTA.

H.R. 616: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 617: Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 628: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 631: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. STEWART, Mr. AMODEI, Ms. LEE, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 638: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 639: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 647: Mr. HARPER, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 648: Mr. HARPER, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 650: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. BLUM, Mr. STUTZMAN, and Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 654: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 662: Mr. JONES, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. KATKO, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, and Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 663: Mr. KING of Iowa and Mr. WHITFIELD.

H.R. 685: Mr. FORBES, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. BLUM, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. ROSS, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 702: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 706: Ms. Lee.

H.R. 707: Mrs. HARTZLER and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 721: Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BENISHEK, and Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 722: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 742: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 751: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 756: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 767: Mr. MURPHY of Florida and Mr. ADERHOLT.

H.R. 775: Mr. PETERSON, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. WALZ, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. MCKINLEY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 784: Mr. NEAL, Mr. BEYER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 793: Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 802: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. STEWART, and Mr. JOLLY.

H.R. 805: Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 815: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 816: Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. BLUM, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, and Mr. RUSSELL.

H.R. 822: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. HURD of Texas.

H.R. 825: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 842: Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. FORBES, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 845: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. ASHFORD, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 849: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 852: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 855: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 863: Mr. REICHERT, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. LATTA, Mr. SCHOCK, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 869: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 879: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 884: Mr. MOOLENAAR.

H.R. 885: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr.DOLD, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 903: Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 909: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 919: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 920: Mr. NADLER, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 923: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, and Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 924: Mr. HURT of Virginia and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 928: Mr. BABIN, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. MCHENRY, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. ISSA, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 931: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 932: Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 969: Mr. KING of Iowa, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. SARBANES, and Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H.R. 970: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 973: Mr. VEASEY, Ms. ESTY, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. CALVERT, and Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 976: Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 977: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 978: Mr. KILMER, Mr. TURNER, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 993: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 997: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 1000: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 1019: Mr. COOPER, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 1058: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. BLUM, and Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 1059: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. BLUM, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 1062: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. ISSA, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. PERRY, and Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 1063: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 1078: Mr. FARR, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. LAMALFA.

H.R. 1086: Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. BARR, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, and Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 1090: Mr. ROYCE, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. HILL, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. MESSER, Mr. GUINTA, and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 1095: Mr. WELCH and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 1100: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 1104: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 1114: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. HENSARLING, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. JONES, Mr. SALMON, and Mr. LONG.

H.R. 1125: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1128: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 1129: Mr. RUIZ, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 1130: Mr. SCHIFF and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 1131: Ms. SPEIER, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. WELCH, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 1135: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 1142: Mr. ELLISON, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. TURNER, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 1153: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.

H.R. 1162: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. ESTY, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1174: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 1178: Mr. OLSON, Mr. PASCRELL, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 1180: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. FINCHER, and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 1190: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 1191: Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. DENT, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. HANNA, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BOST, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. HUELSKAMP, and Mr. REED.

H.R. 1192: Mr. POLIS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. GOHMERT, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 1195: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. KILMER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 1206: Mr. BABIN, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 1210: Mr. ZINKE, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. WALBERG, and Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 1218: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HUNTER, and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 1232: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1233: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. HULTGREN.

H.R. 1234: Mr. ROKITA and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 1248: Mr. TURNER and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.

H.R. 1249: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. MESSER, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. BABIN, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. MICA.

H.R. 1258: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. CURBELO of Florida.

H.R. 1267: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. HUELSKAMP.

H.R. 1284: Mr. NADLER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. CLARK OF MASSACHUSETTS, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1301: Mr. WELCH, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1309: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

H.R. 1319: Ms. GABBARD, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 1320: Mr. HENSARLING and Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

H.R. 1323: Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 1339: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 1341: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 1343: Ms. MENG, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. MEEHAN, and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 1358: Mr. BEYER.

H.J. Res. 29: Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. MESSER, Mr. ROKITA and Ms. FOXX.

H.J. Res. 33: Mr. BARR.

H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. WALZ, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. SIRES, Mr. OLSON, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. HARPER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Mr. PITTS, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. NEAL and Mr. RIBBLE.

H. Con. Res. 23: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. PITTS.

H. Res. 11: Mr. MULVANEY.

H. Res. 12: Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. ESHOO, and Ms. EDWARDS.

H. Res. 14: Mrs. LUMMIS.

H. Res. 26: Mrs. COMSTOCK and Mr. NEAL.

H. Res. 45: Mr. COSTA.

H. Res. 54: Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. CAPPS, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. NEAL, Mr. BEYER, Mr. SCHOCK, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. LANCE, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. SCHIFF.

H. Res. 92: Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. BEYER, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. FARR, and Mrs. TORRES.

H. Res. 106: Mr. MEEKS.

H. Res. 111: Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. SIMPSON, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H. Res. 137: Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. YARMUTH, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. NADLER.

H. Res. 139: Mr. TROTT, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. ROKITA.

H. Res. 140: Mr. COLE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. NUNES, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. COOK, Mr. SALMON, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. WELCH, Mr. JONES, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. DESANTIS.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 1041: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 1102: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015 No. 44

Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our conquering King, thank You for providing us with wings of faith to soar above life's challenges and vicissitudes. Empower our lawmakers to use faith's wings to live lives that are lofty and laudable. May they stand for right and be willing to accept the consequences as they strive to please You in all that they think, say, and do. Lord, give them the wisdom to follow Your unfailing guidance, seeking to be patient even with difficult people. Open their minds to discern Your will as You give them the courage to obey You.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Democratic leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION AND LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Madam President, Confucius said, ''Life is very simple, but we insist on making it complicated.'' That is true.

Right now, the Republican Senate leadership is insisting on making a good piece of legislation far more complicated than it should be. This human trafficking and child pornography bill before the Senate has wide bipartisan support. Unfortunately, it also includes a previously unreported abortion provision that has brought us to a screeching halt in this legislation.

But there is a quick and very easy solution to this dilemma: Take the abortion language out of the bill. The Republican leadership doesn't seem to be interested in a solution.

The Senate Republican leadership is anxious to shut down debate without fixing the problem. We can stand here all week and question how the abortion language got in the legislation. Many believe it was by sleight of hand, but it doesn't matter. It is a fact that Republicans included abortion language in this bill that is completely unrelated to human trafficking, and by doing so Republicans turned a bipartisan bill into a political fight.

Republican Congressman ERIK PAULSEN of Minnesota drafted the House version of the same human trafficking bill. He wrote the bill. It passed the House. Even he believes that inclusion of the abortion provision in the Senate bill is not appropriate.

Here is what he said:

> There is no reason it should be included in these bills. This issue is far too important to tie it up with an unrelated fight with politics as usual.

This is his bill, and he says we should take that language out. He is a Republican.

The path forward is clear: Take the abortion language out of the bill and we can pass it right now. That is it.

But if hijacking the human trafficking bill with an unrelated abortion provision wasn't already bad enough—listen to this—the majority leader is now holding Loretta Lynch's nomination hostage too. It is hard to comprehend, but that is what is happening.

Just last Tuesday, the Republican leader gave his word that he would bring up a vote this week on President Obama's Attorney General nominee. President Obama's Attorney General is well qualified and no one questions her qualifications.

Now Senator MCCONNELL is saying the Senate will not confirm Loretta Lynch until we pass the trafficking bill—abortion language and all.

Loretta Lynch was nominated by the President 128 days ago. Since that time, Senate Republicans have found reason after reason after reason to delay her confirmation. First, it was just wait until the next Congress. In fact, the Republican leader said last year:

> Ms. Lynch will receive fair consideration by the Senate. And her nomination should be considered in the new Congress through regular order.

But when this Congress got underway, her nomination had to wait until after the Keystone legislation. Everyone will remember it was a bill to construct a massive pipeline to import foreign oil, only to turn around and export it to other countries.

Then Ms. Lynch's nomination had to wait until after a new Defense Secretary was confirmed. Then Republicans on the Judiciary Committee needed more time and said just one more week. Then she had to wait until after the February recess. As I said, it has been delay after delay after delay, and now we are here in the middle of March and Loretta Lynch has yet to get a vote on the Senate floor.

Why can't we get this incredibly qualified woman confirmed? She has waited 128 days. That is the longest any Attorney General has ever waited in the last four decades.

As I have said, a vote on the Lynch nomination has nothing to do with the trafficking bill and it certainly has nothing to do with abortion.

The majority leader can choose to keep the Senate stuck on this abortion provision, but he does so at the detriment of so many other bills that require the Senate's attention. The majority leader gave his word that we

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

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would consider the Lynch nomination through regular order, and that has not happened. He gave his word that we would vote on confirmation this week, but now he is hedging on that. There is no reason my friend, the majority leader, cannot live up to his numerous commitments.

Loretta Lynch's nomination is on the Executive Calendar, meaning the Senate can consider her nomination and then immediately move back to the trafficking bill. Any attempt to hold her nomination hostage because of the abortion provision is a sham.

This Congress is barely 2 months old. Yet this is just the latest on a growing list of examples proving Republicans simply cannot govern.

The American people need a human trafficking bill, and the American people need an Attorney General. Let's confirm Loretta Lynch as soon as possible.

Madam President, what is the business of the day?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Texas.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, tomorrow morning the Senate will be casting a very important vote. We will be voting on a piece of legislation called the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, which currently has 12 Democratic cosponsors and virtually an equal number of Republican cosponsors. In other words, this is generally bipartisan legislation.

As further evidence of its bipartisan support, this bill passed unanimously out of the Senate Judiciary Committee in February, and it enjoys the support of more than 200 victims' rights and law enforcement organizations. But as everyone in this Chamber knows, Senate Democrats have said they will filibuster this bipartisan legislation that is designed to provide justice for victims of trafficking because it contains a particular provision they have voted for on a number of occasions and, indeed, have chosen to cosponsor. It is unconscionable and shameful and more than that it is just simply baffling to me.

The reason it is so shameful is because there are children waiting for our help. The average victim of human trafficking in the United States is a young girl between the age of 12 and 14 years of age. Children are being abused and literally sexually assaulted while apparently some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have decided to try to make a political point. It is baffling because my colleagues have voted for essentially this very same provision in one form or another time and time and time again.

Apparently, the Democratic leader, who is pressuring Members of his caucus to filibuster this bill is—well, he says we need to take out the language they object to, but I was standing on the floor just a few days ago when—I guess it was Thursday afternoon—the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, offered them an opportunity to have an up-or-down vote to strip that language out of the bill and they objected to it. So it is getting harder and harder to believe the sincerity of their protests, and it is appearing more and more likely that what they want to do is have the Senate return to the same dysfunctional nature it was under for the last 4 years by the previous majority.

I wish to pose several questions to our colleagues who insist on filibustering this bipartisan piece of legislation. The first question I have is: Isn't it the case that only 3 months ago 50 Democrats voted for the 2015 Defense authorization bill? Isn't that a bill a piece of authorizing legislation much like the underlying justice for victims of trafficking bill? If 50 Democrats voted for similar language with regard to the limitations on the use of funding just a few months ago, how in the world can they filibuster this bill for including the same language they voted for, more or less, just a few short months ago? In fact, it is true that in 2009 all of the Senate Democrats—in a partisan vote—voted to include this similar language as part of ObamaCare. Groups such as NARAL, the National Abortion Rights Action League, protested that the language ''went far beyond even the Hyde Amendment.'' Yet 60 Democrats, including the then-majority leader—now minority leader—voted for that in the wee hours of Christmas Eve 2009.

Again, I ask our friends who are filibustering this bipartisan piece of legislation designed to help the victims of human trafficking: Isn't it true that in 2009, 58 Senate Democrats voted to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program, which like Medicaid is subject to the Hyde Amendment?

To each of those questions, the record would demonstrate they should be answered with a resounding yes.

So time and time again, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who now find themselves in the inexplicable position of filibustering a bill they are cosponsoring or which they have already voted for in the Judiciary Committee and which contains very similar restrictions on the use of the funding—how in the world have they decided to make the stand, here and now, denying even the opportunity they have been given by the majority leader to have an up-or-down vote to strip the language out that they object to?

Well, despite the hypocrisy of their position, the question this really boils down to is this. This is the question, the only question that really matters: To our colleagues who are filibustering this legislation, Are you prepared to turn your back on the thousands of people living every day in bondage and who are desperately clinging to the hope that someone—someone—will lend them a helping hand? Are you prepared to abandon these children and these other victims of human trafficking who deserve a roof over their head, someone to lean on, and somehow, some way to get a fresh start in life?

Do our colleagues who are filibustering this legislation really want to play politics with such a sensitive and vulnerable part of our population over an issue that some advocates have called a phantom problem? The reason why some advocates who support this legislation have called the objection of the Democratic leader a phantom problem is because not only have they voted for similar provisions over and over and over again, this essentially has been the settled law of the land for 39 years—since 1976. Just in case our colleagues think that the examples I mentioned are exclusive, there are a number of other provisions—32 Democrats voted for the so-called CR omnibus, the continuing resolution omnibus, in December. Thirty-two Democrats voted for that which contained very similar language. And I mentioned several others.

I want to conclude with the Washington Post editorial for today. I do not always find myself in agreement with the Washington Post editorial board, but this morning I think they encapsulated the Democratic filibuster of the bipartisan antitrafficking bill perfectly. In urging the Senate to pass this legislation, they wrote: ''[T]his week the question will be whether Senators can put the interests of scared, abused children ahead of the chance to score political points.'' I could not agree more.

So tomorrow morning, an hour after we convene, we will have a vote that will decide whether this legislation goes on to final passage. We need six brave Democrats—six brave Democrats—to join all the Republicans on this side to keep hope alive for these victims of human trafficking. We need six Democrats who are willing to break away from the tyranny of their party's own leadership here in the Senate and do what they know is the right thing to do. They know it in their heart, and they know it in their mind, and they know they have supported similar language in legislation time and time again.

We need six Democrats willing to break away from the mindless, heartless filibuster of this legislation. I hope they will examine their conscience. I

hope they will ask themselves, Isn't this exactly the kind of vote that I came here to the U.S. Senate to cast? I hope they will pray on it, and I hope they will think long and hard before saying no to the abused children and the victims of human trafficking.

That is what this is all about. It is not based on any Hyde amendment language in this legislation. It is based on a determination to render this institution dysfunctional, not because of any principal policy disagreement, because, as I point out, our colleagues on the other side have voted for similar language time and time and time again.

Our colleagues on the other side realize that on November 4, the voters rejected the then-majority and gave this side of the aisle the opportunity to serve in the majority because, frankly, they were sick and tired of the way that Washington operates and the dysfunction that prevailed here for so long. I had higher hopes that after the election we would all learn something from what the voters were telling us on November 4 and thereafter and that we would take advantage of the opportunity to try to work together to find areas where we could agree, in a bipartisan way, to actually move the ball forward and help people who need our help. If we cannot do that on an antihuman trafficking bill, what can we possibly work together on?

This whole phony issue of the Hyde amendment provision in this bill is a joke. It is a sick, sad joke, after time and time again voting for similar provisions in other legislation. As I pointed out, you have 12 Democratic cosponsors of the legislation. Do you think they did not read the legislation? That is ridiculous. Do you think their staff did not tell them what was in the legislation? Do you think before the Judiciary Committee voted unanimously to pass it out people did not know what they were voting on? I do not believe that for a minute. I have too much respect for our colleagues and their professionalism to think they missed it.

Our colleagues have an important choice to make tomorrow morning. I hope they will say yes to these victims of human trafficking and no to the kind of political gamesmanship that gives this institution a bad name.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

SENATE AGENDA AND NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I listened to the impassioned speech by my colleague from Texas on the issue of human trafficking. There is no dispute here. This legislation is bipartisan. Democrats and Republicans are prepared to support the bill that has been offered on human trafficking by Republican Senator CORNYN and Democratic Senator KLOBUCHAR. There are amendments pending I think which improve the bill—one by Senator LEAHY about runaway children. In fact, we are so prepared to do this that we have put together a comprehensive substitute amendment to what has just been described which could be quickly passed on the floor. I do not believe there would be more than a handful of Senators voting no. I certainly would support the passage of the Leahy version.

What is the difference? Senator CORNYN has injected into this important issue a side issue, but not an inconsequential one, on the Hyde amendment.

Henry Hyde was a Congressman from Illinois who served in the House of Representatives with me for a period of time. He authored the Hyde amendment that said no Federal funds shall be used to pay for abortion procedures except in very limited circumstances—rape, incest, and the life of the mother. That has been put in appropriations bills every year since—without question, without challenge.

What Senator CORNYN is trying to do is to make this permanent law, and make it part of a human trafficking bill. I do not doubt this is an important issue. I know it is because I have served in the House and the Senate. But I do question whether we should make every bill that comes along a vehicle or carrier for debating abortion or other really controversial issues.

This question of passing a human trafficking bill to protect the scores—thousands—of victims of human trafficking is one which would pass in a heartbeat in the Senate if the Senator from Texas would remove this controversial section. Senator LEAHY has offered that substitute. I hope we will have an opportunity to vote on it, and vote on it soon.

As to whether this is a reflection of a dysfunctional Congress, well, most of the people back in Illinois and Chicago whom I run into—particularly this weekend—have raised that issue from time to time, and I can see where the argument could be made. We now have a Congress controlled by Republicans—the House and the Senate—and the White House, obviously, with a Democratic President. It is a tough political terrain under the best of circumstances, and we certainly have not been facing the best of circumstances for a long time. There are just a lot of differences between the House and the Senate and the President and the White House, and many of those are manifest.

What was the first bill the Republican majority in the Senate called—No. 1, Senate bill 1? The Keystone Pipeline—a bill to authorize the construction of a pipeline owned by a Canadian company in the United States. That was the highest priority for the Senate Republicans. The President said at the outset: Do not try to preempt my authority as President. I will veto it.

But they insisted. We went through several weeks—2 or 3 weeks—of amendments, and we cooperated on the Democratic side. I think there might have been 30 or more amendments offered during that period of time. In the end, the bill passed with six or eight Democratic votes, was sent to the President, and was vetoed.

So the first 3 weeks were spent on this politically controversial issue, for which, at the end of the day, the President's veto was sustained, and it was wiped off the slate.

Then we went into a rather bizarre chapter here where the House Republicans insisted that before—before—they would fund the Department of Homeland Security—you know, the folks at the airport, the people who are guarding our borders—before they would fund the Department of Homeland Security to guard us against terrorism, we had to vote on five separate riders relative to the President's immigration Executive orders.

They held up this appropriation—giving partial funding to it week after week after week—until we finally said: Enough is enough. Fund this agency that keeps us safe. Stop playing political games with this issue. It went back and forth and back and forth. Another 3 weeks were wasted on this issue before finally—finally—on a bipartisan basis we passed this measure funding the Department of Homeland Security and said to the House of Representatives: Please, stop putting extraneous issues on important matters like funding our government.

I thought perhaps we turned the corner and moved in a more positive way, but we are mired now over this one, small provision in this bill which Senator CORNYN could remove in a heartbeat.

Then last week came a blockbuster issue. I did not realize a week ago today that still a week later I would be going on Chicago television being questioned about a letter signed by 47 Republican Senators which was sent to the Ayatollah of Iran, a letter sent by 47 Republican Senators to the Ayatollah of Iran telling him and his government not to negotiate with the President of the United States in an effort to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons. The author of this letter, Senator COTTON of Arkansas, and those who signed it, went to great lengths describing how they would, in fact, have the last word on anything negotiated by this President and that they planned on being around for a long, long time, urging the Ayatollah to not enter into negotiations with the President of the United States of America.

There is no historic precedent for what just occurred—none. We have never had 47 Senators of any party send a letter to a head of state and say: Stop negotiating with the United States of America. And they did it. The press reaction across the United States has been overwhelmingly negative to this action that was taken by these 47 Senators. I could go through the long list here of what newspapers across America have said about that letter.

The Detroit Free Press said: ''A blot on the 114th U.S. Senate.''

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: ''The senators who signed the letter should be ashamed.''

The Salt Lake Tribune: ''Cringe-worthy buffoonery on the global stage'' is how they described that letter.

The Courier-Journal in Louisville, KY, asked the question: ''Has Congress gone crazy?'' when they reflected on this letter. The Courier-Journal went on to call those who signed it: ''Senate Saboteurs.'' Those are their words, not mine.

The Salt Lake Tribune said: ''. . . the foolish, dangerous and arguably felonious attempt by the Obama Derangement Caucus of the Senate. . . .''

The Kansas City Star said: ''Was Iran letter traitorous or just treacherous for GOP [Senators]. . . .''

The Los Angeles Times called it ''insulting.'' They said: ''The Republican senators' meddling in that responsibility is outrageous.''

It goes on and on. I won't read them all. It doesn't get any better. It gets worse. And to think that 47 Republican Senators would try to preempt any President of the United States.

Today in Geneva, Switzerland, former Senator and current Secretary of State John Kerry sits down at a negotiating table across from Iran. On our side of the table are major allies trying to stop the development of a nuclear weapon in Iran. They will struggle. Maybe they will never reach an agreement. But what the 47 Senators said in a letter to the Ayatollah of Iran will not help.

What is the alternative? If these negotiations fail, the alternative is Iran develops a nuclear weapon and endangers not only Israel but the Middle East and far beyond, and triggers an arms race in the Middle East for nuclear weapons. That is an outrageous, unacceptable outcome. Or, military action. Military action by Israel, perhaps, as Prime Minister Netanyahu suggested 2 weeks ago; military action by the United States. Is it worth our time to be negotiating to try to find a peaceful resolution, to try to find a way for Iran to stop developing nuclear weapons with verifiable inspections? We won't take them at their word. There have to be inspections. Or is it better, as these 47 Republican Senators insisted, to walk away from the table? I think it is far better to continue these negotiations. I don't know if they will end up with a good agreement, but don't we owe it to our President, our Secretary of State, our government, our country, to at least see these negotiations through and then to read the agreement before 47 Senators send a letter condemning it and rejecting it? It was a sad day. But now let's turn the corner.

The first thing we should do this week—the absolute first thing we should do—is approve the President's nominee to be Attorney General. Loretta Lynch appeared before our Judiciary Committee. Senator HATCH was there, and I think he may even concede what I am about to say: No one laid a glove on this magnificent lady—a prosecutor with a spotless record; an African American with a life story about witnessing the civil rights movement as it unfolded in this country in the 1960s; an extraordinarily good person—good family, good background, impeccable credentials. There wasn't a single thing said about her that would stop anyone voting for her.

Now her nomination has been sitting for 128 days since it was announced. They are trying to set a record on the Republican side: No nominee for Attorney General has languished that long in the last 30 years. If they have a complaint about this lady, let them say so. Their complaint: She was chosen by President Barack Obama. That is not good enough.

This week, let us rise above the politics which have dominated the Senate since this session began. Let us do something constructive—approve this Attorney General, take this offensive section out of this bill, and move it for passage. We can get it done in a matter of hours.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, today we will again resume consideration of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. This is an important bill to me. I have been working on it for many years. Without a doubt, this legislation is incredibly important.

Right now in this country there are thousands of human beings—mainly young people—living as slaves. Women and children are stolen from their homes, stripped of their God-given rights, and robbed of their human dignity. These individuals live among us. They live in our neighborhoods and in our suburbs, our biggest cities and our smallest towns. They live in a world of silence, fear, hopelessness, and unspeakable suffering.

The State Department estimates that up to 17,500 individuals are trafficked to the United States every year. The majority of these are women and children. Some of them are forced into a life of unpaid servitude, many others into sex work. Worldwide, the International Labor Organization estimates that 4.5 million people are currently enslaved through sex trafficking. These numbers are staggering, but they only illustrate the scope of the problem. The suffering of each individual victim should not be lost in a sea of statistics. For victims of human trafficking, the surreal horror of their lives bears testimony to the gravity of the crime.

A number of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have worked tirelessly to update our legal framework for fighting this scourge. I wish to commend them for their efforts, especially the senior Senator from Texas, the senior Senator from Minnesota, and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee. Their efforts represent exactly the sort of work that should be the mission of this body: working across the aisle to produce workable solutions to the most pressing problems facing our Nation.

The majority leader also merits praise for his decision to take up this bill and his unwavering support for it. Far too often, his predecessor focused the Senate's time and efforts on taking partisan messaging votes and abusing the rules to score political points. By prioritizing the consideration of important bipartisan legislation such as this—and by restoring this body's traditions of fulsome debate, an open amendment process, and regular order through the committee system—our new majority is putting the Senate back to work for the American people. While the sailing has not always been totally smooth—it rarely is—the progress we have seen in restoring this institution to its proper role as a productive legislative body is both real and meaningful.

Given the progress we have made thus far, the logjam that is currently impeding our progress on this important legislation is extremely disappointing. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have claimed that we somehow supposedly snuck a controversial abortion provision into an otherwise uncontroversial bill.

This claim is unequivocally ridiculous. First, the language in question was by no means snuck into the bill. It was in the bill when it was introduced at the beginning of this Congress. It was in the bill when those of us on the Judiciary Committee took part in an extensive markup of the bill. It was in the bill when it passed unanimously out of committee. It was in the bill when we undertook its consideration here on the floor. In fact, there were Democratic cosponsors of this bill.

Moreover, not only was this language in the bill from the beginning, but it has also been the law of the land for nearly four decades. Democrats in this body have supported countless other bills with similar language, including even ObamaCare.

Abortion is obviously a divisive and sensitive issue. While I am strongly pro-life, I recognize that many of my friends passionately disagree with me on this issue. As Members of this institution, it is incumbent upon us to respect the sincere beliefs of our colleagues with whom we disagree and to work toward responsible governing arrangements.

The Hyde amendment represents such a sensible and appropriate arrangement. It is predicated on the commonsense notion that while we may vigorously disagree on whether life should be protected before birth, we can broadly agree that taxpayer money should not be used—should not be

used—to fund a procedure that many Americans—in fact a majority, according to a number of polls—consider to be murder.

The responsible way for each of us to approach this bill, regardless of our view on abortion, is to embrace this long-standing, commonsense compromise on abortion funding and focus on passing the underlying measure—a bill that is so critical to our efforts to fight human trafficking and help alleviate the suffering of victims.

To hold up the passage of this bill to pick a fight over the Hyde amendment represents an unambiguous dereliction of Senators' individual duties to responsibly legislate.

Unfortunately, that is exactly what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have done. They are now threatening a filibuster unless we agree to their extreme pro-abortion position on this issue. There ought to be six of them who will stand up and vote with us and get this bill passed.

In response, the majority leader offered an eminently reasonable compromise—an up-or-down vote on an amendment to strip out the language to which they are suddenly objecting. But the minority leader objected, demanding a guarantee that the provision be removed. By doing so, the minority leader is once again resorting to outrageous ''my way or the highway'' tactics that are the antithesis of how the Senate should work. It is a move out of the same playbook that he used to give us a calendar full of messaging votes last year meant to produce political theater rather than meaningful legislation.

This ploy plainly demonstrates the desire of the minority leadership to muck up the majority's efforts to exercise reliable leadership, no matter the cost to the victims of human trafficking. By resorting to this sort of obstruction, they have demonstrated how desperately they want to derail our efforts to legislate responsibly and instead resort to their tired and discredited war-on-women rhetoric to win cheap political points.

Let me repeat a point I have repeatedly made about this impasse—words that the minority leader has tried to manipulate to support his shameful gambit. For all of my colleagues who are tempted by this irresponsible strategy: It would be pathetic to hold up this bill. This bill is absolutely critical to our families and our children.

I cannot believe the Senate has become so political that my colleagues would raise this issue—this tangential, long-settled issue at this time—after the same transparently clear language passed unanimously out of the Judiciary Committee.

For my colleagues to hold up this bill in an effort to impose their extreme policy, to overturn the law of the land that has long enjoyed bipartisan support, to pick a false fight over abortion, or to try to embarrass the majority is itself embarrassing.

I urge my colleagues in the minority in the strongest possible terms to reconsider their position and allow the Senate, once again, to do the people's business.

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

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

A NUCLEAR IRAN

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I rise to discuss what many believe is the most dangerous threat to our national security, and that is a nuclear Iran.

Over the past few weeks, there have been a lot of discussions about the Obama administration's ongoing negotiations with Iran and what the role of Congress should be. I believe the debate this past week in Congress over how to best address this issue has distracted us from what I believe are the two key objectives in our effort to prevent Iran from achieving nuclear weapons capability. First, Iran must be prevented from getting the bomb, and second, we in the Senate must decide the best way to guarantee that result.

For the past 10 years, I have been working hard to find the most acceptable and best way to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons capability. Note that word ''capability.''

For me, it has long been not enough to just announce that we must not allow Iran to get a nuclear weapon. I am determined that Iran must not get the technical capability to manufacture such a weapon because a nuclear weapons-capable Iran is as dangerous as a nuclear-armed Iran because it throws up a cloud of ambiguity about its formal intentions.

There are many in the policy communities who find some mistaken sense of comfort from the intelligence agencies' current view that Iran has not yet made a formal decision to develop a nuclear weapon. This is a delusion. Iran's industrial-strength uranium enrichment enterprise has gone from 600 centrifuges 6 years ago when the international community first expressed alarm to 19,000 today. We know the Ayatollah is on a quest for 190,000 centrifuges as soon as international constraints are removed.

Let's state the obvious: The Iranian pursuit of uranium enrichment is not being created to manufacture medical isotopes and reactor fuel for producing electricity; its purpose is to produce nuclear bombs.

Throughout my many years of involvement on this issue—as cochair of the task force at the Bipartisan Policy Center along with former Senator Chuck Robb and a distinguished panel of experts and in the last 4 years here in the Senate—I have called for using the full range of tools to prevent Iran from reaching its nuclear goal. These include negotiations coupled with ever-increasing sanctions pressure and a credible threat of the use of military force if the negotiations and sanctions fail to lead to Iran's commitment to cease its pursuit of nuclear weapons capability. This continues to be my view.

I do believe in diplomacy. I would very much like to see effective negotiations take place, led by insightful diplomats, focused on the right results. I would like to see that lead to a settlement that brings security and confidence. But we have every reason to fear this is not now happening.

I don't want to destroy the negotiations track, but I do want to refocus it with the firm backing it requires to achieve the goal we need to reach. I don't want to demand everything from the Iranians, but I do want to require enough to guarantee they give up on their nuclear weapons ambitions. I don't want to torpedo the administration's diplomatic efforts, but I do want to require that Congress have the final say on whether the results of negotiations are acceptable and achieve the goals of preventing Iran's nuclear weapons capability.

For me and I trust for the Senate, this is our most important task of the moment—to force the President to accept a congressional role. He has said repeatedly that he will deny us that role when it comes to approving any agreement. We must not let that happen.

The reason I did not sign the open letter to Iran is not because I disagreed with the goals of the letter. All Senate Republicans and, I believe, many Senate Democrats, are in agreement on the overall objective of avoiding a bad deal with Iran. But the strategy we need to accomplish this essential goal is now in question, and we are divided now in a way that makes this goal harder to achieve.

There are two bills pending that would require the President to present any Iran deal to us for review and action, and this is the course I believe we should take. One, which I cosponsored, has been introduced by both Senators KIRK and MENENDEZ—a bipartisan effort. The other, coauthored by Senators CORKER and MENENDEZ—also bipartisan—I also support. The latter bill, which would require Congress to approve any deal with Iran, is very close to achieving the support of 67 or more Senators needed to overturn President Obama's promised veto of any legislation on this topic.

Lack of bipartisan consensus at this moment on this issue is likely to lead to a fatally flawed deal that destroys more than a decade of effort to bring Iran to cease its goal of nuclear weapons capability.

We all know now that the Obama administration abandoned the core objectives at the very outset, even before these talks began. Four U.N. Security

Council resolutions; frequent and constant demands coming from this Chamber; four Presidents—two Republicans and two Democrats—saying a nuclear-capable Iran is unacceptable; the firm position of AIPAC and other friends of Israel—all stated the necessity that Iran give up and shut down all its uranium-enriching centrifuges. Yet this goal was jettisoned before the talks even started. The Obama administration spokesmen, including Secretary Kerry himself, have explained repeatedly that it was just too hard to achieve. We must be more realistic, we are told. The Iranians, we are told, can never be expected to agree to the demands laid down years ago by the Security Council. That was then, they said. This is now. Everything has changed. We have to set that goal aside, and we have to reach some reasonable agreement with a reasonable process with a reasonable country. The word we need to question there is ''reasonable.''

Madam President, it appears my time is running out, but I notice that no other Member is here to speak, so I ask unanimous consent to speak for just 3 more minutes.

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

Mr. COATS. Madam President, I thank the Chair.

But even leaving that shocking capitulation aside, we can never expect that the Iranians would negotiate under those conditions. We can now focus on the key fatal flaw of this agreement. It has been simmering for months, but it is now boiling over onto the front pages of our national attention thanks to the presentation by the Prime Minister of Israel, and that is the sunset clause.

We now see that even if Iran is constrained by this agreement and even if in the most unlikely of worlds Iran fully complies with the agreement, at the end of a decade or so, Iran will be fully liberated to pursue nuclear capabilities with no limitations or constraints whatsoever—a free hand, a blank check to go forward, an Iran that will have wealth, the technical expertise, industrial infrastructure, the will, and, if given a sunset provision, the international acquiescence to do whatever they like to pursue their goal without any ability of us to stop it. They can do whatever they like.

Ten years—oh, that is a long time out. Ten years is tomorrow afternoon. It is a blink of the eye.

Such a sunset clause makes this entire enterprise unacceptable. Any agreement that contains a sunset clause must be rejected, and any agreement with Iran that does not impose permanent restraints on their nuclear ambitions is no agreement at all. We in the Senate have it within our ability and mandate to guarantee that happens, but to do so, we need to reach consensus across the aisle. We need to work together as Republicans and Democrats for the future security of our Nation, and for that matter, all nations.

There are a number of issues on which we don't agree. There are a number of things on which we have different thoughts about how to proceed. But this is an issue of such historic consequence and such potential harm that we must find a way to work together to ensure our ability to undo what looks like is coming our way. So I plead with and I urge my colleagues—all my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats—to rise above any political considerations and work together to ensure that this Senate can prevent Iran from getting the bomb. History and future generations and our children and our grandchildren will judge what we do here now, and may that judgment be the right judgment for not just the future of our Nation but for the future of the world.

Madam President, with that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, last week the majority leader announced that he would finally schedule a vote for this week on the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be our next Attorney General. But as of today no date has been set. The Senate majority leader is now threatening to further delay a vote on this highly qualified nominee until after the Senate has concluded its debate on the human trafficking bill.

Now, there is really no good reason for Senate Republicans to continue dragging their feet on scheduling a vote on Ms. Lynch's nomination. I have been here long enough to know we can debate legislation and vote on nominations at the same time, and to say otherwise is a hollow excuse. In fact, last Thursday we voted on four other executive nominations while we were on the human trafficking bill. We are actually going to vote on two more executive nominations this evening while we are on the human trafficking bill.

All Senators who agree on the importance of ending human trafficking also know it is important to confirm Loretta Lynch as our Nation's top law enforcement officer. She has a proven track record of prosecuting human trafficking and child rape crimes. This is not just somebody who just talks about it and says how much they are opposed to human trafficking, as though anybody were in favor of human trafficking.

This not just someone who says she is opposed to child rape cases, as though anybody here were going to say they are in favor of it. She has actually prosecuted them. Over the course of the last decade, the U.S. attorney's office that Ms. Lynch leads has indicted over 55 defendants in sex trafficking cases and rescued over 110 victims of sex trafficking. We stand here on the floor talking about these issues. She actually does it.

So I think she and the American people have waited long enough. President Obama announced the nomination of Ms. Lynch 4 months ago. The Judiciary Committee reported her nomination with bipartisan support 18 days ago. By tomorrow—we talk about whether we move fast or not. By tomorrow, her nomination will have been pending on the Senate floor longer than all of the past five attorneys general combined.

Take a look at this. Here is Loretta Lynch. She has been pending on the floor now for 18 days. This is, of course, with the months she had to wait before that. Now, Attorneys General Holder, Mukasey, Gonzales, Ashcroft, and Reno had to wait a total of 18 days pending after their nominations came out—so five of them, one of her. She has had to wait as long as five of them had to wait.

We also pointed out the amount of time—I look at the amount of time it took—for the four men who preceded her. All four of those men went through so much faster than she has. We happened to have a vote out of committee. Janet Reno took 1 day. John Ashcroft, who I helped get through the committee, although I did not support him, took 2 days. Alberto Gonzales took 8 days; Michael Mukasey, 2 days, and Eric Holder, 5 days.

This delay is an embarrassment to the Senate. Her qualifications are beyond reproach. But the Senate Republican leadership continues to delay a vote on her confirmation despite her impeccable credentials. Now, when she is confirmed, we know that Loretta Lynch will be the first African-American woman to serve our country as Attorney General. But instead of moving forward with this historic nomination, Senate Republicans appear intent on making history for all of the wrong reasons.

As David Hawkings wrote in a Roll Call article dated March 12:

> Lynch is on a course to be confirmed this month after the longest wait ever for a nominee to be attorney general—and very likely by the closest vote ever to put a new person in charge of the Justice Department.

We want to send the signal that we are tough on crime. We want to send the signal that we want to get these traffickers. We want to send a signal that people who commit crimes, whether they are Republicans or Democrats, should go to jail. Yet we refuse to confirm the person who has actually done all of those things. It appears that some want to simply refuse to allow a vote on her nomination, effectively shirking the constitutional duty of the Senate to provide advice and consent.

One Republican Senator even tweeted on the weekend about the need to

block her historic nomination. Then, in case you overlooked why he was doing that, he included a link to a political fundraising Web site. We have always kept law enforcement—the FBI Director, the Attorney General, anybody in law enforcement—out of politics. For a Senator to tweet that we have to block this person, and oh, by the way, here is where you can contribute to a political campaign—that is wrong.

It seems likely the Senate will have to file a cloture motion to vote to overcome the filibuster of her nomination. That is unprecedented; it is unwarranted. No other Attorney General nomination in our history has ever been met with a filibuster. We have never needed to have a cloture vote on an Attorney General nomination. Yet it seems Republican leadership wants to make history for all the wrong reasons.

I mention this to give us an idea. President George Bush in the last 2 years of his term—now a lameduck President—nominated Michael Mukasey for Attorney General.

Michael Mukasey was being sent because the last Attorney General had done a disastrous job—even though he had been voted for by, I think, all Republicans—people will accept the fact now that he politicized the prosecutors' offices and everything else, and finally the Bush administration had to get rid of him.

I had just become chairman again, as Democrats had taken back the Senate. I moved Attorney General Mukasey through even though I did not support him. I felt the President should have a vote on his Attorney General. I moved him through in record time.

She has waited so much more time, multiple times longer than Mukasey.

This is especially troubling and unfair because Ms. Lynch's qualifications for the job are so extraordinary. And her life story is equally extraordinary. Born in Greensboro and raised in Durham, NC, Loretta Lynch is the daughter of a fourth-generation Baptist preacher and a school librarian. They instilled in her the American values of fairness and equality, even when those around them were not living up to those values. Ms. Lynch has spoken about riding on her father's shoulders to their church where students organized peaceful protests against racial segregation. The freedom songs and the church music that went hand-in-hand with those protests undoubtedly made up the soundtrack of her childhood. The Judiciary Committee was honored to have her father, Rev. Lorenzo Lynch, with us not only at both days of her historic hearing in January but also with us when the committee considered his daughter's nomination in February.

When Loretta Lynch was a young child, Reverend Lynch bravely opened his church's basement to the students and others who organized lunch counter sit-ins in North Carolina. He taught his only daughter that ''ideals are wonderful things, but unless you can share them with others and make this world a better place, they're just words.'' The fact that she has dedicated the majority of her career to public service reaffirms that she has lived those ideals of justice in the service of others. And yet, Senate Republicans appear intent on preventing her from continuing her service—service that we should be honored to have.

Two weekends ago, Ms. Lynch traveled to Selma to honor the 50th anniversary of the historic march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, where scores of courageous Americans were beaten and trampled on Bloody Sunday because they refused to be silent about the need for equal protection under the law. It was a weekend when both Democrats and Republicans came together. President Obama stood there with President George W. Bush beside him, who had signed the last Voting Rights Act. They honored the civil rights activists of 50 years ago.

But I also felt it was a time to reaffirm our shared commitment to Americans, as Americans, and the ideals of justice and equality that so many of our predecessors have fought and bled for, from our Founding Fathers to the foot soldiers for justice on that bridge in Selma.

Loretta Lynch embodies these ideals. She has devoted her career to making them a reality. It is time for Republicans and Democrats to come together to confirm this outstanding woman to be the next Attorney General. It is time to stop delaying and making excuses for how she is being treated. It is time to vote.

This is reflecting badly on all law enforcement. I hear from so many in law enforcement saying: Why are you politicizing this nomination? Republicans and Democrats have usually kept law enforcement out of politics. Why is this?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator has expired. Senators are limited to 10 minutes each.

Mr. LEAHY. Are we on the trafficking act?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No, we are in morning business.

Mr. LEAHY. When do we go on the trafficking act?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business has expired.

Mr. LEAHY. I seek recognition.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 178, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 178) to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Pending:

Portman amendment No. 270, to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to enable State child protective services systems to improve the identification and assessment of child victims of sex trafficking.

Portman amendment No. 271, to amend the definition of ''homeless person'' under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to include certain homeless children and youth.

Vitter amendment No. 284 (to amendment No. 271), to amend section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to clarify those classes of individuals born in the United States who are nationals and citizens of the United States at birth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, earlier this month, two Florida men were charged with human trafficking. They drugged a runaway 16-year-old girl. Then they forced her to have sex with up to 10 men a day. They sold her to men in a gas station bathroom. They sold her on the street and they sold her in the back of a car.

She was 16 years old. She had run away from home. She was terribly vulnerable. They promised her food, then they beat her, drugged her, and sold her. When she escaped, they tracked her down, beat her, and sold her again.

All of us—I think we should have an agreement that Democrats and Republicans alike must remember the many other survivors of this heinous crime.

We have been working for almost 1 year on bipartisan proposals to protect these vulnerable children, count the survivors, and then punish those who put them through this hell. This effort had strong bipartisan support until partisan politics was injected into the debate.

The fight against human trafficking should not be made into a partisan issue to score political points. That is unfortunately where we are today. Everyone expected this legislation to move smoothly through the Senate, I know I did, just as it did through the House. Instead, Senate Republicans have turned away from a comprehensive solution that can garner broad support.

I am deeply saddened by this partisan fight. It is both destructive and unnecessary. It is destructive because it threatens to derail important legislation that would make a difference in the lives of survivors—such as the 16-year-old girl in Florida.

This partisan fight is unnecessary because abortion politics have no place in this debate. Congress has a long history of passing legislation to address human trafficking. We have consistently done so without abortion politics being injected into the discussion.

I know we have passed the Violence Against Women Act. We included a trafficking amendment of mine in that. While I was disappointed that a number of my Republicans colleagues voted against the Violence Against Women Act, which had the sex trafficking

amendment in it, we still passed it by a bipartisan majority, as did the House of Representatives, and the President signed it into law.

So I was pleased we were able to get that significant piece of legislation passed, even though many in this body who say why aren't we passing this voted against the Violence Against Women Act with the sexual trafficking amendment.

But I wish to make clear to everyone that this partisan provision that has now popped up is not something that survivors of human trafficking are asking for. It is not something experts in the field who work with them every day are asking for. We should look at these experts who know what is going on and ask them what it is they want. They do not want this.

In fact, those who are closest to the damage wreaked by this terrible crime are asking all of us, Senate Republicans and Democrats, to take out this provision. They are asking us to put politics aside and to focus on the needs of those who have lived through a hell we will never understand.

Holly Austin Smith, a survivor, was a girl who ran away at the age of 14 and was bought and sold for sex. She put it this way when she testified before our committee:

> Politics should not govern the options available to victims of sex trafficking—especially when such victims often have had their basic human rights taken away by criminals who had only their own agendas in mind.

So I think we have to stand with these human trafficking survivors. We have to put aside our agendas. They are asking us to take out this unnecessary provision and move the bill forward to address their urgent needs.

I support the rest of Senator CORNYN's bill, and that is why I included it in the comprehensive substitute amendment I filed last week. Also included in my substitute is a vital component to prevent human trafficking by focusing on runaway and homeless youth.

If we are serious about helping to end this heinous crime, we should be talking about all the good ideas to expand the protections of trafficking victims. Don't try to score partisan points. We should all come together to protect these vulnerable kids. That is why we are here. I am confident that if we remember these children, Republicans and Democrats, we can move forward and return to the bipartisan path we have always walked on this issue.

One of the reasons I have that amendment—talking about preventing is one thing and we should prosecute those people who do this—but wouldn't it be that much better for the victims if we could prevent it from happening in the first place?

I have spoken before of the nightmares I still have from some of the cases I prosecuted when I was 26 years old and the chief prosecutor for one-quarter of my State. I looked at these victims and the ages of my own children, and all I wanted to do was to get—and did—the people who perpetrated these crimes, prosecute them, and convict them.

We should prosecute people who do this, but I also thought how much better it would have been if we had programs that would have given these people somewhere they could turn to before they became victims, some way to protect them so we wouldn't see it afterward.

I said on the floor the other night that in preparing for these trials, the people I prosecuted, I wouldn't bring paperwork home in the evening to do it. I stayed in my office and prepared it. One, I didn't want to take the chance that one of my then-young children might see some of the photographs I was going to introduce into evidence—but I also didn't want them to see their father crying and wonder why, because I always tried to tell them the truth. I was not about to tell these young children the truth of what I was seeing.

Instead, I would tell the truth to the jury and the jury would convict, but even the jury wishes it had never happened in the first place.

The National Network for Youth sent a letter saying:

> The National Network for Youth is writing this letter with the hope that the U.S. Senate will remove the partisan piece of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. This legislation is desperately needed and we cannot let this moment pass us by because of the addition of partisan and divisive provisions.

The National Network for Youth is saying: Let's go back to why both Republicans and Democrats wanted this legislation—to stop trafficking, to help the victims of trafficking, and not to score political points.

Just as the majority of this body voted for the Leahy-Crapo bill, the Violence Against Women Act, which had a provision on sexual trafficking, a majority voted for it, Republicans and Democrats—I wish that others—I wish everybody in this body voted for it.

I understand that some who now strongly support the partisan part of the trafficking bill voted against the Violence Against Women Act. Each Senator has the right to vote as he or she wants.

But I find it strange that they say: Let's go forward with this partisan provision, when only 1 year ago or so those same Senators who are now saying we should go forward with this voted against the Violence Against Women Act. The very same Senators voted against it.

Let's get out of politics. That was a good act. It had a very strong sex trafficking provision, which fortunately also was accepted by the House of Representatives and signed into law by the President. Senator CRAPO and I set aside politics so we could pass that bill. That is what we should do today.

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.

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

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

Mr. SESSIONS. I appreciate the work my colleagues have done on this trafficking bill. It is an important issue that deserves debate and a vote.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Madam President, I will say why I believe the Lynch nomination should not go forward. I think it is for a very important reason and, unfortunately, it is one that I think Congress has to address.

In their wisdom, our Founders gave Congress certain powers as a coequal branch of government, and one of those powers was the power to confirm or not confirm nominees. Long before Ms. Lynch's nomination was announced, I said I could not vote to confirm any candidate for Attorney General who supported the President's unlawful Executive amnesty. That Executive amnesty presents big constitutional issues that we have to talk about and understand, and it relates directly to the powers of the executive branch versus the legislative branch.

The Attorney General is the top law enforcement officer in this country, and anyone who occupies that office, must have fidelity to the laws of the United States duly passed, and to the Constitution of the United States. It is that simple. The Senate cannot confirm any individual, must never confirm an individual to such an office as this—the one most responsible for maintaining fidelity to law—who would support and advance a scheme that violates our Constitution and eviscerates congressional authority. No person should be confirmed who would do that.

Congress makes the laws, not the President, and Congress has repeatedly rejected legislation to provide amnesty, work permits, and benefits to those who have entered our country unlawfully. If you want to receive benefits in the United States, you should wait your turn and come lawfully.

We rejected such proposals in 2006, 2007, 2010, 2013, and 2014. President Obama's unlawful and unconstitutional Executive actions nullify the immigration laws we do have that are on the books—the Immigration and Nationality Act—and replaces them with the very measures Congress refused to enact. That is where we are. Even King George III lacked the power to legislate without Parliament.

President Obama's Executive action provides illegal immigrants—those who come into our country contrary to the immigration laws of the United States, which are generous indeed, allowing a million people a year to come to our country—with work authorization, photo IDs, trillions in Social Security

and Medicare benefits, and tax credits of up to $35,000 a year, according to the Congressional Research Service. I think the IRS Commissioner has admitted that as well.

The President's action has even made chain migration and citizenship a possibility, which he said repeatedly he couldn't do and wouldn't do. Despite those assurances, his action opens up these possibilities as well, it appears. And, again, all of these measures were rejected by Congress.

I discussed these issues with Ms. Lynch. I asked her plainly whether she supported the President's unilateral decision to make his own immigration rules and laws. Here is the relevant portion of that hearing transcript, because I wanted to be clear about it. This was during the Judiciary Committee hearing when she was there as part of her confirmation process.

Mr. Sessions: I have to have a clear answer to this question: Ms. Lynch, do you believe the Executive action announced by President Obama on November 20th is legal and constitutional? Yes or no?

Ms. Lynch: As I've read the [Office of Legal Counsel] opinion, I do believe it is, Senator.

Well, first, we need to understand something. I served 5 years as a Federal prosecutor in the Department of Justice, and this is the way it works. The Office of Legal Counsel is a part of the Department of Justice. The Office of Legal Counsel is the one that has been credited with writing this pathetic memorandum that justified the President's actions. But the Office of Legal Counsel works directly for the Attorney General. The Attorney General is really the one responsible for forwarding to the President a memorandum that says the President can do what he wanted to do.

The President said on over 20 different occasions over a period of years, ''I am not an emperor,'' ''I do not have the power to do this,'' ''this would be unconstitutional.'' He made similar statements over 20 different times. Then he changed his mind as we got close to an election, for reasons that I don't fully intend to speculate about at this time, and then he asked that he be given the power to do this.

This puts great pressure on the Office of Legal Counsel, but that is one of the historic roles they fulfill—to analyze these things. They take an oath to the Constitution, and they are required to say no if the President is asking for something he is not entitled to do. They are supposed to say no, and the Attorney General is supposed to say no.

The Attorney General could review the opinion of the Office of Legal Counsel and take it upon himself or herself to write their own opinion and submit it as the position of the Department of Justice and say the President can do this if he so desires. So that is the way the system works.

But what I want to say, colleagues, is the Attorney General played a key role in this Presidential overreach. It was the Attorney General's office that approved this overreach. And this nominee says she believes this is correct. She indicated her approval, and I am sure will defend it in every court around the country and advocate for it. Some say: Well, she works for the President. No, she works for the people of the United States of America. Her salary comes from the taxpayers of this country. Her duty, on occasion, is to say no to the President; to try to help him accomplish his goals, like a good corporate lawyer would, but at some point you have to say: Mr. Corporate CEO, Mr. President of the United States, this goes too far. You can't do this. But Ms. Lynch has indicated she is unwilling to do that.

One of the most stunning features of the President's actions is the mass grant of work permits for up to 5 million illegal immigrants. These immigrants will take jobs directly from American citizens and directly from legal immigrants who have come into the country. U.S. Civil Rights Commission member Peter Kirsanow has discussed this issue and written at length about how allowing illegal immigrants to take jobs undermines the rights of U.S. workers—the legal rights of U.S. workers—especially African-American workers and Hispanic workers suffering from high unemployment today.

At her confirmation hearing, I, therefore, asked Ms. Lynch about what she might do to protect the lawful rights of U.S. workers. Here is the simple question I placed to the person who would be the next top law enforcement officer for America. And in my preamble to the question, I noted Attorney General Holder had said that people who came to our country unlawfully and who are in our country unlawfully today have a civil right and a human right to citizenship in America, contrary to all law. So I asked her what she thought about this.

Mr. Sessions: Who has more right to a job in this country; a lawful immigrant who's here or [a] citizen or a person who entered the country unlawfully?

Ms. Lynch: I believe that the right and the obligation to work is one that's shared by everyone in this country regardless of how they came here. And certainly, if someone is here regardless of status, I would prefer they would be participating in the workplace than not participating in the workplace.

What a stunning and breathtaking statement that is for the top law enforcement officer in America—to say that a person has a right to work in this country regardless of how they came here. So people who enter don't have to follow the steps that are required? They do not have to establish that they have lawful justification to enter the United States and work in the United States anymore? If you can just get into the country unlawfully, then you have a right to work? And our current Attorney General Holder says they have a civil right to citizenship.

This is not law. I don't know what this is, but it is so far from law I don't know how to express my concern about it effectively. It is unprecedented for someone who is seeking the highest law enforcement office in America to declare that someone who is in this country illegally has a right to a job. Make no mistake, we are at a dangerous time in our Nation's history, particularly for our Republic's legal system and our Constitution.

I would like to quote now from Prof. Jonathan Turley, a Shapiro Professor of Public Interest Law at George Washington University Law School, a nationally recognized constitutional scholar, and a self-described supporter of President Obama and most of his policies. He has been called as an expert witness on various issues by Senator LEAHY and other Democrats over the years. He described the current state of affairs as ''a constitutional tipping point.'' He is referring to the Presidential overreach. I would like to take a moment to read from the testimony he delivered before the House of Representatives in February of last year—9 months before the President even announced this amnesty, but after the first DACA amnesty. This is what he said:

The current passivity of Congress represents a crisis of faith for members willing to see a president assume legislative powers in exchange for insular policy gains. The short-term insular victories achieved by this President will come at a prohibitive cost if the current imbalance is not corrected. Constitutional authority is easy to lose in the transient shifts of politics. It is far more difficult to regain. If a passion for the Constitution does not motivate members, perhaps a sense of self-preservation will be enough to unify members. President Obama will not be our last president. However, these acquired powers will be passed to his successors. When that occurs, members may loathe the day that they remained silent as the power of government shifted so radically to the Chief Executive. The powerful personality that engendered this loyalty will be gone, but the powers will remain. We are now at the constitutional tipping point for our system. If balance is to be reestablished, it must begin before this President leaves office and that will likely require every possible means to reassert legislative authority.

Now that is Professor Turley, a supporter of President Obama, and a fine constitutional scholar, who is warning the U.S. Congress of the dangers to its powers that have been eroded in the recent months. To stop it, he says that will require Congress to use ''every possible means to reassert its legislative authority.''

So stopping an Attorney General nominee—not voting to confirm an individual as Attorney General—is that a legitimate power of Congress? Well, of course it is. Should we feel obligated and required to confirm someone who has announced they intend to pursue and advance legally through the powers of their office an unconstitutional overreach, because the President nominates that person? Is that our duty? Doesn't Congress have a right to say: Oh no, Mr. President, we understand how this system works. You get to nominate, but you have overreached

here and we are not going to ratify. We are not going to consent or approve someone who is going to continue to promote these kinds of unlawful activities.

One glaring result of Congress's passivity is that executive branch nominees no longer feel the need to be responsive to congressional oversight. We are not getting sufficient answers from them. That is for sure. I think Congress has too often been quiet and slept on its watch.

In the past, Members could perform their constitutional duty of advice and consent, for example, by withholding consent until a nominee provided information to which Congress was entitled. That is how coequal branches of government are supposed to function. Congress has a duty to demand accurate information from the executive branch before providing funds to that branch, and they have a right to insist on it. They don't have to fund any branch of government they believe is unworthy.

When Ms. Lynch came before the committee, it quickly became apparent that she had no intention of being frank and providing real answers. That is a problem I think we have to confront.

I think the most telling example of this concern was illustrated by an answer I was given to a straightforward question I asked, which goes to the very core of this debate that we are having in America about the President's powers and what we should do about establishing a lawful system of immigration—one that we could be proud of, one that is systemically and fairly applied day after day.

The question I asked her was simply this:

> Do you believe that President Obama has exceeded his executive authority in any way? If so, how?

She answered:

> As United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, I have not been charged with determining when and whether the President has exceeded his executive authority.

But that was really not a good-faith answer or an attempt to answer the question.

I will wrap up and just say, in conclusion, that we are dealing with huge constitutional issues. I wish it weren't so. It is not anything personal that causes me to complain about this nominee. But in truth, we need to use the means this Congress has to defend its legitimate constitutional rights, the power it has been given to legislate. And the President's duties, as the chief law and executive officer of the country, are to execute the laws passed by Congress. One of the key players on his team is the Attorney General, and the Attorney General in this situation has taken a position contrary to the fundamental principles of the Constitution, as Professor Turley has delineated with force and clarity.

That being the case, I think Congress has a duty to this institution, to the laws and Constitution of this country, and to the American people not to confirm someone who is not committed to those principles and, indeed, has asserted boldly that she would continue in violation of them.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

DEATH MASTER FILE

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I am going to defer to my colleague from Connecticut, since at 5 p.m. we will be discussing the nominees which I will speak to. But before we do, I just want to point out two things to the Senate.

First of all, the lead story of ''60 Minutes'' last night was about the death master file which is put out by Social Security.

Interestingly, the story was from the extraordinary standpoint that a number of people are told they are dead when in fact they are very much alive and all of the horror they go through in trying to correct somebody's having made a mistake—a clerical error—that in fact they were dead by the alteration of one number or a name or just sheer overlook.

But there is another problem with the death master file, and we have tried and tried to get that from Social Security. Unless you have an immediate use—a legitimate use for the death master file to be made public, such as a life insurance company—they would have a legitimate use to know who had died so they could stop the payments. Something else the ''60 Minutes'' program pointed out was that Medicare did not catch a lot of payments going out. But unless you have a legitimate use, by suddenly putting on line the death master file, it opens up all of these Social Security numbers for criminals to come in and create a new identity, file a tax return, and get a refund on a fictitious tax return.

I want to continue to encourage the Social Security Administration. They claim they don't have the legal authority until we can give them the legal authority they are looking for. We think they have it administratively in their power not to put it out there. That is the right thing to do.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN

As I yield to the very distinguished Senator from Connecticut, a tremendous member of our commerce committee, I want to say I was sad last week—and am still sad this week—that nearly half of the Senators of the Senate sought to inject themselves by writing to the Ayatollah, trying to derail the negotiations that are ongoing on matters of life and death. If they don't think Iran having a nuclear weapon is a matter of life and death, they have another thing coming. Trying to derail the negotiations, while in fact the negotiations are going on at the very hour of the writing of that letter, and still are—and we won't know until the 24th of this month if in fact they are successful.

I will come back when we get into the executive session about the nominees. I look forward to hearing from the Senator from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I am proud to follow the distinguished Senator from Florida, and I join him in his observations of the ''60 Minutes'' show, but equally, if not more importantly, in his views on the letter that was sent to the rulers of Iran and its divisive and destructive impact on a matter that should be above partisan politics. To inject a partisan political issue into, literally, a matter of life and death, in my view, is unfortunate, inappropriate, and truly regrettable.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Equally unfortunate, regrettable, and inappropriate is to inject politics into law enforcement. The nomination of the chief law enforcement officer in our Nation, the Attorney General—that position truly ought to be above politics. In fact, as we know from the structure of our government, it is generally regarded to be above politics.

The President of the United States has his or her legal counsel to provide advice to the President, but the Attorney General of the United States enforces laws for this Nation—not for one party, not for one official, not on one issue, but on all issues for all people in the United States.

When my colleagues have said on the floor that the President deserves his nominee, really it is the Nation that deserves a nominee to be confirmed.

This nominee has been delayed longer than any in recent history. As my colleagues have observed and as this chart illustrates, 129 days have passed since Loretta Lynch's nomination. From announcement to confirmation, her nomination has been delayed longer than any in recent history—in fact, longer than any in modern history, putting aside the Meese nomination, which was delayed because of an ongoing investigation into alleged improprieties.

There is no investigation here. There is no question of impropriety. There has been no hint of any reason to reject the Loretta Lynch nomination.

The American people could be forgiven for thinking that some of the Members of this body are simply looking for an excuse to delay or deny her nomination.

First, it was in our hearing questions about her capacity and qualifications. Those reasons or potential excuses for delaying or denying her nomination were quickly extinguished. Then it was the immigration issue. That too, as an excuse for delaying or denying this nomination, has been dispensed. Now it is the antitrafficking bill.

No reason for delay could be more inappropriate, because the fact of the matter is the threat to delay again her nomination is antithetical to the very goal of stopping human trafficking. If my colleagues really want to end sex exploitation and human trafficking,

they should confirm the chief law enforcement official who is responsible for fighting it. They should confirm the nominee who has indicated an anathema to this kind of abuse, who has shown her determination to fight it and to use all of the laws and potentially this new law in the war against human trafficking.

The Senate is perfectly capable of filling this crucial position—the top law enforcement job in the Nation—even as it debates antitrafficking legislation. In fact, it has shown itself capable of doing so just last week when two nominees to Department of Transportation positions—important transportation positions, as I can say personally, because they involve the safety and reliability of our system—even as it continued to debate the antitrafficking legislation.

Holding the Lynch nomination hostage—which is what is happening here—is a disservice to the Department of Justice but even more so to our system of justice. It undermines the integrity and trust in the nonpolitical nature of justice in this Nation. It does so at a time when vigorous and effective leadership is more important and necessary than ever.

The Nation could be forgiven for assuming, as increasingly appears to be so, that the Lynch nomination is being held hostage or is simply a cynical excuse to prevent her from getting to work on protecting the American public from human trafficking, which is so important.

There are legitimate points of debate between our sides on this issue. Those points of debate and differences need to be resolved, and I hope they will be. I trust they will be. I believe that they are resolvable and that extraneous or irrelevant provisions now in the bill can be removed so that we can focus on stopping modern-day slavery, which is what the—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. If I may have another minute to finish.

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

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Which is what we should be doing here, and I believe we will do it.

Loretta Lynch has a stellar record. She served with incredible distinction during her time as U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York. I suggest to my colleagues that the best way to serve the purpose of stopping trafficking is to confirm her so she can get to work on enforcing that new law.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, we have had competing claims about who is really at fault. I think the answer to that question is becoming unquestionably undeniable to any fair observer. Actions speak louder than words and there is no denying the actions of the minority party, which, before this Congress, was the majority party in the Senate for 8 years.

Even in the minority, they are up to their old tricks of blocking amendments and grinding the Senate to a halt. Given the distortion of the Senate rules during those 8 years, it is no wonder the American public, and perhaps even some Senators, are confused about how the Senate rules are supposed to work. So I wish to take a few moments to talk about a procedure in the Senate called the cloture motion.

With cloture, the Senate is actually voting on the question: Is it the sense of the Senate that the debate shall be brought to a close? The proper use of cloture is when the Senate has had time for debate and consideration of amendments and it seems as though the Senate is getting bogged down. If a cloture vote fails, then that means the Senate has decided, as a body, to keep on considering a particular piece of legislation. This is a crucial point and one that was routinely distorted under the previous majority, and they did it for partisan ends.

A vote against cloture is a vote to continue considering a bill until at least 60 Senators are satisfied they have had their say and are ready to vote a bill up or down, yea or nay. It is not always clear when the Senate has reached that point, so the bill can sometimes require several cloture votes.

Under the previous majority leadership—and now that group happens to be the Senate minority—we saw unprecedented abuses of Senate rules to block Senators from participating in the deliberative process. This included the repeated abuse of the cloture rule. In order to shield his Members from having to take tough votes, the previous majority leader routinely moved to shut down all consideration of a bill even before any debate took place and even before any amendments could be considered.

As I stated, cloture is supposed to be used after the Senate has considered a measure for a period of time and a preponderance of the Senate thinks it has deliberated enough, and not do it to end consideration of a bill before it has begun, as the previous majority leadership did for several years prior to this year.

Let's contrast how our majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, has been running the Senate. He has not tried to block minority amendments, as was done to us when we were in the minority. In fact, we have already had more than twice as many amendment votes as all of last year.

As the manager of this bill, I have been running an open amendment process, and I am not afraid to have votes on amendments of all kinds. In fact, if you are fortunate enough to be elected to represent your State as a U.S. Senator, it seems to me you have an obligation to the people of your State to offer amendments on issues that are important to your State. The American people saw that we were serious about restoring the Senate tradition of having an open amendment process with the very first major bill we took up in this new Congress.

Supporters of the Keystone Pipeline bill had the 60 votes to end debate, but we didn't try to ram through the bill without consideration of amendments. We had a full, open amendment process as we are supposed to have in the U.S. Senate, because it is a deliberative and amending body. There were more than a few ''gotcha'' types of amendments from the other side, but that is OK because that is how the Senate is supposed to operate. There was also an opportunity, for the first time in a very long time, for Senators to get votes on substantive issues that are important to the people of their individual States. That should be a big deal for every Senator, but it was not a very big deal the way the Senate was run previous to this year. When Senators are blocked from participating in the legislative process, the people they represent are disenfranchised. We were not elected to serve our party leadership, but to represent our State, and that is why it was so disappointing under the previous majority to see Senators repeatedly voting in lockstep with their party leadership to block amendments and end debate before it started. I think it is pretty clear from the last election that that strategy backfired in a very major way. Yet the same leaders, now in the minority, are up to their old tricks.

The previous Senate leadership routinely used a tactic called filling the tree, where a former majority leader used his right of first recognition to call up his amendments and thus block out amendments from other Senators of both political parties.

When the Senate is considering a number of amendments at once, it then requires unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up a new amendment, and that is a way to prevent other Senators from then offering their amendments. If you don't get unanimous consent to take down an amendment to make room for your amendment, you don't get the chance to offer your amendment, and usually that was blocked, and that is why there were only 18 rollcall votes on amendments all last year, compared to this year. The last time I counted, so far this year we had 43 votes.

Elections are supposed to have consequences, and the consequences of the last election are that the new majority decided the Senate ought to operate as a deliberative and amending body where every Senator can participate, so Majority Leader MCCONNELL has not filled the amendment tree.

We have substantive amendments pending as we speak. Nevertheless, the minority leadership has been objecting to even setting aside the pending amendment or proceeding to a vote on pending amendments just as when they used the procedure of filling the amendment tree.

After reporting the human trafficking bill out of the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously, they have decided there is one provision they don't

like, so after 3 days of consideration last week the bill has not moved forward. It looks as though the same trick is going on right now. Since there is an open amendment process—and that is the way Senator MCCONNELL runs the Senate—we have naturally suggested that they offer an amendment if they don't like something in this bill. They have refused to do so, and instead are holding up the entire bill from being amended and finally passed.

So after opening the bill up to amendments and having considered the bill for a week, the majority leader has now filed cloture. I want to be clear what this means. Again, a vote against cloture is a vote to continue debate and consider amendments. I have voted against ending debate many times in recent years out of principle when Senators were being denied their right to offer amendments. No one can say this is the case right now on this human trafficking bill. We have had a week of debate, and it is the minority party that is blocking amendments.

Remember that many Members of the now minority party, when they were in the majority, were adamant that a vote against cloture is a filibuster and that it is illegitimate to filibuster. I say to my colleagues, if they truly believe filibusters are wrong and it was not just cynical political posturing, then you had better vote for cloture tomorrow.

I will also note that a couple of Senators sent out a ''Dear Colleague'' letter at the beginning of this Congress calling again for what they term the ''talking filibuster.'' By this, those Senators mean that if you vote against ending debate, you should be prepared to talk nonstop on the Senate floor. Under their proposal, as soon as there are no Senators talking on the Senate floor, the Senate would move to a final vote. The problem with this idea under the previous leadership was that amendments were routinely blocked so it meant Senators would have to talk nonstop to preserve their right to offer an amendment with no guarantee they would ever get the chance. That is not the issue this time.

We have allowed an open amendment process, and it is the minority party that is blocking amendments. So I would say to all the advocates of the so-called talking filibuster, if you do vote against cloture, you are saying you want to debate this bill more before a vote is taken. In that case, you better put your money where your mouth is.

To all of my colleagues who support this so-called filibuster and vote against this cloture motion, I expect to see you come down to the Senate floor and talk nonstop. You can use the time to explain to the American people why you object to moving forward with this very important bipartisan legislation to combat sex trafficking. Then when you are ready to move forward with the vote, let us know.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CARLOS A. MONJE, JR., TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

NOMINATION OF MANSON K. BROWN TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Carlos A. Monje, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation; and Manson K. Brown, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COATS). Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I would like to speak on the confirmation of both nominees, but first of all, I want to render a courtesy to the Senator from Connecticut—if he needs to complete his statement, I will yield to him and he can ask it in the form of a question.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. I want to express my appreciation to the Senator from Florida, whose model I am seeking to follow not only in expertise but also in graciousness and generosity.

It appears to me that we are in the midst of yet again considering nominations, so I would ask the Senator from Florida whether in his view his speaking now and our voting now on these nominations will detract in any way from the Senate's consideration of the trafficking bill and whether our voting on Loretta Lynch would in any way detract from our consideration of the trafficking bill.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, my response to the Senator is that, just as with the two nominees we will favorably consider today, which have been bipartisan, with the great support of Senator THUNE, the chairman of the Commerce Committee—those are not going to interfere with the trafficking bill. So, too, the President's choice—which came overwhelmingly out of the Committee on the Judiciary—for Attorney General likewise would not in any way hinder the trafficking bill if, in fact, we could get up the nominee, because the votes would obviously be there. So my answer to the Senator is that clearly it would not hinder the trafficking bill.

Mr. President, I rise in support of the confirmation of two public servants into leadership roles at NOAA—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—and the Department of Transportation. One is Admiral Manson Brown. Admiral Brown has served our country with distinction for over 30 years, most recently as an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard. What made him successful in the Coast Guard is going to be put to great use as Assistant Secretary for Environmental Observation and Prediction at NOAA. Hurricane season is right around the corner. His position is going to provide crucial guidance and accountability if that big storm starts swirling in a counterclockwise fashion headed to the mainland. So I, this Senator from Florida, am particularly appreciative of Senator THUNE for helping expedite this confirmation.

This role will also oversee continued efforts to modernize NOAA. Now we are frequently launching up-to-date best technology weather satellites. NASA builds them, NASA launches them, and NOAA operates them. They are critical in giving us the refined capability to determine the ferociousness of a storm and its track.

As a highly regarded officer, Admiral Brown has honed significant expertise in his leadership in the Coast Guard maritime stewardship, safety, and national security. He is an engineer.

In our Senate Commerce Committee, we hold Admiral Brown in such high regard that we have reported his nomination favorably twice—once last Congress and again during our very first markup—and it was unanimous.

The second nominee is Mr. Carlos Monje, an Assistant Secretary for Policy. He will play a major, important role in shaping national transportation policy and priorities.

The Department of Transportation, for example, plays a critical role in helping ensure safety in the airspace as well as protecting consumers.

Last Friday, since I did not go back to my State, I went with the FAA Administrator to the Next Generation air traffic control modernization to see progress that is being made in the FAA research and development center at the Atlantic City Airport. NextGen capitalizes on existing technologies, such as the GPS capability provided by the Department of Defense satellite network, and what it will do is make our air traffic control system safer and more efficient.

How that works is right now we have a series of radars, and if it is an up-to-date radar, it will go around every 20 seconds. So you know where the airplane was, but you don't know where it is for the next 20 seconds—until the radar comes back around. If it is where it should be, it is in the path that was filed by the crew.

The next generation of air traffic control will track that aircraft from satellites, so there will be a continuous feed of data from the aircraft to the satellites, back to the controllers on the ground. Because of that, they can space aircraft closer, and they can give them a direct route into the airport instead of a lot of the circular patterns they have because of the delay in the continuous tracking. As a result, they

can save a lot of money for the airlines because they can be more fuel efficient, instead of the present step system—if you own an airliner and you are going into an airport, you are going to go through a series of steps. Air traffic control is going to tell you to descend to such-and-such at such-and-such heading, and you are going to go there. All of this continuous conversation is going on and having to be acknowledged by the cockpit crew until they tell you to descend to the next step down.

What the new Next Generation system will do is it will eliminate that step system because there will be a continuous feed. It will eliminate a lot of the human conversation, some of which gets misunderstood, because all of that continuous communication will be between the air traffic controller and the aircraft via communication of satellite. As a result, they will be able to give an aircraft a direct route—not through steps, not all that conversation—of descent into the airport, saving a lot of potential mistakes in human communication as well as saving a lot of fuel instead of having to power up and power down as the aircraft goes through each of those steps.

Implementing the Next Generation air traffic control modernization is going to be just one of the many transportation policy challenges that we will face and that we are developing and that we have already implemented on a trial basis in a couple of airports and in some airplanes.

The Department of Transportation also plays a critical role in ensuring vehicle safety through its National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. And, of course, you have been reading the stories there—brakes that don't work, ignition switches that accidentally turn off when jostled by key chains, and now deadly airbag failures that cause the steering wheel containing an airbag to be a lethal weapon because it is faulty and it shreds metal in the explosion. We have had five deaths in this country alone that have already been reported.

So these nominees are assuming extremely important roles in the U.S. Government. I think the way Senator THUNE has handled these nominees as our chairman in the Commerce Committee has been admirable, and I thank him for the bipartisanship he has shown. We commend to the Senate these two nominees who will be voted on at 5:30.

Mr. GRASSLEY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, will the kind Senator from Iowa yield for one request? I neglected to say something earlier.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I will.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Iowa. He is very kind.

Our former colleague, Senator Landrieu, is in the Gallery in order to see the confirmation vote of Carlos Monje, who is from her State of Louisiana.

I thank the Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

(The remarks of Mr. GRASSLEY are printed in today's RECORD during consideration of S. 178.)

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

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I yield back all of our remaining time.

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

All time is yielded back.

VOTE ON MONJE NOMINATION

Under the previous order, the question occurs on the Monje nomination.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Carlos A. Monje, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 71 Ex.]

YEAS—94

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

NOT VOTING—6

Cruz	Graham	Sanders
Flake	Kirk	Vitter

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BROWN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Manson K. Brown, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO DR. MICHAEL COLEGROVE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to recognize a great Kentuckian who has recently received a great honor. Dr. Michael Colegrove, who has been employed with the University of the Cumberlands in various capacities over the last 40 years and is currently the vice president for student services and the director of leadership studies, recently received the Tri-County 2015 Leader of the Year award from the Leadership Tri-County organization in Kentucky.

Leadership Tri-County focuses on civic, business, and community leadership in Laurel, Knox, and Whitley Counties in southeastern Kentucky. A nonprofit organization founded in 1987, it identifies potential, emerging, and current leaders from the three counties and nurtures their continued development.

Dr. Colegrove graduated from Cumberland College, currently known as the University of the Cumberlands, in 1971. In addition to working for the school for 40 years, he spent 30 years in the U.S. Army Reserve and retired with the rank of colonel in 2003. Dr. Colegrove earned a master of arts from Eastern Kentucky University and a doctor of philosophy from Vanderbilt University. He is also a graduate of the U.S. War College.

Dr. Colegrove is the author of six books. His first book, ''Climbing the Pyramid: The How To's of Leadership,'' was published in 2004. It came about because of the need for a textbook for a leadership seminar conducted by the University of the Cumberlands. He has also volunteered with the American Red Cross and the Kiwanis Club.

Dr. Colegrove and his wife Donna live in Williamsburg, KY, and have a daughter Kimberly who resides in Indiana with her husband Matthew and their two sons Jackson and William. I am sure Dr. Colegrove's family members are very proud of him and all that he has accomplished. I know my colleagues join me in congratulating Dr. Michael Colegrove on his receipt of the Tri-County 2015 Leader of the Year award.

An area newspaper, the Times Tribune, published an article about Dr. Colegrove receiving his award. I ask unanimous consent that a portion of said article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Sentinel Echo, Feb. 25, 2015]

U OF C'S COLEGROVE HONORED AT LTC

(By Nita Johnson)

The influence he has made on his colleagues was evident—first with the University of the Cumberlands' marching band's Honor Guard presenting the flags, and then by the two tables of students and co-workers seated at the Corbin Technology Center on Monday evening.

His dedication is the quality that earned University of the Cumberlands' Dr. Michael Colegrove the 2015 Leader of the Year award from the Leadership Tri-County organization during their yearly awards banquet.

Colegrove can be described with many words: author, Sunday School teacher, deacon, military veteran, and long-time employee at the Williamsburg college that focuses on helping students achieve success through faith and discipline.

Hon. Eugene Siler Jr., a Williamsburg native who serves as the Sixth Judicial Circuit Judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals, introduced Colegrove and described him as ''as organized as anybody you'll ever see.''

As a personal friend and member of the Sunday School class that Colegrove teaches, Siler said Colegrove had achieved success through his faith and dedication to family, his job, and his role as a Christian.

''He's a great person,'' Siler said.

Colegrove's record speaks for itself. He earned a bachelor's degree from then-Cumberland College, his master of arts degree from Eastern Kentucky University and his doctor of philosophy from Vanderbilt University. He also graduated from the United States Army War College and served in the Army Reserves for 30 years, retiring with the rank of colonel.

He has been involved with a number of civic organizations ranging from the American Red Cross to serving as lieutenant governor for the Kiwanis Club for the Kentucky-Tennessee Region 6.

But Colegrove's humility has remained intact throughout his many achievements.

''I am a man most blessed,'' he told the crowd. ''I had the opportunity at the University of the Cumberlands to teach faith with discipline with my colleagues and co-workers. I had the opportunity to serve the students, and I have two mentors.''

His mentors were the past two presidents of the Williamsburg institution—Drs. Jim Taylor and Jim Boswell. Both men saw extensive growth of the college over their tenure as president, which Colegrove credited to their vision for the future.

His involvement with Leadership Tri-County, he said, has also taught him lessons—one being a book about leadership and the other being one of life's simplest but sometimes most difficult qualities—the art of listening.

The book, Colegrove said, had five major areas to consider.

''Challenge the process,'' he said, ''then inspire and share the vision. You have to have a vision. Enable others to act, and model the way you want.''

The last aspect of that, he added, was to ''encourage the heart.''

Listening, he said, came not from his years of experience in the military or the collegiate arena, but more so from his own family.

''I don't know if Kimberly (Colegrove's only child) remembers this or not, but she was talking to me and I guess I drifted off in my own thoughts,'' he said. ''She squared me up—which in the Army is when you take someone's face in your hands. She turned my head so I was looking her straight in the eyes and she kept on talking. She showed me that I needed to listen to her.''

Oddly enough, Colegrove's second lesson came from Kimberly's son, William.

''William Joyce made this in a Sunday School class,'' Colegrove explained while he took out a handmade set of ears. ''It's a paper plate cut in two with a piece of pipe cleaner connecting it. The paper plate has two ears drawn on it and I guess the pipe cleaner is to do this.''

Putting the piece across his head, Colegrove demonstrated how the ''listening ears'' worked. Amid the laughter of the crowd, he reminded everyone that ''listening is an empowering ability.''

RECOGNIZING THE AVIATION MUSEUM OF KENTUCKY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to recognize and congratulate the Aviation Museum of Kentucky, the official aviation museum of the Commonwealth, on the occasion of its 20th anniversary. The museum, located at 4316 Hangar Drive at the Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, KY, first opened its doors on April 15, 1995.

The Aviation Museum of Kentucky has welcomed guests from all 50 States and from over 80 foreign countries. It serves as an educational and cultural resource for my State and for the Nation, focusing on aviation history and the important roles many Kentuckians have played in it.

The museum's exhibits attract approximately 10,000 students each year to learn about the science of flight. Through the study of aviation, students learn about math, physics, geography, and more. They also learn about the history of aviation.

The museum educates young people about potential careers in aviation and the importance of the aviation industry, which supports thousands of jobs in Kentucky. Pilots, mechanics, engineers, flight controllers, meteorologists, and more are all spotlighted.

The Aviation Museum of Kentucky holds summer camps to give 10- to 15-year-old Kentuckians a hands-on introduction to flight. To date, they have engaged with over 5,000 youth to help them explore aviation, aerospace, and the possibility of productive and fulfilling careers in the field. Students learn from professional educators and go aloft with licensed instructors. And thanks to the museum's scholarship program, nearly one-third of all campers attend at no charge.

In 1996, the Aviation Museum established the Kentucky Aviation Hall of Fame to recognize famous Kentuckians in aviation. To date, 45 Kentuckians have been honored. The Hall of Fame pays homage to Kentuckians like Matthew Sellers of Carter County, who gave us retractable landing gear; Solomon Van Meter of Lexington, who gave us the lifesaving pack parachute; and Noel Parrish of Versailles, who flew with the legendary Tuskegee Airmen.

The museum also hosts historic aviation events, giving the public the chance to see in person restored and vintage aircraft. Thousands each year come to view them. And the museum hosts quarterly lectures with speakers from around the world who come to share their stories.

The Aviation Museum of Kentucky was founded by the Kentucky Aviation Roundtable, a group of aviation enthusiasts that was first organized in 1978 in Lexington. The group worked for nearly two decades to see the dream of an aviation museum become reality, and now the Aviation Museum of Kentucky is a great asset to the State, to the industry, and to the Nation.

So I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Aviation Museum of Kentucky and the many fine Kentuckians who run and support it. I am proud of all they have achieved in 20 years, and I look forward to many more years of excellence from this unique Kentucky institution. I wish the Aviation Museum of Kentucky many more years of continued success.

REMEMBERING REVEREND WILLIE T. BARROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last week Chicago—and America—lost a civil rights leader and an icon. Rev. Willie T. Barrow passed away at the age of 90. Known as the ''Little Warrior,'' Reverend Barrow stood up to anyone who would deny equality.

In 1936, 10 years before the Montgomery bus boycott, 12-year-old Willie Barrow challenged the segregated Texas school system that refused to bus African-American kids to school. In a recent interview, Reverend Barrow described it this way. One day, Barrow had enough and confronted the bus driver and school officials. ''You got plenty room,'' Barrow said she told the bus driver and school officials. ''Why you want me to get off? Because I'm black? We got to change that.''

She was right. And from that moment, she dedicated her life to fighting

for social justice and standing up for the most vulnerable in our society.

In 1945, she came to Chicago and worked as a youth minister and a field organizer with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. At the height of the civil rights movement, she followed Dr. King to Atlanta, where she organized meetings, rallies and transportation for volunteers who came to participate in the marches and sit-ins. She also helped organize the 1963 march on Washington.

Reverend Barrow didn't just fight for racial equality, she fought for women's rights, labor rights and gay rights too. While she helped Rev. Jesse Jackson start Operation Breadbasket on the South Side of Chicago, she was fighting sexism within the civil rights movement. During meetings, some even asked Reverend Jackson why he brought his secretary.

But as Operation Breadbasket evolved into the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, Reverend Barrow became the first woman to lead the organization. As the chairman of the board and CEO, Reverend Barrow brought women together from the Chicago Network—an organization comprised of Chicago's most distinguished professional women—to talk about their leadership roles and the underrepresentation of women on corporate boards.

Around Chicago, she was known as ''godmother'' for the work she did with many young community activists—including Barack Obama. She took on causes ranging from AIDS awareness to traveling on missions of peace to Vietnam, Russia, Nicaragua, Cuba and South Africa when Nelson Mandela was released from prison.

Last Sunday, 70,000 people gathered in Selma, AL, to remember and celebrate the civil rights leaders who marched 50 years ago. Sadly, Reverend Barrow couldn't be there. But 50 years ago, Reverend Barrow was on the front lines, marching alongside Dr. King and future Congressman JOHN LEWIS.

Years ago, I made the trip to Selma and stood on the Edmund Pettus Bridge where Reverend Barrow marched and JOHN LEWIS was beaten unconscious and nearly killed by Alabama State troopers. It was profoundly moving to see the places where leaders like these risked their lives to redeem the promises of America for all of us. And it's because of civil rights leaders like Reverend Barrow that our Nation has made progress in the pursuit of social justice. But we know that bridges run both ways. We can move ahead, or we can turn back. Without the courage, the leadership, and the determination of Rev. Willie T. Barrow, the fight to move forward just got a little harder.

ASSAULT ON PRESS FREEDOM IN TURKEY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have spoken many times on the Senate floor in defense of press freedom because it is a fundamental cornerstone of a democratic society. Today I want to briefly draw the Senate's attention to the situation in Turkey, one of the many countries in the world where this basic right is under threat by officials in the government who seek to silence their critics.

Recently, in the latest assault on press freedom, Turkish police arrested and detained nearly two dozen members of the news media, including Ekrem Dumanli and Hidayet Karaca, two prominent journalists who are well known to be affiliated with Fethullah Gulen, a vocal critic of President Erdogan. The sweeping charges levied against them were not only intended to stop their criticism, but to intimidate anyone who is critical of the Turkish Government. While Mr. Dumanli has since been released, Mr. Karaca remains in prison.

This case reflects a broader pattern of repression in Turkey, where targeted reprisals against outspoken critics have become a common practice for that government. In fact, Reporters Without Borders ranked Turkey 154 out of 180 nations for press freedom in its 2014 World Press Freedom Index, and Turkey has consistently been among the top jailers of journalists, along with China and Iran. This latest censorship continues the abuse of the Turkish penal code and further erodes what remains of press freedom in Turkey.

Not only are these actions inconsistent with the norms and values expected of Turkey, a NATO ally; they violate Turkey's own commitments under international law, foment further dissent, and serve to affirm the allegations being made against the Erdogan administration. I am disappointed with the backsliding from democracy that we have seen in Turkey, and I am concerned that it will weaken our important strategic partnership in the region. I join the many government officials, advocates, journalists and others who have called for a prompt resolution of these cases, and an end to the Turkish Government's jailing of people for exercising their right to free expression. The international community and people of good will everywhere expect better from the government of that great nation. The people of Turkey deserve better.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, next week I will join many Vermonters to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Burlington Police Department, which was established in early 1865 with the appointment of the city's first constable, Luman A. Drew. For the sake of historical perspective: Mr. Drew was chosen for this high post after his service in the pursuit and capture of a group of Confederate cavalrymen who had raided nearby St. Albans, robbing its banks and burning its buildings before fleeing toward Canada.

For many months now, Burlington Detective Jeffrey Beerworth has been compiling that bit of history and other stories in his research of the department's history, and his vignettes are both entertaining and informative. They are particularly interesting to me, as I reflect on my work as a prosecutor with law enforcement agencies in Burlington and other communities as State's attorney for Chittenden County earlier in my career. Most importantly, they show us how the role of law enforcement officers has evolved over the years. I imagine that First Constable Drew could not have foreseen police wearing body cameras in 2015, nor would he recognize the challenges that heroin and other drugs pose to our society. Back in his day, First Constable Drew's main concerns were horse theft and public drunkenness.

A visit to the Burlington Police Department website today offers a glimpse of the many investigative units, programs and community outreach services that fall under today's rubric of police work. I am proud of the efforts of Police Chief Michael Schirling and his team in connecting one-on-one with the residents of Burlington. Community policing is alive and well in Vermont's largest city, and other departments around the country could learn much from what Burlington has done. The Junior Community Police Academy creates relationships among police officers and the city's youths, who someday may become officers themselves. In partnering with the Howard Center, officers work with the Street Outreach Team to support those with psychiatric and substance abuse issues, or those who cope with homelessness or other behavioral challenges. These cases traditionally account for a large percentage of police calls, yet this innovative program allows for trained professionals to address social service needs and allow police officers to focus on public safety.

The Daily Activity Log of the Burlington Police Department offers a glimpse of the range and volume of calls to which today's officers must respond. In a recent 2-day period, 223 records were logged, ranging from the minor to the tragic. Of course, there are many that are recorded simply as ''traffic stops,'' but we know that every traffic stop has the potential for the unknown. That is why I have worked hard over many years to support these officers by providing Federal funds for bulletproof vests. Officers need this protection and deserve nothing less.

Chief Schirling has laid out a series of upcoming events to mark the department's 150 years of service. These will include a community barbecue and open house, along with his monthly ''Coffees with the Chief.'' This is all in keeping with his vision of community policing, and this celebration will be shared by all who benefit from the work of a highly professional and dedicated police force.

On this historic occasion, I thank Chief Schirling and the entire Burlington Police Department for their continued service and dedication, upholding a long and valued tradition. The Queen City is most fortunate for their service.

LICKING COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CENTENNIAL

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the Licking County Chamber of Commerce as it celebrates its 100th anniversary of service to the residents of Licking County and to the State of Ohio. The chamber supports around 1,000 businesses of all sizes throughout the county and strives to enhance the quality of life in the region.

The chamber was initially created ''to advance the economic well-being of the area and its citizens'' and it continues to do so today. The organization focuses on growth opportunities and advocacy for its members so that businesses may have a positive impact on the community. The chamber has helped Licking County build a vibrant workforce, pro business attitude, robust infrastructure, and great industrial parks like the Central Ohio Aerospace and Technology Center campus. These efforts have helped the chamber achieve numerous successes, including an accreditation through the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

I have had the opportunity to work directly with the chamber during my time in the Senate, and have seen firsthand its commitment to economic development and serving the business community.

I congratulate the Licking County Chamber of Commerce and all who were involved in making its first 100 years a success.

BRYN DU MANSION 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the Bryn Du Mansion as it celebrates its 150th anniversary. This historic 52-acre property is located in the charming village of Granville, OH. Among its many features, the home has 53 rooms and 12 fireplaces. Henry Wright originally constructed the mansion in 1865 from sandstone quarried from the property.

The Bryn Du Mansion is on the National Registry for Historic Places because of its significant history and importance to the region. The home has had many owners over the years who were entrepreneurs in the community.

The Bryn Du Mansion is now owned by the Village of Granville and is managed by a local commission with a mission of ''historic preservation and to provide program and event facilities for the benefit of the community.'' The mansion houses several community programs and annual events to promote the arts, civic engagement, and athletics for the village of Granville.

I am here today to honor the success and longevity of the Bryn Du Mansion, and I would like to congratulate everyone involved in making its first 150 years a success.

CONGRATULATING ANOMATIC CORPORATION ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Anomatic Corporation as it celebrates its 50th anniversary of supplying anodized aluminum to companies around the world. Anomatic was founded in 1965 by William Rusch when he developed an idea for a continuous motion machine for anodizing aluminum. Today, Scott Rusch and his brother William B. Rusch continue the legacy their father started 50 years ago.

The company is headquartered in New Albany, OH, with manufacturing facilities in Newark, OH and around the world. Anomatic creates products in the fields of automotive, beauty and personal care, consumer electronics, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, and spirits.

Anomatic's in-house capabilities include full package design, high volume anodizing, rapid 3D prototyping, metal stamping, screen printing, double anodizing, laser engraving, and assembly. Anomatic also features the world's largest anodizing capacity, producing more than 1 billion units last year alone.

I have had the opportunity to work on issues important to the growth of Anomatic and its employees and look forward to the company's future expansion in Ohio. I congratulate Anomatic Corporation and everyone involved in making its first 50 years a success.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING PROTECTORS OF ANIMALS

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, it is with great admiration that I wish to recognize the laudable achievements of Protectors of Animals, a wonderful and innovative no-kill rescue and shelter organization based in East Hartford, CT. I am proud to highlight the occasion of their 40th Anniversary, and I wish to convey my deepest congratulations to them on this auspicious occasion.

Protectors of Animals was founded in 1975 by a group of dedicated individuals brought together by their shared love for animals and commitment to animal welfare. Two of these individuals, Dru Harder and Phyllis Pavel, truly started off at the grassroots level, knocking on doors in their community in Portland, CT, in order to raise awareness and funds for their local pound.

Over the years, Protectors of Animals' passion and tireless fight against animal cruelty has led them to great successes and enabled them to save countless abandoned and abused animals from being euthanized. They have also aided more than 14,000 cats and 7,000 dogs in finding caring homes across our State.

The dedicated staff and volunteers at Protectors of Animals not only give animals shelter but help them to heal from past trauma and allow them to recreate caring relationships with humans that are built on trust. It is no surprise that this work has garnered deep and abiding support from animal lovers around Connecticut. This joint effort, backed by genuine values of humaneness and caring, has allowed them to meet the highest standards of accountability, as well as program and cost effectiveness. Protectors of Animals has been recognized by the Independent Charities of America with that organization's ''Best in America'' seal of approval, which is offered to a select few of the highest performing nonprofits in our Nation.

Having personally supported Protectors of Animals over the years, I can attest to the devotion, commitment, and enthusiasm of everyone involved with their organization. I know how hard their founders, board of directors, staff, and volunteers have worked to support these goals. For its legacy of safeguarding animals and combating cruelty, I am proud to congratulate and celebrate Protectors of Animals on its 40th anniversary.•

TRIBUTE TO WAYNE MASON

• Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, It is a great honor for me to pay tribute to a great Georgian and a great friend, Wayne Mason. It is Wayne's 75th birthday, and for a minute I want to share with the Senate the greatest example I know of how much difference one man can make. I would not be where I am today and Gwinnett County—one of America's most dynamic counties—would not be what it is today were it not for the support and leadership of Wayne Mason.

Wayne is generous in giving back to his community and passionate in his love of country. A successful real estate developer, Wayne has said he lives for the deal and will die seeking his final one. Wayne began a life of hard work and deal-making as a boy by plowing his family's gardens with a one-eyed mule, and he honed his marketing skills by selling eggs and Christmas wreaths. A clever young man, Wayne understood what was needed in a budding community and he opened many of the entities needed to develop one—including a bonding company, ceramic tile store, funeral home, liquor store and a bank. Between 1959 and 1972, he built 1,800 homes in the growing community of Snellville, GA, and by that time, he was a millionaire.

Wayne didn't stop building his community credentials there. He became chairman of the Gwinnett County Commission in 1977 and served in that capacity until 1981. Wayne's successful

development and investment projects in Gwinnett County include names and places all metro Atlantans know such as Discover Mills and The Villages at Global Forum. He also served as a member of the Atlanta Regional Commission, which is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for much of the metro Atlanta area.

Another area he conquered in more recent years that is also essential for a thriving community is higher education. It has also become a particular passion and point of pride for Wayne in the form of Georgia Gwinnett College, which he helped to make a reality. In 1994, Gwinnett County was the largest county east of the Mississippi without a 4-year college. So Wayne and a group of leaders in Gwinnett County purchased 160 acres of land in Lawrenceville, GA, and designated it specifically for the development of a college campus. Georgia Gwinnett College opened its doors in 2006 as the first 4-year college founded in Georgia in more than 100 years, and the first 4-year, public college created in the U.S. in the 21st century. In less than 10 years, Georgia Gwinnett College's enrollment is approaching 11,000 students and Wayne still serves on the college foundation's board.

Wayne Mason is the foundation upon which Gwinnett County's success is based. So I want to wish happy birthday to a great Georgian and friend.●

RECOGNIZING ELLEN GOLDEN AND DR. BARBARA WOODLEE

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, I wish to honor two remarkable women, Ellen Golden and Dr. Barbara Woodlee, who are new inductees to the Maine Women's Hall of Fame. Like all members of this prestigious group, Ellen and Barbara have had a tremendous impact on the lives of family and friends in their communities and on women throughout the State of Maine. Indeed, to be considered for the Maine Women's Hall of Fame, nominees' achievements must have had significant statewide impact, must have improved the lives of women in Maine, and must have made contributions with enduring value for women. I am pleased to say that Ellen and Barbara have not only met these criteria, they have far exceeded them.

Ellen Golden, from Woolwich, ME, is the senior vice president and founder of the Women's Business Center at Coastal Enterprises, Inc., CEI. She has played a leading role in supporting women business owners and microenterprise growth through research, policy, and program development. She has also been at the forefront of expanding small business opportunities for minorities and immigrants in Maine. Ellen's efforts through CEI and a number of other boards and civic organizations have provided financial and career possibilities that would otherwise have been unavailable to many Mainers. Ellen's work truly embodies the spirit of American opportunity.

Dr. Barbara Woodlee, from Vassalboro, ME, was the president of Kennebec Valley Community College in Fairfield, ME for nearly 30 years. A trailblazer in her field, she served as the first woman president within the Maine Community College System. Throughout her presidency, Barbara strove to increase educational opportunities for Maine women by developing programs, particularly in the health care field, that met the needs of the many women who used the college to launch their careers. Her efforts to open up opportunities for women to access higher education, and the well-paying jobs that come with it, are commendable. But it is not just women at the college who have benefited from her work; thanks to her, Maine community college students pay the lowest in-state tuition and fees in all of New England. She kept costs low while facing difficult budget challenges—a task with which we here in Congress can sympathize.

Congratulations to both Ellen and Barbara for their induction into the Maine Women's Hall of Fame. With this well-deserved honor, they join the likes of Senator Margaret Chase Smith, who in 1950 courageously stood here, on the Senate floor, to denounce McCarthyism. I thank Ellen and Barbara for all that they have done for Maine women and for our State as a whole. Maine is fortunate to have such tireless advocates promoting education and fighting for economic opportunity.●

CONGRATULATING THE WELLS RESERVE AND LAUDHOLM TRUST

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve and Laudholm Trust on the completion of the final stage of their solar energy project. On March 20, 2015, they will officially finish the project and be 100 percent energy self-sufficient. They are the first nonprofit organization in Maine to reach this milestone.

The solar array project represents only the most recent environmental conservation landmark on the Wells Reserve. In fact, the land on which the Wells Reserve sits has been a key link between the community and the environment for not just decades but centuries. It was settled for farming in 1643 and was the largest saltwater farm in York County at one time, shipping its products to Boston weekly. By 1978, the farm was derelict, but devoted community members decided to join together to revitalize it. Laudholm Trust was soon born from that initiative. Officially established in 1982, the Laudholm Trust has been a vital supporter of stewardship, research, and education efforts surrounding Maine's coastal communities, enabling the success of the Wells Reserve. Due in part to the Trust's efforts, the 2,250 acres of farmland were designated a National Estuarine Research Reserve in 1984.

The solar array project is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished when stakeholders at all levels work together. The $200,000 in funding to purchase the solar panels was made possible by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, NOAA, the Mattina R. Proctor Foundation, the Davis Conservation Foundation, the Town of Wells, Efficiency Maine, and, of course, Wells Reserve and Laudholm members. A Maine company, Revision Energy of Portland, ME, installed the array. Through the hard work of this community, the project was completed a full two years ahead of schedule. For such a significant project to be finished years ahead of schedule proves the dedication of the organizations and individuals involved with completing this venture.

The local initiative and collaboration demonstrated on the Wells Reserve for this project represents the very best of Maine community moxie. On the occasion of the completion of the Wells Reserve and Laudholm Trust solar array, I extend my congratulations to the two leading organizations and all those involved in making the project possible.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–926. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Secretary of Defense, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–927. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Strategic and Critical Materials 2015 Report on Stockpile Requirements''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–928. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11,

2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–929. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Suspension of Community Eligibility'' ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2015–0001)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–930. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to Existing Validated End-User Authorization in the People's Republic of China: Samsung China Semiconductor Co. Ltd.'' (RIN0694–AG50) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–931. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 on March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–932. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, three (3) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of the Treasury, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–933. A communication from the Assistant Chief Counsel for Pipeline, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Pipeline Safety: Miscellaneous Changes to Pipeline Safety Regulations'' (RIN2137–AE59) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–934. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Adjustments to 2015 Annual Catch Limits'' (RIN0648–XD536) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–935. A communication from the Office of Managing Director, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 as amended by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992'' (MB Docket No. 05–311) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–936. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the annual report on the Child Support Program for fiscal year 2012; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–937. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, eight (8) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of the Treasury, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–938. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Office of Refugee Resettlement: Annual Report to Congress, FY 2013''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–939. A communication from the General Counsel, Institute of Museum and Library Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–940. A communication from the Chair, Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report that includes recommendations for improving federally and privately funded Alzheimer's programs; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 739. A bill to modify the treatment of agreements entered into by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish nursing home care, adult day health care, or other extended care services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 740. A bill to improve the coordination and use of geospatial data; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. REID):

S. 741. A bill to authorize the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a program of awarding grants to owners or operators of water systems to increase the resiliency or adaptability of the systems to any ongoing or forecasted changes to the hydrologic conditions of a region of the United States; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mrs. MCCASKILL, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 742. A bill to appropriately limit the authority to award bonuses to employees; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 743. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. COATS, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 744. A bill to rescind certain Federal funds identified by States as unwanted and use the funds to reduce the Federal debt; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 745. A bill to provide debt and tax transparency to taxpayers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. HELLER, Mr. REED, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 746. A bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 747. A bill to prioritize funding for an expanded and sustained national investment in basic science research; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. SASSE (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. LEE, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 748. A bill to prohibit the issuance of social security numbers to individuals given deferred action under the President's immigration executive actions; to the Committee on Finance.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 139

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 139, a bill to permanently allow an exclusion under the Supplemental Security Income program and the Medicaid program for compensation provided to individuals who participate in clinical trials for rare diseases or conditions.

S. 148

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 148, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require State licensure and bid surety bonds for entities submitting bids under the Medicare durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) competitive acquisition program, and for other purposes.

S. 266

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 266, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify safe harbor requirements applicable to automatic contribution arrangements, and for other purposes.

S. 288

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 288, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to reform the National Labor Relations Board, the Office of the General Counsel, and the process for appellate review, and for other purposes.

S. 301

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 301, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the

centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 308

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 308, a bill to reauthorize 21st century community learning centers, and for other purposes.

S. 313

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 313, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to add physical therapists to the list of providers allowed to utilize locum tenens arrangements under Medicare.

S. 316

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 316, a bill to amend the charter school program under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

S. 379

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 379, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers.

S. 402

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 402, a bill to establish a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Master Teacher Corps program.

S. 431

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 477

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 477, a bill to terminate Operation Choke Point.

S. 492

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 492, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to improve environmental literacy to better prepare students for postsecondary education and careers, and for other purposes.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 539, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) 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. 586

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 586, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to foster more effective implementation and coordination of clinical care for people with pre-diabetes, diabetes, and the chronic diseases and conditions that result from diabetes.

S. 605

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 605, a bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to invest in innovation for education.

S. 609

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 609, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and increase the exclusion for benefits provided to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responders.

S. 628

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 628, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the designation of maternity care health professional shortage areas.

S. 637

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 637, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 681

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 681, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 688

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 688, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to adjust the Medicare hospital readmission reduction program to respond to patient disparities, and for other purposes.

S. 698

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 698, a bill to restore States' sovereign rights to enforce State and local sales and use tax laws, and for other purposes.

S. 711

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 711, a bill to amend section 520J of the Public Service Health Act to authorize grants for mental health first aid training programs.

S. 712

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 712, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to exempt certain flights from increased aviation security service fees.

S. 713

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 713, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 716

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 716, a bill to allow seniors to file their Federal income tax on a new Form 1040SR.

S. 729

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 729, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, with respect to certain exceptions to discharge in bankruptcy.

S. 736

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 736, a bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require disclosure to States of the basis of determinations under such Act, to ensure use of information provided by State, tribal, and county governments in decisionmaking under such Act, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 290

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 290 intended to be proposed to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

AMENDMENT NO. 298

At the request of Mr. SESSIONS, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 298 intended to be proposed to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

AMENDMENT NO. 300

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No.

300 intended to be proposed to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. REID):

S. 741. A bill to authorize the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a program of awarding grants to owners or operators of water systems to increase the resiliency or adaptability of the systems to any ongoing or forecasted changes to the hydrologic conditions of a region of the United States; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to introduce the Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act with colleagues the Democratic Leader and the Ranking Member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. The condition of our water infrastructure is in a state of crisis that is only exacerbated by the effects of climate change. The longer we ignore the problem, the more it costs us. The truth is that we are in a crisis that can be averted. There is no need to lose revenue from disrupted business and flooded streets. Our water infrastructure may be buried and out of sight and out of mind; but today we must elevate these systems to the priority level they deserve.

Each year within my home State of Maryland I witness stark reminders of what cities across the nation are facing. In July of last year, Prince George's County, Maryland, experienced a breakdown of its most essential public infrastructure when a water main serving 100,000 people began to fail. Mandatory water restrictions were instituted, limiting access to water for homes and businesses during an intense heat wave that saw the heat index repeatedly reach the triple digits. At the National Harbor, one hotel evacuated three thousand guests and was forced to cancel upcoming reservations. Included in the affected area is Joint Base Andrews, which publicized plans to shut down a long list of services, including appointments at its medical center.

There are incidents like this happening across America. The reports are startling. They confirm what every water utility professional knows: we need massive reinvestment in our water infrastructure now and over the coming decades. The Nation's drinking water infrastructure—especially the underground pipes that deliver safe drinking water to America's homes and businesses—is aging. Like many of the roads, bridges, and other public assets on which the country relies, most of our buried drinking water infrastructure was built 50 or more years ago, in the post-World War II era of rapid demographic change and economic growth. Some of our systems are even older; in Baltimore, where I live, many of the pipes were installed in the 1800s. Some of these ''pipes'' are wooden. We need investment to deal with changing population needs and changing hydrological conditions. We have no other choice but to elevate it to a public safety priority and to take action now.

The Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act aims to help local communities meet the challenges of upgrading water infrastructure systems to meet the hydrological changes we are seeing today. The bill directs the EPA to establish a Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability program. Grants will be awarded to eligible water systems to make the necessary upgrades. Communities across the country will be able to compete for Federal matching funds, which in turn will help finance projects to help communities overcome these threats.

Improving water conservation, adjustments to current infrastructure systems, and funding programs to stabilize communities' existing water supply are all projects WIRS grants will fund. WIRS will never grant more than 50 percent of any project's cost, ensuring cooperation between local communities and the federal government. The EPA will try to award funds that use new and innovative ideas as often as possible.

It is estimated that by 2020, the forecasted deficit for sustaining water delivery and wastewater treatment infrastructure, will trigger a $206 billion increase in costs for businesses. In a worst case scenario, a lack of water infrastructure investment will cause the United States to lose nearly 700,000 jobs by 2020.

A healthy water infrastructure system is as important to America's economy as paved roads and sturdy bridges. Water and wastewater investment has been shown to spur economic growth. The U.S. Conference of Mayors has found that for every dollar invested in water infrastructure, the Gross Domestic Product is increased to more than $6. The Department of Commerce has found that that same dollar yields close to $3 worth of economic output in other industries. Every job created in local water and sewer industries creates close to four jobs elsewhere in the national economy.

We know that a reactive mode causes us to lose billions in revenue in the short-term. Let us instead take a proactive approach, making strategic investments in innovative projects designed to meet the current and future needs of our water systems. That is the purpose of the Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act.

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. 741

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 ''Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) HYDROLOGIC CONDITION.—The term ''hydrologic condition'' means the quality, quantity, or reliability of the water resources of a region of the United States.

(3) OWNER OR OPERATOR OF A WATER SYSTEM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''owner or operator of a water system'' means an entity (including a regional, State, tribal, local, municipal, or private entity) that owns or operates a water system.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term ''owner or operator of a water system'' includes—

(i) a non-Federal entity that has operational responsibilities for a federally, tribally, or State-owned water system; and

(ii) an entity established by an agreement between—

(I) an entity that owns or operates a water system; and

(II) at least 1 other entity.

(4) WATER SYSTEM.—The term ''water system'' means—

(A) a community water system (as defined in section 1401 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. 300f));

(B) a treatment works (as defined in section 212 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1292)), including a municipal separate storm sewer system (as that term is used in that Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.));

(C) a decentralized wastewater treatment system for domestic sewage;

(D) a groundwater storage and replenishment system;

(E) a system for transport and delivery of water for irrigation or conservation; or

(F) a natural or engineered system that manages floodwater.

SEC. 3. WATER INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY.

(a) PROGRAM.—The Administrator shall establish and implement a program, to be known as the ''Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Program'', under which the Administrator shall award grants for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019 to owners or operators of water systems for the purpose of increasing the resiliency or adaptability of the water systems to any ongoing or forecasted changes (based on the best available research and data) to the hydrologic conditions of a region of the United States.

(b) USE OF FUNDS.—As a condition on receipt of a grant under this Act, an owner or operator of a water system shall agree to use the grant funds exclusively to assist in the planning, design, construction, implementation, operation, or maintenance of a program or project that meets the purpose described in subsection (a) by—

(1) conserving water or enhancing water use efficiency, including through the use of water metering and electronic sensing and control systems to measure the effectiveness of a water efficiency program;

(2) modifying or relocating existing water system infrastructure made or projected to be significantly impaired by changing hydrologic conditions;

(3) preserving or improving water quality, including through measures to manage, reduce, treat, or reuse municipal stormwater, wastewater, or drinking water;

(4) investigating, designing, or constructing groundwater remediation, recycled water, or desalination facilities or systems to serve existing communities;

(5) enhancing water management by increasing watershed preservation and protection, such as through the use of natural or engineered green infrastructure in the management, conveyance, or treatment of water, wastewater, or stormwater;

(6) enhancing energy efficiency or the use and generation of renewable energy in the management, conveyance, or treatment of water, wastewater, or stormwater;

(7) supporting the adoption and use of advanced water treatment, water supply management (such as reservoir reoperation and water banking), or water demand management technologies, projects, or processes (such as water reuse and recycling, adaptive conservation pricing, and groundwater banking) that maintain or increase water supply or improve water quality;

(8) modifying or replacing existing systems or constructing new systems for existing communities or land that is being used for agricultural production to improve water supply, reliability, storage, or conveyance in a manner that—

(A) promotes conservation or improves the efficiency of use of available water supplies; and

(B) does not further exacerbate stresses on ecosystems or cause redirected impacts by degrading water quality or increasing net greenhouse gas emissions;

(9) supporting practices and projects, such as improved irrigation systems, water banking and other forms of water transactions, groundwater recharge, stormwater capture, groundwater conjunctive use, and reuse or recycling of drainage water, to improve water quality or promote more efficient water use on land that is being used for agricultural production;

(10) reducing flood damage, risk, and vulnerability by—

(A) restoring floodplains, wetland, and upland integral to flood management, protection, prevention, and response;

(B) modifying levees, floodwalls, and other structures through setbacks, notches, gates, removal, or similar means to facilitate reconnection of rivers to floodplains, reduce flood stage height, and reduce damage to properties and populations;

(C) providing for acquisition and easement of flood-prone land and properties in order to reduce damage to property and risk to populations; or

(D) promoting land use planning that prevents future floodplain development;

(11) conducting and completing studies or assessments to project how changing hydrologic conditions may impact the future operations and sustainability of water systems; or

(12) developing and implementing measures to increase the resilience of water systems and regional and hydrological basins, including the Colorado River Basin, to rapid hydrologic change or a natural disaster (such as tsunami, earthquake, flood, or volcanic eruption).

(c) APPLICATION.—To seek a grant under this Act, the owner or operator of a water system shall submit to the Administrator an application that—

(1) includes a proposal for the program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement to be planned, designed, constructed, implemented, or maintained by the water system;

(2) provides the best available research or data that demonstrate—

(A) the risk to the water resources or infrastructure of the water system as a result of ongoing or forecasted changes to the hydrologic system of a region, including rising sea levels and changes in precipitation patterns; and

(B) the manner in which the proposed program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement would perform under the anticipated hydrologic conditions;

(3) describes the manner in which the proposed program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement is expected—

(A) to enhance the resiliency of the water system, including source water protection for community water systems, to the anticipated hydrologic conditions; or

(B) to increase efficiency in the use of energy or water of the water system; and

(4) describes the manner in which the proposed program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement is consistent with an applicable State, tribal, or local climate adaptation plan, if any.

(d) PRIORITY.—

(1) WATER SYSTEMS AT GREATEST AND MOST IMMEDIATE RISK.—In selecting grantees under this Act, subject to section 4(b), the Administrator shall give priority to owners or operators of water systems that are, based on the best available research and data, at the greatest and most immediate risk of facing significant negative impacts due to changing hydrologic conditions.

(2) GOALS.—In selecting among applicants described in paragraph (1), the Administrator shall ensure that, to the maximum extent practicable, the final list of applications funded for each year includes a substantial number that propose to use innovative approaches to meet 1 or more of the following goals:

(A) Promoting more efficient water use, water conservation, water reuse, or recycling.

(B) Using decentralized, low-impact development technologies and nonstructural approaches, including practices that use, enhance, or mimic the natural hydrological cycle or protect natural flows.

(C) Reducing stormwater runoff or flooding by protecting or enhancing natural ecosystem functions.

(D) Modifying, upgrading, enhancing, or replacing existing water system infrastructure in response to changing hydrologic conditions.

(E) Improving water quality or quantity for agricultural and municipal uses, including through salinity reduction.

(F) Providing multiple benefits, including to water supply enhancement or demand reduction, water quality protection or improvement, increased flood protection, and ecosystem protection or improvement.

(e) COST-SHARING REQUIREMENT.—

(1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The share of the cost of any program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement that is the subject of a grant awarded by the Administrator to the owner or operator of a water system under subsection (a) paid through funds distributed under this Act shall not exceed 50 percent of the cost of the program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement.

(2) CALCULATION OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—In calculating the non-Federal share of the cost of a program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement proposed by a water system in an application submitted under subsection (c), the Administrator shall—

(A) include the value of any in-kind services that are integral to the completion of the program, strategy, or infrastructure improvement, including reasonable administrative and overhead costs; and

(B) not include any other amount that the water system involved receives from the Federal Government.

(f) DAVIS-BACON COMPLIANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All laborers and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors on projects funded directly by or assisted in whole or in part by this Act shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of part A of subtitle II of title 40, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ''Davis-Bacon Act'').

(2) AUTHORITY.—With respect to the labor standards specified in this subsection, the Secretary of Labor shall have the authority and functions set forth in Reorganization Plan Numbered 14 of 1950 (64 Stat. 1267; 5 U.S.C. App.) and section 3145 of title 40, United States Code.

(g) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 3 years thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) describes the progress in implementing this Act; and

(2) includes information on project applications received and funded annually under this Act.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act $50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019.

(b) REDUCTION OF FLOOD DAMAGE, RISK, AND VULNERABILITY.—Of the amount made available to carry out this Act for a fiscal year, not more than 20 percent may be made available to grantees for activities described in subsection (b)(10).

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 747. A bill to prioritize funding for an expanded and sustained national investment in basic science research; to the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. DURBIN. 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. 747

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 ''American Innovation Act''.

SEC. 2. CAP ADJUSTMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 251(b)(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E); and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (C), the following:

''(D) BASIC SCIENCE RESEARCH.—

''(i) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—If a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a fiscal year is enacted that specifies amounts for the National Science Foundation, then the adjustments for that fiscal year shall be the amount of additional new budget authority provided in that Act for such programs for that fiscal year, but shall not exceed—

''(I) for fiscal year 2016, $397,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(II) for fiscal year 2017, $831,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(III) for fiscal year 2018, $1,275,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(IV) for fiscal year 2019, $1,765,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(V) for fiscal year 2020, $2,290,000,000 in additional new budget authority; and

''(VI) for fiscal year 2021, $2,867,000,000 in additional new budget authority.

''(ii) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICE OF SCIENCE.—If a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a fiscal year is enacted that specifies amounts for the Office of Science of the Department of Energy, then the adjustments for that fiscal year shall be the amount of additional new budget authority provided in that Act for such programs for that fiscal year, but shall not exceed—

''(I) for fiscal year 2016, $275,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(II) for fiscal year 2017, $566,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(III) for fiscal year 2018, $867,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(IV) for fiscal year 2019, $1,198,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(V) for fiscal year 2020, $1,555,000,000 in additional new budget authority; and

''(VI) for fiscal year 2021, $1,946,000,000 in additional new budget authority.

''(iii) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS.—If a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a fiscal year is enacted that specifies amounts for the Department of Defense science and technology programs, then the adjustments for that fiscal year shall be the amount of additional new budget authority provided in that Act for such programs for that fiscal year, but shall not exceed—

''(I) for fiscal year 2016, $636,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(II) for fiscal year 2017, $1,309,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(III) for fiscal year 2018, $2,007,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(IV) for fiscal year 2019, $2,773,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(V) for fiscal year 2020, $3,603,000,000 in additional new budget authority; and

''(VI) for fiscal year 2021, $4,512,000,000 in additional new budget authority.

''(iv) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES.—If a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a fiscal year is enacted that specifies amounts for the Scientific and Technical Research and Services within the National Institute of Standards and Technology of the Department of Commerce, then the adjustments for that fiscal year shall be the amount of additional new budget authority provided in that Act for such programs for that fiscal year, but shall not exceed—

''(I) for fiscal year 2016, $31,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(II) for fiscal year 2017, $62,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(III) for fiscal year 2018, $96,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(IV) for fiscal year 2019, $132,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(V) for fiscal year 2020, $173,000,000 in additional new budget authority; and

''(VI) for fiscal year 2021, $216,000,000 in additional new budget authority.

''(v) NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION SCIENCE DIRECTORATE.—If a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a fiscal year is enacted that specifies amounts for the Science Mission Directorate of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, then the adjustments for that fiscal year shall be the amount of additional new budget authority provided in that Act for such program for that fiscal year, but shall not exceed—

''(I) for fiscal year 2016, $267,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(II) for fiscal year 2017, $559,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(III) for fiscal year 2018, $876,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(IV) for fiscal year 2019, $1,222,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

''(V) for fiscal year 2020, $1,598,000,000 in additional new budget authority; and

''(VI) for fiscal year 2021, $2,006,000,000 in additional new budget authority.

''(vi) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this subparagraph:

''(I) ADDITIONAL NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY.—The term 'additional new budget authority' means—

''(aa) with respect to the National Science Foundation, the amount provided for a fiscal year, in excess of the amount provided in fiscal year 2015, in an appropriation Act and specified to support the National Science Foundation;

''(bb) with respect to the Department of Energy Office of Science, the amount provided for a fiscal year, in excess of the amount provided in fiscal year 2015, in an appropriation Act and specified to support the Department of Energy Office of Science;

''(cc) with respect to the Department of Defense Science and Technology Programs, the amount provided for a fiscal year, in excess of the amount provided in fiscal year 2015, in an appropriation Act and specified to support the Department of Defense Science and Technology Programs;

''(dd) with respect to the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research Services, the amount provided for a fiscal year, in excess of the amount provided in fiscal year 2015, in an appropriation Act and specified to support the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research Services; and

''(ee) with respect to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science Directorate, the amount provided for a fiscal year, in excess of the amount provided in fiscal year 2015, in an appropriation Act and specified to support the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science Directorate.

''(II) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION.—The term 'National Science Foundation' means the appropriations accounts that support the various institutes, offices, and centers that make up the National Science Foundation.

''(III) DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICE OF SCIENCE.—The term 'Department of Energy Office of Science' means the appropriations accounts that support the various institutes, offices, and centers that make up the Department of Energy Office of Science.

''(IV) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS.—The term 'Department of Defense Science and Technology programs' means the appropriations accounts that support the various institutes, offices, and centers that make up the Department of Defense Science and Technology programs.

''(V) NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH AND SERVICES.—The term 'National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research and Services' means the appropriations accounts that support the various institutes, offices, and centers that make up the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research and Services.

''(VI) NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION SCIENCE DIRECTORATE.—The term 'National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science Directorate' means the appropriations accounts that support the various institutes, offices, and centers that make up the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science Directorate.''.

(b) FUNDING.—There are hereby authorized to be appropriated—

(1) for the National Science Foundation, the amounts provided for under clause (i) of such section 251(b)(2)(D) in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021, and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year;

(2) for the Department of Energy Office of Sciences, the amounts provided for under clause (ii) of such section 251(b)(2)(D) in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021, and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year;

(3) for the Department of Defense Science and Technology programs, the amounts provided for under clause (iii) of such section 251(b)(2)(D) in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021, and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year;

(4) for the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research and Services, the amounts provided for under clause (iv) of such section 251(b)(2)(D) in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021, and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year; and

(5) for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science Directorate, the amounts provided for under clause (iv) of such section 251(b)(2)(D) in each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021, and such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year.

(c) MINIMUM CONTINUED FUNDING REQUIREMENT.—Amounts appropriated for each of the programs and agencies described in section 251(b)(2)(D) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (as added by subsection (a)) for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021, and each subsequent fiscal year, shall not be less than the amounts appropriated for such programs and agencies for fiscal year 2015.

(d) EXEMPTION OF CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS FROM SEQUESTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 255(g)(1)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act (2 U.S.C. 905(g)(1)(A)) is amended by inserting after ''Advances to the Unemployment Trust Fund and Other Funds (16–0327–0–1–600).'' the following:

''Appropriations under the American Innovation Act.''.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to any sequestration order issued under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.) on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 301. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 302. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 303. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 304. Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 305. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 306. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 307. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 308. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 309. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 310. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 311. Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 312. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 313. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 314. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 315. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 316. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 301. Mr. LEAHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015''.

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

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

Sec. 101. Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund.
Sec. 102. Clarifying the benefits and protections offered to domestic victims of human trafficking.
Sec. 103. Victim-centered child human trafficking deterrence block grant program.
Sec. 104. Direct services for victims of child pornography.
Sec. 105. Increasing compensation and restitution for trafficking victims.
Sec. 106. Streamlining human trafficking investigations.
Sec. 107. Enhancing human trafficking reporting.
Sec. 108. Reducing demand for sex trafficking.
Sec. 109. Sense of Congress.
Sec. 110. Using existing task forces and components to target offenders who exploit children.
Sec. 111. Targeting child predators.
Sec. 112. Monitoring all human traffickers as violent criminals.
Sec. 113. Crime victims' rights.
Sec. 114. Combat Human Trafficking Act.
Sec. 115. Survivors of Human Trafficking Empowerment Act.
Sec. 116. Bringing Missing Children Home Act.
Sec. 117. Grant accountability.

TITLE II—COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Subtitle A—Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking

Sec. 201. Amendments to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

Subtitle B—Improving the Response to Victims of Child Sex Trafficking

Sec. 211. Response to victims of child sex trafficking.

Subtitle C—Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking

Sec. 221. Victim of trafficking defined.
Sec. 222. Interagency task force report on child trafficking primary prevention.
Sec. 223. GAO Report on intervention.
Sec. 224. Provision of housing permitted to protect and assist in the recovery of victims of trafficking.

TITLE III—HERO ACT

Sec. 301. Short title.
Sec. 302. HERO Act.

TITLE IV—RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH AND TRAFFICKING PREVENTION ACT

Sec. 401. Runaway and homeless youth and trafficking prevention.
Sec. 402. Response to missing children and victims of child sex trafficking.

TITLE V—STOP EXPLOITATION THROUGH TRAFFICKING ACT

Sec. 501. Short title.
Sec. 502. Safe Harbor Incentives.
Sec. 503. Report on restitution paid in connection with certain trafficking offenses.
Sec. 504. National human trafficking hotline.
Sec. 505. Job corps eligibility.
Sec. 506. Clarification of authority of the United States Marshals Service.
Sec. 507. Establishing a national strategy to combat human trafficking.

TITLE I—JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

SEC. 101. DOMESTIC TRAFFICKING VICTIMS' FUND.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 201 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 3014. Additional special assessment

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of enactment of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 and ending on September, 30 2019, in addition to the assessment imposed under section 3013, the court shall assess an amount of $5,000 on any non-indigent person or entity convicted of an offense under—

''(1) chapter 77 (relating to peonage, slavery, and trafficking in persons);

''(2) chapter 109A (relating to sexual abuse);

''(3) chapter 110 (relating to sexual exploitation and other abuse of children);

''(4) chapter 117 (relating to transportation for illegal sexual activity and related crimes); or

''(5) section 274 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1324) (relating to human smuggling), unless the person induced, assisted, abetted, or aided only an individual who at the time of such action was the alien's spouse, parent, son, or daughter (and no other individual) to enter the United States in violation of law.

''(b) SATISFACTION OF OTHER COURT-ORDERED OBLIGATIONS.—An assessment under subsection (a) shall not be payable until the person subject to the assessment has satisfied all outstanding court-ordered fines and orders of restitution arising from the criminal convictions on which the special assessment is based.

''(c) ESTABLISHMENT OF DOMESTIC TRAFFICKING VICTIMS' FUND.—There is established in the Treasury of the United States a fund, to be known as the 'Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund' (referred to in this section as the 'Fund'), to be administered by the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

''(d) DEPOSITS.—Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, or any other law regarding the crediting of money received for the Government, there shall be deposited in the Fund an amount equal to the amount of the assessments collected under this section, which shall remain available until expended.

''(e) USE OF FUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts in the Fund, in addition to any other amounts available, and without further appropriation, the Attorney General, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020, use amounts available in the Fund to award grants or enhance victims' programming under—

''(A) sections 202, 203, and 204 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 14044a, 14044b, and 14044c);

''(B) subsections (b)(2) and (f) of section 107 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105); and

''(C) section 214(b) of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13002(b)).

''(2) GRANTS.—Of the amounts in the Fund used under paragraph (1), not less than $2,000,000, if such amounts are available in the Fund during the relevant fiscal year, shall be used for grants to provide services for child pornography victims under section 214(b) of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13002(b)).

''(f) TRANSFERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Effective on the day after the date of enactment of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, on September 30 of each fiscal year, all unobligated balances in the Fund shall be transferred to the Crime Victims Fund established under section 1402 of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10601).

''(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts transferred under paragraph (1)—

''(A) shall be available for any authorized purpose of the Crime Victims Fund; and

''(B) shall remain available until expended.

''(g) COLLECTION METHOD.—The amount assessed under subsection (a) shall, subject to subsection (b), be collected in the manner that fines are collected in criminal cases.

''(h) DURATION OF OBLIGATION.—Subject to section 3613(b), the obligation to pay an assessment imposed on or after the date of enactment of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 shall not cease until the assessment is paid in full.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 201 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3013 the following:

''3014. Additional special assessment.''.

SEC. 102. CLARIFYING THE BENEFITS AND PROTECTIONS OFFERED TO DOMESTIC VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

Section 107(b)(1) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) and (G) as subparagraphs (G) and (H), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following:

''(F) NO REQUIREMENT OF OFFICIAL CERTIFICATION FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS AND LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to require United States citizens or lawful permanent residents who are victims of severe forms of trafficking to obtain an official certification from the Secretary of Health and Human Services in order to access any of the specialized services described in this subsection or any other Federal benefits and protections to which they are otherwise entitled.''; and

(3) in subparagraph (H), as redesignated, by striking ''subparagraph (F)'' and inserting ''subparagraph (G)''.

SEC. 103. VICTIM-CENTERED CHILD HUMAN TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 203 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 14044b) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 203. VICTIM-CENTERED CHILD HUMAN TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General may award block grants to an eligible entity to develop, improve, or expand domestic child human trafficking deterrence programs that assist law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judicial officials, and qualified victims' services organizations in collaborating to rescue and restore the lives of victims, while investigating and prosecuting offenses involving child human trafficking.

''(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Grants awarded under subsection (a) may be used for—

''(1) the establishment or enhancement of specialized training programs for law enforcement officers, first responders, health care officials, child welfare officials, juvenile justice personnel, prosecutors, and judicial personnel to—

''(A) identify victims and acts of child human trafficking;

''(B) address the unique needs of child victims of human trafficking;

''(C) facilitate the rescue of child victims of human trafficking;

''(D) investigate and prosecute acts of human trafficking, including the soliciting, patronizing, or purchasing of commercial sex acts from children, as well as training to build cases against complex criminal networks involved in child human trafficking; and

''(E) utilize, implement, and provide education on safe harbor laws enacted by States, aimed at preventing the criminalization and prosecution of child sex trafficking victims for prostitution offenses, and other laws aimed at the investigation and prosecution of child human trafficking;

''(2) the establishment or enhancement of dedicated anti-trafficking law enforcement units and task forces to investigate child human trafficking offenses and to rescue victims, including—

''(A) funding salaries, in whole or in part, for law enforcement officers, including patrol officers, detectives, and investigators, except that the percentage of the salary of the law enforcement officer paid for by funds from a grant awarded under this section shall not be more than the percentage of the officer's time on duty that is dedicated to working on cases involving child human trafficking;

''(B) investigation expenses for cases involving child human trafficking, including—

''(i) wire taps;

''(ii) consultants with expertise specific to cases involving child human trafficking;

''(iii) travel; and

''(iv) other technical assistance expenditures;

''(C) dedicated anti-trafficking prosecution units, including the funding of salaries for State and local prosecutors, including assisting in paying trial expenses for prosecution of child human trafficking offenders, except that the percentage of the total salary of a State or local prosecutor that is paid using an award under this section shall be not more than the percentage of the total number of hours worked by the prosecutor that is spent working on cases involving child human trafficking;

''(D) the establishment of child human trafficking victim witness safety, assistance, and relocation programs that encourage cooperation with law enforcement investigations of crimes of child human trafficking by leveraging existing resources and delivering child human trafficking victims' services through coordination with—

''(i) child advocacy centers;

''(ii) social service agencies;

''(iii) State governmental health service agencies;

''(iv) housing agencies;

''(v) legal services agencies; and

''(vi) nongovernmental organizations and shelter service providers with substantial experience in delivering wrap-around services to victims of child human trafficking; and

''(E) the establishment or enhancement of other necessary victim assistance programs or personnel, such as victim or child advocates, child-protective services, child forensic interviews, or other necessary service providers; and

''(3) the establishment or enhancement of problem solving court programs for trafficking victims that include—

''(A) mandatory and regular training requirements for judicial officials involved in the administration or operation of the court program described under this paragraph;

''(B) continuing judicial supervision of victims of child human trafficking, including case worker or child welfare supervision in collaboration with judicial officers, who have been identified by a law enforcement or judicial officer as a potential victim of child human trafficking, regardless of whether the victim has been charged with a crime related to human trafficking;

''(C) the development of a specialized and individualized, court-ordered treatment program for identified victims of child human trafficking, including—

''(i) State-administered outpatient treatment;

''(ii) life skills training;

''(iii) housing placement;

''(iv) vocational training;

''(v) education;

''(vi) family support services; and

''(vii) job placement;

''(D) centralized case management involving the consolidation of all of each child human trafficking victim's cases and offenses, and the coordination of all trafficking victim treatment programs and social services;

''(E) regular and mandatory court appearances by the victim during the duration of the treatment program for purposes of ensuring compliance and effectiveness;

''(F) the ultimate dismissal of relevant non-violent criminal charges against the victim, where such victim successfully complies with the terms of the court-ordered treatment program; and

''(G) collaborative efforts with child advocacy centers, child welfare agencies, shelters, and nongovernmental organizations with substantial experience in delivering wrap-around services to victims of child human trafficking to provide services to victims and encourage cooperation with law enforcement.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity shall submit an application to the Attorney General for a grant under this section in such form and manner as the Attorney General may require.

''(2) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—An application submitted under this subsection shall—

''(A) describe the activities for which assistance under this section is sought;

''(B) include a detailed plan for the use of funds awarded under the grant;

''(C) provide such additional information and assurances as the Attorney General determines to be necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section; and

''(D) disclose—

''(i) any other grant funding from the Department of Justice or from any other Federal department or agency for purposes similar to those described in subsection (b) for which the eligible entity has applied, and which application is pending on the date of the submission of an application under this section; and

''(ii) any other such grant funding that the eligible entity has received during the 5-year period ending on the date of the submission of an application under this section.

''(3) PREFERENCE.—In reviewing applications submitted in accordance with paragraphs (1) and (2), the Attorney General shall give preference to grant applications if—

''(A) the application includes a plan to use awarded funds to engage in all activities described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (b); or

''(B) the application includes a plan by the State or unit of local government to continue funding of all activities funded by the award after the expiration of the award.

''(d) DURATION AND RENEWAL OF AWARD.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant under this section shall expire 3 years after the date of award of the grant.

''(2) RENEWAL.—A grant under this section shall be renewable not more than 2 times and for a period of not greater than 2 years.

''(e) EVALUATION.—The Attorney General shall—

''(1) enter into a contract with a nongovernmental organization, including an academic or nonprofit organization, that has experience with issues related to child human trafficking and evaluation of grant programs to conduct periodic evaluations of grants made under this section to determine the impact and effectiveness of programs funded with grants awarded under this section;

''(2) instruct the Inspector General of the Department of Justice to review evaluations issued under paragraph (1) to determine the methodological and statistical validity of the evaluations; and

''(3) submit the results of any evaluation conducted pursuant to paragraph (1) to—

''(A) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

''(B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

''(f) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—An eligible entity awarded funds under this section that is found to have used grant funds for any unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost shall not be eligible for any

grant funds awarded under the block grant for 2 fiscal years following the year in which the unauthorized expenditure or unallowable cost is reported.

''(g) COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT.—An eligible entity shall not be eligible to receive a grant under this section if within the 5 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this section, the grantee has been found to have violated the terms or conditions of a Government grant program by utilizing grant funds for unauthorized expenditures or otherwise unallowable costs.

''(h) ADMINISTRATIVE CAP.—The cost of administering the grants authorized by this section shall not exceed 5 percent of the total amount expended to carry out this section.

''(i) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of the cost of a program funded by a grant awarded under this section shall be—

''(1) 70 percent in the first year;

''(2) 60 percent in the second year; and

''(3) 50 percent in the third year, and in all subsequent years.

''(j) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING; FULLY OFFSET.—For purposes of carrying out this section, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, is authorized to award not more than $7,000,000 of the funds available in the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund, established under section 3014 of title 18, United States Code, for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

''(k) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'child' means a person under the age of 18;

''(2) the term 'child advocacy center' means a center created under subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13001 et seq.);

''(3) the term 'child human trafficking' means 1 or more severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102)) involving a victim who is a child; and

''(4) the term 'eligible entity' means a State or unit of local government that—

''(A) has significant criminal activity involving child human trafficking;

''(B) has demonstrated cooperation between Federal, State, local, and, where applicable, tribal law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and social service providers in addressing child human trafficking;

''(C) has developed a workable, multi-disciplinary plan to combat child human trafficking, including—

''(i) the establishment of a shelter for victims of child human trafficking, through existing or new facilities;

''(ii) the provision of trauma-informed, gender-responsive rehabilitative care to victims of child human trafficking;

''(iii) the provision of specialized training for law enforcement officers and social service providers for all forms of human trafficking, with a focus on domestic child human trafficking;

''(iv) prevention, deterrence, and prosecution of offenses involving child human trafficking, including soliciting, patronizing, or purchasing human acts with children;

''(v) cooperation or referral agreements with organizations providing outreach or other related services to runaway and homeless youth;

''(vi) law enforcement protocols or procedures to screen all individuals arrested for prostitution, whether adult or child, for victimization by sex trafficking and by other crimes, such as sexual assault and domestic violence; and

''(vii) cooperation or referral agreements with State child welfare agencies and child advocacy centers; and

''(D) provides an assurance that, under the plan under subparagraph (C), a victim of child human trafficking shall not be required to collaborate with law enforcement officers to have access to any shelter or services provided with a grant under this section.

''(l) GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY; SPECIALIZED VICTIMS' SERVICE REQUIREMENT.—No grant funds under this section may be awarded or transferred to any entity unless such entity has demonstrated substantial experience providing services to victims of human trafficking or related populations (such as runaway and homeless youth), or employs staff specialized in the treatment of human trafficking victims.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (22 U.S.C. 7101 note) is amended by striking the item relating to section 203 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 203. Victim-centered child human trafficking deterrence block grant program.''.

SEC. 104. DIRECT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY.

The Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13001 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 212(5) (42 U.S.C. 13001a(5)), by inserting '', including human trafficking and the production of child pornography'' before the semicolon at the end; and

(2) in section 214 (42 U.S.C. 13002)—

(A) by redesignating subsections (b), (c), and (d) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) DIRECT SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY.—The Administrator, in coordination with the Director and with the Director of the Office of Victims of Crime, may make grants to develop and implement specialized programs to identify and provide direct services to victims of child pornography.''.

SEC. 105. INCREASING COMPENSATION AND RESTITUTION FOR TRAFFICKING VICTIMS.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 18.—Section 1594 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''that was used or'' and inserting ''that was involved in, used, or''; and

(ii) by inserting '', and any property traceable to such property'' after ''such violation''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting '', or any property traceable to such property'' after ''such violation'';

(2) in subsection (e)(1)(A)—

(A) by striking ''used or'' and inserting ''involved in, used, or''; and

(B) by inserting '', and any property traceable to such property'' after ''any violation of this chapter'';

(3) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(4) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f) TRANSFER OF FORFEITED ASSETS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Attorney General shall transfer assets forfeited pursuant to this section, or the proceeds derived from the sale thereof, to satisfy victim restitution orders arising from violations of this chapter.

''(2) PRIORITY.—Transfers pursuant to paragraph (1) shall have priority over any other claims to the assets or their proceeds.

''(3) USE OF NONFORFEITED ASSETS.—Transfers pursuant to paragraph (1) shall not reduce or otherwise mitigate the obligation of a person convicted of a violation of this chapter to satisfy the full amount of a restitution order through the use of non-forfeited assets or to reimburse the Attorney General for the value of assets or proceeds transferred under this subsection through the use of nonforfeited assets.''.

(b) AMENDMENT TO TITLE 28.—Section 524(c)(1)(B) of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''chapter 77 of title 18,'' after ''criminal drug laws of the United States or of''.

(c) AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 31.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 97 of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating section 9703 (as added by section 638(b)(1) of the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations Act, 1993 (Public Law 102–393; 106 Stat. 1779)) as section 9705; and

(B) in section 9705(a), as redesignated—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) in subparagraph (I)—

(aa) by striking ''payment'' and inserting ''Payment''; and

(bb) by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period; and

(II) in subparagraph (J), by striking ''payment'' and inserting ''Payment''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)—

(I) in subparagraph (B)—

(aa) in clause (iii)—

(AA) in subclause (I), by striking ''or'' and inserting ''of''; and

(BB) in subclause (III), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(bb) in clause (iv), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(cc) by inserting after clause (iv) the following:

''(v) United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement with respect to a violation of chapter 77 of title 18 (relating to human trafficking);'';

(II) in subparagraph (G), by adding ''and'' at the end; and

(III) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a period.

(2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) CROSS REFERENCES.—

(i) TITLE 28.—Section 524(c) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(I) in paragraph (4)(C), by striking ''section 9703(g)(4)(A)(ii)'' and inserting ''section 9705(g)(4)(A)'';

(II) in paragraph (10), by striking ''section 9703(p)'' and inserting ''section 9705(o)''; and

(III) in paragraph (11), by striking ''section 9703'' and inserting ''section 9705''.

(ii) TITLE 31.—Title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(I) in section 312(d), by striking ''section 9703'' and inserting ''section 9705''; and

(II) in section 5340(1), by striking ''section 9703(p)(1)'' and inserting ''section 9705(o)''.

(iii) TITLE 39.—Section 2003(e)(1) of title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking ''section 9703(p)'' and inserting ''section 9705(o)''.

(B) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections for chapter 97 of title 31, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''9701. Fees and charges for Government services and things of value.

''9702. Investment of trust funds.

''9703. Managerial accountability and flexibility.

''9704. Pilot projects for managerial accountability and flexibility.

''9705. Department of the Treasury Forfeiture Fund.''.

SEC. 106. STREAMLINING HUMAN TRAFFICKING INVESTIGATIONS.

Section 2516 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (a), by inserting a comma after ''weapons)'';

(B) in subparagraph (c)—

(i) by inserting ''section 1581 (peonage), section 1584 (involuntary servitude), section 1589 (forced labor), section 1590 (trafficking with respect to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor),'' before ''section 1591'';

(ii) by inserting ''section 1592 (unlawful conduct with respect to documents in furtherance of trafficking, peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor),'' before ''section 1751'';

(iii) by inserting a comma after ''virus)'';

(iv) by striking '',, section'' and inserting a comma;

(v) by striking ''or'' after ''misuse of passports),''; and

(vi) by inserting ''or'' before ''section 555'';

(C) in subparagraph (j), by striking ''pipeline,)'' and inserting ''pipeline),''; and

(D) in subparagraph (p), by striking ''documents, section 1028A (relating to aggravated identity theft))'' and inserting ''documents), section 1028A (relating to aggravated identity theft)''; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''human trafficking, child sexual exploitation, child pornography production,'' after ''kidnapping''.

SEC. 107. ENHANCING HUMAN TRAFFICKING REPORTING.

Section 505 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3755) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(i) PART 1 VIOLENT CRIMES TO INCLUDE HUMAN TRAFFICKING.—For purposes of this section, the term 'part 1 violent crimes' shall include severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102)).''.

SEC. 108. REDUCING DEMAND FOR SEX TRAFFICKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking ''or maintains'' and inserting ''maintains, patronizes, or solicits'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''or obtained'' and inserting ''obtained, patronized, or solicited''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''or obtained'' and inserting ''obtained, patronized, or solicited''; and

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking ''or maintained'' and inserting '', maintained, patronized, or solicited''; and

(B) by striking ''knew that the person'' and inserting ''knew, or recklessly disregarded the fact, that the person''.

(b) DEFINITION AMENDED.—Section 103(10) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)) is amended by striking ''or obtaining'' and inserting ''obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting''.

(c) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the amendments made by this section is to clarify the range of conduct punished as sex trafficking.

SEC. 109. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, defines a sex trafficker as a person who ''knowingly. . .recruits, entices, harbors, transports, provides, obtains, or maintains by any means a person. . .knowing, or in reckless disregard of the fact, that means of force, threats of force, fraud, coercion. . .or any combination of such means will be used to cause the person to engage in a commercial sex act, or that the person has not attained the age of 18 years and will be caused to engage in a commercial sex act'';

(2) while use of the word ''obtains'' in section 1591, United States Code, has been interpreted, prior to the date of enactment of this Act, to encompass those who purchase illicit sexual acts from trafficking victims, some confusion persists;

(3) in United States vs. Jungers, 702 F.3d 1066 (8th Cir. 2013), the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit ruled that section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, applied to persons who purchase illicit sexual acts with trafficking victims after the United States District Court for the District of South Dakota erroneously granted motions to acquit these buyers in two separate cases; and

(4) section 108 of this title amends section 1591 of title 18, United States Code, to add the words ''solicits or patronizes'' to the sex trafficking statute making absolutely clear for judges, juries, prosecutors, and law enforcement officials that criminals who purchase sexual acts from human trafficking victims may be arrested, prosecuted, and convicted as sex trafficking offenders when this is merited by the facts of a particular case.

SEC. 110. USING EXISTING TASK FORCES AND COMPONENTS TO TARGET OFFENDERS WHO EXPLOIT CHILDREN.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall ensure that—

(1) all task forces and working groups within the Innocence Lost National Initiative engage in activities, programs, or operations to increase the investigative capabilities of State and local law enforcement officers in the detection, investigation, and prosecution of persons who patronize, or solicit children for sex; and

(2) all components and task forces with jurisdiction to detect, investigate, and prosecute cases of child labor trafficking engage in activities, programs, or operations to increase the capacity of such components to deter and punish child labor trafficking.

SEC. 111. TARGETING CHILD PREDATORS.

(a) CLARIFYING THAT CHILD PORNOGRAPHY PRODUCERS ARE HUMAN TRAFFICKERS.—Section 2423(f) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''means (1) a'' and inserting the following: ''means—

''(1) a'';

(2) by striking ''United States; or (2) any'' and inserting the following: ''United States;

''(2) any''; and

(3) by striking the period at the end and inserting the following: ''; or

''(3) production of child pornography (as defined in section 2256(8)).''.

(b) HOLDING SEX TRAFFICKERS ACCOUNTABLE.—Section 2423(g) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by striking ''a preponderance of the evidence'' and inserting ''clear and convincing evidence''.

SEC. 112. MONITORING ALL HUMAN TRAFFICKERS AS VIOLENT CRIMINALS.

Section 3156(a)(4)(C) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''77,'' after ''chapter''.

SEC. 113. CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3771 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

''(9) The right to be informed in a timely manner of any plea bargain or deferred prosecution agreement.

''(10) The right to be informed of the rights under this section and the services described in section 503(c) of the Victims' Rights and Restitution Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 10607(c)) and provided contact information for the Office of the Victims' Rights Ombudsman of the Department of Justice.'';

(2) in subsection (d)(3), in the fifth sentence, by inserting '', unless the litigants, with the approval of the court, have stipulated to a different time period for consideration'' before the period; and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking ''this chapter, the term'' and inserting the following: ''this chapter:

''(1) COURT OF APPEALS.—The term 'court of appeals' means—

''(A) the United States court of appeals for the judicial district in which a defendant is being prosecuted; or

''(B) for a prosecution in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

''(2) CRIME VICTIM.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The term'';

(B) by striking ''In the case'' and inserting the following:

''(B) MINORS AND CERTAIN OTHER VICTIMS.—In the case''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) DISTRICT COURT; COURT.—The terms 'district court' and 'court' include the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.''.

(b) CRIME VICTIMS FUND.—Section 1402(d)(3)(A)(i) of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10601(d)(3)(A)(i)) is amended by inserting ''section'' before ''3771''.

(c) APPELLATE REVIEW OF PETITIONS RELATING TO CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3771(d)(3) of title 18, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)(2) of this section, is amended by inserting after the fifth sentence the following: ''In deciding such application, the court of appeals shall apply ordinary standards of appellate review.''.

(2) APPLICATION.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to any petition for a writ of mandamus filed under section 3771(d)(3) of title 18, United States Code, that is pending on the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 114. COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Combat Human Trafficking Act of 2015''.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COMMERCIAL SEX ACT; SEVERE FORMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS; STATE; TASK FORCE.—The terms ''commercial sex act'', ''severe forms of trafficking in persons'', ''State'', and ''Task Force'' have the meanings given those terms in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

(2) COVERED OFFENDER.—The term ''covered offender'' means an individual who obtains, patronizes, or solicits a commercial sex act involving a person subject to severe forms of trafficking in persons.

(3) COVERED OFFENSE.—The term ''covered offense'' means the provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a commercial sex act involving a person subject to severe forms of trafficking in persons.

(4) FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term ''Federal law enforcement officer'' has the meaning given the term in section 115 of title 18, United States Code.

(5) LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term ''local law enforcement officer'' means any officer, agent, or employee of a unit of local government authorized by law or by a local government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal law.

(6) STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER.—The term ''State law enforcement officer'' means any officer, agent, or employee of a State authorized by law or by a State government agency to engage in or supervise the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution of any violation of criminal law.

(c) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TRAINING AND POLICY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, PROSECUTORS, AND JUDGES.—

(1) TRAINING.—

(A) LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.—The Attorney General shall ensure that each anti-human trafficking program operated by the Department of Justice, including each anti-human trafficking training program for Federal, State, or local law enforcement officers, includes technical training on—

(i) effective methods for investigating and prosecuting covered offenders; and

(ii) facilitating the provision of physical and mental health services by health care providers to persons subject to severe forms of trafficking in persons.

(B) FEDERAL PROSECUTORS.—The Attorney General shall ensure that each anti-human trafficking program operated by the Department of Justice for United States attorneys or other Federal prosecutors includes training on seeking restitution for offenses under chapter 77 of title 18, United States Code, to ensure that each United States attorney or other Federal prosecutor, upon obtaining a conviction for such an offense, requests a specific amount of restitution for each victim of the offense without regard to whether the victim requests restitution.

(C) JUDGES.—The Federal Judicial Center shall provide training to judges relating to the application of section 1593 of title 18, United States Code, with respect to ordering restitution for victims of offenses under chapter 77 of such title.

(2) POLICY FOR FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.—The Attorney General shall ensure that Federal law enforcement officers are engaged in activities, programs, or operations involving the detection, investigation, and prosecution of covered offenders.

(d) MINIMUM PERIOD OF SUPERVISED RELEASE FOR CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT COMMERCIAL CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING.—Section 3583(k) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''1594(c),'' after ''1591,''.

(e) BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS REPORT ON STATE ENFORCEMENT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROHIBITIONS.—The Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics shall—

(1) prepare an annual report on—

(A) the rates of—

(i) arrest of individuals by State law enforcement officers for a covered offense;

(ii) prosecution (including specific charges) of individuals in State court systems for a covered offense; and

(iii) conviction of individuals in State court systems for a covered offense; and

(B) sentences imposed on individuals convicted in State court systems for a covered offense; and

(2) submit the annual report prepared under paragraph (1) to—

(A) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives;

(B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(C) the Task Force;

(D) the Senior Policy Operating Group established under section 105(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(g)); and

(E) the Attorney General.

SEC. 115. SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING EMPOWERMENT ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Survivors of Human Trafficking Empowerment Act''.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking (referred to in this section as the ''Council''), which shall provide advice and recommendations to the Senior Policy Operating Group established under section 105(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(g)) (referred to in this section as the ''Group'') and the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking established under section 105(a) of such Act (referred to in this section as the ''Task Force'').

(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) COMPOSITION.—The Council shall be composed of not less than 8 and not more than 14 individuals who are survivors of human trafficking.

(2) REPRESENTATION OF SURVIVORS.—To the extent practicable, members of the Council shall be survivors of trafficking, who shall accurately reflect the diverse backgrounds of survivors of trafficking, including—

(A) survivors of sex trafficking and survivors of labor trafficking; and

(B) survivors who are United States citizens and survivors who are aliens lawfully present in the United States.

(3) APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the President shall appoint the members of the Council.

(4) TERM; REAPPOINTMENT.—Each member of the Council shall serve for a term of 2 years and may be reappointed by the President to serve 1 additional 2-year term.

(d) FUNCTIONS.—The Council shall—

(1) be a nongovernmental advisory body to the Group;

(2) meet, at its own discretion or at the request of the Group, not less frequently than annually to review Federal Government policy and programs intended to combat human trafficking, including programs relating to the provision of services for victims and serve as a point of contact for Federal agencies reaching out to human trafficking survivors for input on programming and policies relating to human trafficking in the United States;

(3) formulate assessments and recommendations to ensure that policy and programming efforts of the Federal Government conform, to the extent practicable, to the best practices in the field of human trafficking prevention; and

(4) meet with the Group not less frequently than annually, and not later than 45 days before a meeting with the Task Force, to formally present the findings and recommendations of the Council.

(e) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act and each year thereafter until the date described in subsection (h), the Council shall submit a report that contains the findings derived from the reviews conducted pursuant to subsection (d)(2) to—

(1) the chair of the Task Force;

(2) the members of the Group;

(3) the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Homeland Security, Appropriations, and the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

(4) the Committees on Foreign Relations, Appropriations, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and the Judiciary of the Senate.

(f) EMPLOYEE STATUS.—Members of the Council—

(1) shall not be considered employees of the Federal Government for any purpose; and

(2) shall not receive compensation other than reimbursement of travel expenses and per diem allowance in accordance with section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(g) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.—The Council shall not be subject to the requirements under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

(h) SUNSET.—The Council shall terminate on September 30, 2020.

SEC. 116. BRINGING MISSING CHILDREN HOME ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Bringing Missing Children Home Act''.

(b) CRIME CONTROL ACT AMENDMENTS.—Section 3702 of the Crime Control Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 5780) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) a recent photograph of the child, if available;''; and

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''paragraph (3)'';

(B) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by striking ''60 days'' and inserting ''30 days''; and

(ii) by inserting ''and a photograph taken during the previous 180 days'' after ''dental records'';

(C) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(D) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D);

(E) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following:

''(C) notify the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children of each report received relating to a child reported missing from a foster care family home or childcare institution;'';

(F) in subparagraph (D), as redesignated—

(i) by inserting ''State and local child welfare systems and'' before ''the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children''; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(G) by adding at the end the following:

''(E) grant permission to the National Crime Information Center Terminal Contractor for the State to update the missing person record in the National Crime Information Center computer networks with additional information learned during the investigation relating to the missing person.''.

SEC. 117. GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''covered grant'' means a grant awarded by the Attorney General under section 203 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 14044b), as amended by section 103.

(b) ACCOUNTABILITY.—All covered grants shall be subject to the following accountability provisions:

(1) AUDIT REQUIREMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act, and in each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall conduct audits of recipients of a covered grant to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse of funds by grantees. The Inspector General shall determine the appropriate number of grantees to be audited each year.

(B) DEFINITION.—In this paragraph, the term ''unresolved audit finding'' means a finding in the final audit report of the Inspector General that the audited grantee has utilized grant funds for an unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost that is not closed or resolved within 12 months from the date when the final audit report is issued.

(C) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—A recipient of a covered grant that is found to have an unresolved audit finding shall not be eligible to receive a covered grant during the following 2 fiscal years.

(D) PRIORITY.—In awarding covered grants the Attorney General shall give priority to eligible entities that did not have an unresolved audit finding during the 3 fiscal years prior to submitting an application for a covered grant.

(E) REIMBURSEMENT.—If an entity is awarded a covered grant during the 2-fiscal-year

period in which the entity is barred from receiving grants under subparagraph (C), the Attorney General shall—

(i) deposit an amount equal to the grant funds that were improperly awarded to the grantee into the General Fund of the Treasury; and

(ii) seek to recoup the costs of the repayment to the fund from the grant recipient that was erroneously awarded grant funds.

(2) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph and covered grants, the term ''nonprofit organization'' means an organization that is described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of such Code.

(B) PROHIBITION.—The Attorney General may not award a covered grant to a nonprofit organization that holds money in offshore accounts for the purpose of avoiding paying the tax described in section 511(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(C) DISCLOSURE.—Each nonprofit organization that is awarded a covered grant and uses the procedures prescribed in regulations to create a rebuttable presumption of reasonableness for the compensation of its officers, directors, trustees and key employees, shall disclose to the Attorney General, in the application for the grant, the process for determining such compensation, including the independent persons involved in reviewing and approving such compensation, the comparability data used, and contemporaneous substantiation of the deliberation and decision. Upon request, the Attorney General shall make the information disclosed under this subsection available for public inspection.

(3) CONFERENCE EXPENDITURES.—

(A) LIMITATION.—No amounts transferred to the Department of Justice under this title, or the amendments made by this title, may be used by the Attorney General, or by any individual or organization awarded discretionary funds through a cooperative agreement under this title, or the amendments made by this title, to host or support any expenditure for conferences that uses more than $20,000 in Department funds, unless the Deputy Attorney General or such Assistant Attorney Generals, Directors, or principal deputies as the Deputy Attorney General may designate, provides prior written authorization that the funds may be expended to host a conference.

(B) WRITTEN APPROVAL.—Written approval under subparagraph (A) shall include a written estimate of all costs associated with the conference, including the cost of all food and beverages, audiovisual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and any entertainment.

(C) REPORT.—The Deputy Attorney General shall submit an annual report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives on all approved conference expenditures referenced in this paragraph.

(D) ANNUAL CERTIFICATION.—Beginning in the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this title, the Attorney General shall submit, to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives, an annual certification that—

(i) all audits issued by the Office of the Inspector General under paragraph (1) have been completed and reviewed by the appropriate Assistant Attorney General or Director;

(ii) all mandatory exclusions required under paragraph (1)(C) have been issued;

(iii) all reimbursements required under paragraph (1)(E) have been made; and

(iv) includes a list of any grant recipients excluded under paragraph (1) from the previous year.

(4) PROHIBITION ON LOBBYING ACTIVITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts awarded under this title, or any amendments made by this title, may not be utilized by any grant recipient to—

(i) lobby any representative of the Department of Justice regarding the award of grant funding; or

(ii) lobby any representative of a Federal, State, local, or tribal government regarding the award of grant funding.

(B) PENALTY.—If the Attorney General determines that any recipient of a covered grant has violated subparagraph (A), the Attorney General shall—

(i) require the grant recipient to repay the grant in full; and

(ii) prohibit the grant recipient from receiving another covered grant for not less than 5 years.

TITLE II—COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Subtitle A—Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking

SEC. 201. AMENDMENTS TO THE RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH ACT.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 343(b)(5) (42 U.S.C. 5714–23(b)(5))—

(A) in subparagraph (A) by inserting '', severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9))), and sex trafficking (as defined in section 103(10) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)))'' before the semicolon at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B) by inserting '', severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9))), or sex trafficking (as defined in section 103(10) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)))'' after ''assault''; and

(C) in subparagraph (C) by inserting '', including such youth who are victims of trafficking (as defined in section 103(15) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(15)))'' before the semicolon at the end; and

(2) in section 351(a) (42 U.S.C. 5714–41(a)) by striking ''or sexual exploitation'' and inserting ''sexual exploitation, severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9))), or sex trafficking (as defined in section 103(10) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)))''.

Subtitle B—Improving the Response to Victims of Child Sex Trafficking

SEC. 211. RESPONSE TO VICTIMS OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING.

Section 404(b)(1)(P)(iii) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5773(b)(1)(P)(iii)) is amended by striking ''child prostitution'' and inserting ''child sex trafficking, including child prostitution''.

Subtitle C—Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking

SEC. 221. VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING DEFINED.

In this subtitle, the term ''victim of trafficking'' has the meaning given such term in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

SEC. 222. INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE REPORT ON CHILD TRAFFICKING PRIMARY PREVENTION.

(a) REVIEW.—The Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking, established under section 105 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103), shall conduct a review that, with regard to trafficking in persons in the United States—

(1) in consultation with nongovernmental organizations that the Task Force determines appropriate, surveys and catalogs the activities of the Federal Government and State governments—

(A) to deter individuals from committing trafficking offenses; and

(B) to prevent children from becoming victims of trafficking;

(2) surveys academic literature on—

(A) deterring individuals from committing trafficking offenses;

(B) preventing children from becoming victims of trafficking;

(C) the commercial sexual exploitation of children; and

(D) other similar topics that the Task Force determines to be appropriate;

(3) identifies best practices and effective strategies—

(A) to deter individuals from committing trafficking offenses; and

(B) to prevent children from becoming victims of trafficking; and

(4) identifies current gaps in research and data that would be helpful in formulating effective strategies—

(A) to deter individuals from committing trafficking offenses; and

(B) to prevent children from becoming victims of trafficking.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking shall provide to Congress, and make publicly available in electronic format, a report on the review conducted pursuant to subparagraph (a).

SEC. 223. GAO REPORT ON INTERVENTION.

On the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Congress that includes information on—

(1) the efforts of Federal and select State law enforcement agencies to combat human trafficking in the United States; and

(2) each Federal grant program, a purpose of which is to combat human trafficking or assist victims of trafficking, as specified in an authorizing statute or in a guidance document issued by the agency carrying out the grant program.

SEC. 224. PROVISION OF HOUSING PERMITTED TO PROTECT AND ASSIST IN THE RECOVERY OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING.

Section 107(b)(2)(A) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(2)(A)) is amended by inserting '', including programs that provide housing to victims of trafficking'' before the period at the end.

TITLE III—HERO ACT

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Human Exploitation Rescue Operations Act of 2015'' or the ''HERO Act of 2015''.

SEC. 302. HERO ACT.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The illegal market for the production and distribution of child abuse imagery is a growing threat to children in the United States. International demand for this material creates a powerful incentive for the rape, abuse, and torture of children within the United States.

(2) The targeting of United States children by international criminal networks is a threat to the homeland security of the United States. This threat must be fought with trained personnel and highly specialized counter-child-exploitation strategies and technologies.

(3) The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security serves a critical national security role in protecting the United States from the growing international threat of child exploitation and human trafficking.

(4) The Cyber Crimes Center of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement is a vital national resource in the effort to combat international child exploitation, providing advanced expertise and assistance in investigations, computer forensics, and victim identification.

(5) The returning military heroes of the United States possess unique and valuable skills that can assist law enforcement in combating global sexual and child exploitation, and the Department of Homeland Security should use this national resource to the maximum extent possible.

(6) Through the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child Rescue Corps program, the returning military heroes of the United States are trained and hired to investigate crimes of child exploitation in order to target predators and rescue children from sexual abuse and slavery.

(b) CYBER CRIMES CENTER, CHILD EXPLOITATION INVESTIGATIONS UNIT, AND COMPUTER FORENSICS UNIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle H of title VIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 451 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 890A. CYBER CRIMES CENTER, CHILD EXPLOITATION INVESTIGATIONS UNIT, COMPUTER FORENSICS UNIT, AND CYBER CRIMES UNIT.

''(a) CYBER CRIMES CENTER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall operate, within United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a Cyber Crimes Center (referred to in this section as the 'Center').

''(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Center shall be to provide investigative assistance, training, and equipment to support United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's domestic and international investigations of cyber-related crimes.

''(b) CHILD EXPLOITATION INVESTIGATIONS UNIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall operate, within the Center, a Child Exploitation Investigations Unit (referred to in this subsection as the 'CEIU').

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The CEIU—

''(A) shall coordinate all United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement child exploitation initiatives, including investigations into—

''(i) child exploitation;

''(ii) child pornography;

''(iii) child victim identification;

''(iv) traveling child sex offenders; and

''(v) forced child labor, including the sexual exploitation of minors;

''(B) shall, among other things, focus on—

''(i) child exploitation prevention;

''(ii) investigative capacity building;

''(iii) enforcement operations; and

''(iv) training for Federal, State, local, tribal, and foreign law enforcement agency personnel, upon request;

''(C) shall provide training, technical expertise, support, or coordination of child exploitation investigations, as needed, to cooperating law enforcement agencies and personnel;

''(D) shall provide psychological support and counseling services for United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel engaged in child exploitation prevention initiatives, including making available other existing services to assist employees who are exposed to child exploitation material during investigations;

''(E) is authorized to collaborate with the Department of Defense and the National Association to Protect Children for the purpose of the recruiting, training, equipping and hiring of wounded, ill, and injured veterans and transitioning service members, through the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child Rescue Corps program; and

''(F) shall collaborate with other governmental, nongovernmental, and nonprofit entities approved by the Secretary for the sponsorship of, and participation in, outreach and training activities.

''(3) DATA COLLECTION.—The CEIU shall collect and maintain data concerning—

''(A) the total number of suspects identified by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

''(B) the number of arrests by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, disaggregated by type, including—

''(i) the number of victims identified through investigations carried out by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and

''(ii) the number of suspects arrested who were in positions of trust or authority over children;

''(C) the number of cases opened for investigation by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and

''(D) the number of cases resulting in a Federal, State, foreign, or military prosecution.

''(4) AVAILABILITY OF DATA TO CONGRESS.—In addition to submitting the reports required under paragraph (7), the CEIU shall make the data collected and maintained under paragraph (3) available to the committees of Congress described in paragraph (7).

''(5) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The CEIU is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to accomplish the functions set forth in paragraphs (2) and (3).

''(6) ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to accept monies and in-kind donations from the Virtual Global Taskforce, national laboratories, Federal agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and educational institutions to create and expand public awareness campaigns in support of the functions of the CEIU.

''(B) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—Gifts authorized under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulation for competition when the services provided by the entities referred to in such subparagraph are donated or of minimal cost to the Department.

''(7) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the HERO Act of 2015, and annually for the following 4 years, the CEIU shall—

''(A) submit a report containing a summary of the data collected pursuant to paragraph (3) during the previous year to—

''(i) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

''(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

''(iii) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

''(iv) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

''(v) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

''(vi) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) make a copy of each report submitted under subparagraph (A) publicly available on the website of the Department.

''(c) COMPUTER FORENSICS UNIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall operate, within the Center, a Computer Forensics Unit (referred to in this subsection as the 'CFU').

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The CFU—

''(A) shall provide training and technical support in digital forensics to—

''(i) United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel; and

''(ii) Federal, State, local, tribal, military, and foreign law enforcement agency personnel engaged in the investigation of crimes within their respective jurisdictions, upon request and subject to the availability of funds;

''(B) shall provide computer hardware, software, and forensic licenses for all computer forensics personnel within United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

''(C) shall participate in research and development in the area of digital forensics, in coordination with appropriate components of the Department; and

''(D) is authorized to collaborate with the Department of Defense and the National Association to Protect Children for the purpose of recruiting, training, equipping, and hiring wounded, ill, and injured veterans and transitioning service members, through the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child Rescue Corps program.

''(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The CFU is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to accomplish the functions set forth in paragraph (2).

''(4) ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to accept monies and in-kind donations from the Virtual Global Task Force, national laboratories, Federal agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and educational institutions to create and expand public awareness campaigns in support of the functions of the CFU.

''(B) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—Gifts authorized under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulation for competition when the services provided by the entities referred to in such subparagraph are donated or of minimal cost to the Department.

''(d) CYBER CRIMES UNIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall operate, within the Center, a Cyber Crimes Unit (referred to in this subsection as the 'CCU').

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The CCU—

''(A) shall oversee the cyber security strategy and cyber-related operations and programs for United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

''(B) shall enhance United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's ability to combat criminal enterprises operating on or through the Internet, with specific focus in the areas of—

''(i) cyber economic crime;

''(ii) digital theft of intellectual property;

''(iii) illicit e-commerce (including hidden marketplaces);

''(iv) Internet-facilitated proliferation of arms and strategic technology; and

''(v) cyber-enabled smuggling and money laundering;

''(C) shall provide training and technical support in cyber investigations to—

''(i) United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel; and

''(ii) Federal, State, local, tribal, military, and foreign law enforcement agency personnel engaged in the investigation of crimes within their respective jurisdictions, upon request and subject to the availability of funds;

''(D) shall participate in research and development in the area of cyber investigations, in coordination with appropriate components of the Department; and

''(E) is authorized to recruit participants of the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative

(HERO) Child Rescue Corps program for investigative and forensic positions in support of the functions of the CCU.

''(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The CCU is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to accomplish the functions set forth in paragraph (2).

''(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.''.

(2) TABLE OF CONTENTS AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 note) is amended by adding after the item relating to section 890 the following:

''Sec. 890A. Cyber crimes center, child exploitation investigations unit, computer forensics unit, and cyber crimes unit.''.

(c) HERO CORPS HIRING.—It is the sense of Congress that Homeland Security Investigations of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement should hire, recruit, train, and equip wounded, ill, or injured military veterans (as defined in section 101, title 38, United States Code) who are affiliated with the HERO Child Rescue Corps program for investigative, intelligence, analyst, and forensic positions.

(d) INVESTIGATING CHILD EXPLOITATION.—Section 307(b)(3) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 187(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) conduct research and development for the purpose of advancing technology for the investigation of child exploitation crimes, including child victim identification, trafficking in persons, and child pornography, and for advanced forensics.''.

TITLE IV—RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH AND TRAFFICKING PREVENTION ACT

SEC. 401. RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH AND TRAFFICKING PREVENTION.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Except as otherwise specifically provided, whenever in this section an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a provision, the amendment or repeal shall be considered to be made to a provision of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.).

(c) FINDINGS.—Section 302 (42 U.S.C. 5701) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''age, gender, and culturally and'' before ''linguistically appropriate'';

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking ''outside the welfare system and the law enforcement system'' and inserting '', in collaboration with public assistance systems, the law enforcement system, and the child welfare system'';

(3) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by inserting ''a safe place to live and'' after ''youth need''; and

(B) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(4) in paragraph (6), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

''(7) runaway and homeless youth are at a high risk of becoming victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons.''.

(d) BASIC CENTER GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) GRANTS FOR CENTERS AND SERVICES.—Section 311(a) (42 U.S.C. 5711(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''services'' and all that follows through the period and inserting ''safe shelter and services, including trauma-informed services, for runaway and homeless youth and, if appropriate, services for the families of such youth, including (if appropriate) individuals identified by such youth as family.''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''mental health,'';

(ii) in subparagraph (B)—

(I) in clause (i), by striking ''21 days; and'' and inserting ''30 days;'';

(II) in clause (ii)—

(aa) by inserting ''age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate to the extent practicable'' before ''individual'';

(bb) by inserting '', as appropriate,'' after ''group''; and

(cc) by striking ''as appropriate'' and inserting ''including (if appropriate) counseling for individuals identified by such youth as family''; and

(III) by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) suicide prevention services; and''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (C)—

(I) in clause (ii), by inserting ''age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate to the extent practicable'' before ''home-based services'';

(II) in clause (iii), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(III) in clause (iv), by striking ''diseases.'' and inserting ''infections;''; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

''(v) trauma-informed and gender-responsive services for runaway or homeless youth, including such youth who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation; and

''(vi) an assessment of family engagement in support and reunification (if reunification is appropriate), interventions, and services for parents or legal guardians of such youth, or (if appropriate) individuals identified by such youth as family.''.

(2) ELIGIBILITY; PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—Section 312 (42 U.S.C. 5712) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (5), by inserting '', or (if appropriate) individuals identified by such youth as family,'' after ''parents or legal guardians'';

(ii) in paragraph (6), by striking ''cultural minority and persons with limited ability to speak English'' and inserting ''cultural minority, persons with limited ability to speak English, and runaway or homeless youth who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation'';

(iii) by striking paragraph (7) and inserting the following:

''(7) shall keep adequate statistical records profiling the youth and family members of such youth whom the applicant serves, including demographic information on and the number of—

''(A) such youth who are not referred to out-of-home shelter services;

''(B) such youth who are members of vulnerable or underserved populations;

''(C) such youth who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation, disaggregated by—

''(i) such youth who have been coerced or forced into a commercial sex act, as defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102);

''(ii) such youth who have been coerced or forced into other forms of labor; and

''(iii) such youth who have engaged in a commercial sex act, as so defined, for any reason other than by coercion or force;

''(D) such youth who are pregnant or parenting;

''(E) such youth who have been involved in the child welfare system; and

''(F) such youth who have been involved in the juvenile justice system;'';

(iv) by redesignating paragraphs (8) through (13) as paragraphs (9) through (14);

(v) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following:

''(8) shall ensure that—

''(A) the records described in paragraph (7), on an individual runaway or homeless youth, shall not be disclosed without the consent of the individual youth and of the parent or legal guardian of such youth or (if appropriate) an individual identified by such youth as family, to anyone other than another agency compiling statistical records or a government agency involved in the disposition of criminal charges against an individual runaway or homeless youth; and

''(B) reports or other documents based on the statistics described in paragraph (7) shall not disclose the identity of any individual runaway or homeless youth;'';

(vi) in paragraph (9), as so redesignated, by striking ''statistical summaries'' and inserting ''statistics'';

(vii) in paragraph (13)(C), as so redesignated—

(I) by striking clause (i) and inserting:

''(i) the number and characteristics of runaway and homeless youth, and youth at risk of family separation, who participate in the project, including such information on—

''(I) such youth (including both types of such participating youth) who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation, disaggregated by—

''(aa) such youth who have been coerced or forced into a commercial sex act, as defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102);

''(bb) such youth who have been coerced or forced into other forms of labor; and

''(cc) such youth who have engaged in a commercial sex act, as so defined, for any reason other than by coercion or force;

''(II) such youth who are pregnant or parenting;

''(III) such youth who have been involved in the child welfare system; and

''(IV) such youth who have been involved in the juvenile justice system; and''; and

(II) in clause (ii), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(viii) in paragraph (14), as so redesignated, by striking the period and inserting ''for natural disasters, inclement weather, and mental health emergencies;''; and

(ix) by adding at the end the following:

''(15) shall provide age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the extent practicable to runaway and homeless youth; and

''(16) shall assist youth in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090).''; and

(B) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) by inserting ''age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate to the extent practicable'' after ''provide'';

(II) by striking ''families (including unrelated individuals in the family households) of such youth'' and inserting ''families of such youth (including unrelated individuals in the family households of such youth and, if appropriate, individuals identified by such youth as family)''; and

(III) by inserting ''suicide prevention,'' after ''physical health care,''; and

(ii) in paragraph (4), by inserting '', including training on trauma-informed and youth-centered care'' after ''home-based services''.

(3) APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS.—Section 313(b) (42 U.S.C. 5713(b)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''priority to'' and all that follows through ''who'' and inserting ''priority to eligible applicants who'';

(B) by striking ''; and'' and inserting a period; and

(C) by striking paragraph (2).

(e) TRANSITIONAL LIVING GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 322(a) (42 U.S.C. 5714–2(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by inserting ''age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate to the extent practicable'' before ''information and counseling services''; and

(B) by striking ''job attainment skills, and mental and physical health care'' and inserting ''job attainment skills, mental and physical health care, and suicide prevention services'';

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (8) and (9) through (16) as paragraphs (5) through (10) and (12) through (19), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) to provide counseling to homeless youth and to encourage, if appropriate, the involvement in such counseling of their parents or legal guardians, or (if appropriate) individuals identified by such youth as family;

''(4) to provide aftercare services, if possible, to homeless youth who have received shelter and services from a transitional living youth project, including (to the extent practicable) such youth who, after receiving such shelter and services, relocate to a State other than the State in which such project is located;'';

(4) in paragraph (9), as so redesignated—

(A) by inserting ''age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate to the extent practicable'' after ''referral of homeless youth to'';

(B) by striking ''and health care programs'' and inserting ''mental health service and health care programs, including programs providing wrap-around services to victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation,''; and

(C) by striking ''such services for youths;'' and inserting ''such programs described in this paragraph;'';

(5) by inserting after paragraph (10), as so redesignated, the following:

''(11) to develop a plan to provide age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the extent practicable that address the needs of homeless and street youth;'';

(6) in paragraph (12), as so redesignated, by striking ''the applicant and statistical'' through ''who participate in such project,'' and inserting ''the applicant, statistical summaries describing the number, the characteristics, and the demographic information of the homeless youth who participate in such project, including the prevalence of trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation of such youth,''; and

(7) in paragraph (19), as so redesignated, by inserting ''regarding responses to natural disasters, inclement weather, and mental health emergencies'' after ''management plan''.

(f) COORDINATING, TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.—

(1) COORDINATION.—Section 341 (42 U.S.C. 5714–21) is amended—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting ''safety, well-being,'' after ''health,''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''other Federal entities'' and inserting ''the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice''.

(2) GRANTS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING.—Section 342 (42 U.S.C. 5714–22) is amended by inserting '', including onsite and web-based techniques, such as on-demand and online learning,'' before ''to public and private entities''.

(3) GRANTS FOR RESEARCH, EVALUATION, DEMONSTRATION, AND SERVICE PROJECTS.—Section 343 (42 U.S.C. 5714–23) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (5)—

(I) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ''violence, trauma, and'' before ''sexual abuse and assault'';

(II) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''sexual abuse and assault; and'' and inserting ''sexual abuse or assault, trafficking in persons, or sexual exploitation;'';

(III) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''who have been sexually victimized'' and inserting ''who are victims of sexual abuse or assault, trafficking in persons, or sexual exploitation''; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) best practices for identifying and providing age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the extent practicable to—

''(i) vulnerable and underserved youth populations; and

''(ii) youth who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation; and

''(E) verifying youth as runaway or homeless to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090);'';

(ii) in paragraph (9), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(iii) in paragraph (10), by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

''(11) examining the intersection between the runaway and homeless youth populations and trafficking in persons, including noting whether such youth who are victims of trafficking in persons were previously involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems.''; and

(B) in subsection (c)(2)(B), by inserting '', including such youth who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation'' after ''runaway or homeless youth''.

(4) PERIODIC ESTIMATE OF INCIDENCE AND PREVALENCE OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.—Section 345 (42 U.S.C. 5714–25) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) by striking ''13'' and inserting ''12''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) that includes demographic information about and characteristics of runaway or homeless youth, including such youth who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation; and

''(4) that does not disclose the identity of any runaway or homeless youth.''; and

(B) in subsection (b)(1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''13'' and inserting ''12'';

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(iv) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) incidences, if any, of—

''(i) such individuals who are victims of trafficking in persons; or

''(ii) such individuals who are victims of sexual exploitation; and''; and

(v) in subparagraph (C), as so redesignated—

(I) in clause (ii), by striking ''; and'' and inserting '', including mental health services;''; and

(II) by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) access to education and job training; and''.

(g) SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM.—Section 351 (42 U.S.C. 5714–41) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting ''public and'' before ''nonprofit''; and

(B) by striking ''prostitution, or sexual exploitation.'' and inserting ''violence, trafficking in persons, or sexual exploitation.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(c) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under subsection (a), an applicant shall certify to the Secretary that such applicant has systems in place to ensure that such applicant can provide age, gender, and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to the extent practicable to all youth described in subsection (a).''.

(h) GENERAL PROVISIONS.—

(1) REPORTS.—Section 382(a) (42 U.S.C. 5715(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) through (D) as subparagraphs (C) through (E), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) collecting data on trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation of runaway and homeless youth;''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(A) the number and characteristics of homeless youth served by such projects, including—

''(i) such youth who are victims of trafficking in persons or sexual exploitation;

''(ii) such youth who are pregnant or parenting;

''(iii) such youth who have been involved in the child welfare system; and

''(iv) such youth who have been involved in the juvenile justice system;''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''intrafamily problems'' and inserting ''problems within the family, including (if appropriate) individuals identified by such youth as family,''.

(2) NONDISCRIMINATION.—Part F is amended by inserting after section 386A (42 U.S.C. 5732–1) the following:

''SEC. 386B. NONDISCRIMINATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—No person in the United States shall, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity (as defined in section 249(c)(4) of title 18, United States Code), sexual orientation, or disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available under this title, or any other program or activity funded in whole or in part with amounts appropriated for grants, cooperative agreements, or other assistance administered under this title.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—If sex segregation or sex-specific programming is necessary to the essential operation of a program, nothing in this section shall prevent any such program or activity from consideration of an individual's sex. In such circumstances, grantees may meet the requirements of this section by providing comparable services to individuals who cannot be provided with the sex-segregated or sex-specific programming.

''(c) DISQUALIFICATION.—The authority of the Secretary to enforce this section shall be the same as that provided for with respect to section 654 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9849).

''(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed, interpreted, or applied to supplant, displace, preempt, or otherwise limit the responsibilities and liabilities under other Federal or State civil rights laws.''.

(3) DEFINITIONS.—Section 387 (42 U.S.C. 5732a) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (6), and paragraphs (7) and (8), as paragraphs (2) through (7), and paragraphs (9) and (10), respectively;

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following:

''(1) CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY APPROPRIATE.—The term 'culturally and linguistically appropriate', with respect to services, has the meaning given the term 'culturally and linguistically appropriate services' in the 'National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care', issued in April 2013, by the Office of Minority Health of the Department of Health and Human Services.'';

(C) in paragraph (6)(B)(v), as so redesignated—

(i) by redesignating subclauses (II) through (IV) as subclauses (III) through (V), respectively;

(ii) by inserting after subclause (I), the following:

''(II) trafficking in persons;'';

(iii) in subclause (IV), as so redesignated—

(I) by striking ''diseases'' and inserting ''infections''; and

(II) by striking ''and'' at the end;

(iv) in subclause (V), as so redesignated, by striking the period and inserting ''; and''; and

(v) by adding at the end the following:

''(VI) suicide.'';

(D) in paragraph (7)(B), as so redesignated, by striking ''prostitution,'' and inserting ''trafficking in persons,'';

(E) by inserting after paragraph (7), as so redesignated, the following:

''(8) TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.—The term 'trafficking in persons' has the meaning given the term 'severe forms of trafficking in persons' in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).'';

(F) in paragraph (9), as so redesignated—

(i) by inserting ''to homeless youth'' after ''provides''; and

(ii) by inserting '', to establish a stable family or community supports,'' after ''self-sufficient living''; and

(G) in paragraph (10)(B), as so redesignated—

(i) in clause (ii)—

(I) by inserting ''or able'' after ''willing''; and

(II) by striking ''or'' at the end;

(ii) in clause (iii), by striking the period and inserting ''; or''; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

''(iv) who is involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice system, but who is not receiving government-funded housing.''.

(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 388(a) (42 U.S.C. 5751(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''for fiscal year 2009,'' and all that follows through the period and inserting ''for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.'';

(B) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking ''such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.'' and inserting ''$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.''; and

(C) in paragraph (4), by striking ''for fiscal year 2009'' and all that follows through the period and inserting ''for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.''.

SEC. 402. RESPONSE TO MISSING CHILDREN AND VICTIMS OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING.

(a) MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE ACT.—Section 404(b)(1)(P)(iii) of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5773(b)(1)(P)(iii)) is amended by striking ''child prostitution'' and inserting ''child sex trafficking''.

(b) CRIME CONTROL ACT OF 1990.—Section 3702 of the Crime Control Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 5780) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B) and (C) as subparagraphs (C) and (D), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) a recent photograph of the child, if available;''; and

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''60 days'' and inserting ''30 days'';

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(C) in subparagraph (C)—

(i) by inserting ''State and local child welfare systems and'' before ''the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children''; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) grant permission to the National Crime Information Center Terminal Contractor for the State to update the missing person record in the National Crime Information Center computer networks with additional information learned during the investigation relating to the missing person.''.

TITLE V—STOP EXPLOITATION THROUGH TRAFFICKING ACT

SEC. 501. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act of 2015''.

SEC. 502. SAFE HARBOR INCENTIVES.

Part Q of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 1701(c), by striking ''where feasible'' and all that follows, and inserting the following: ''where feasible, to an application—

''(1) for hiring and rehiring additional career law enforcement officers that involves a non-Federal contribution exceeding the 25 percent minimum under subsection (g); or

''(2) from an applicant in a State that has in effect a law that—

''(A) treats a minor who has engaged in, or has attempted to engage in, a commercial sex act as a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons;

''(B) discourages or prohibits the charging or prosecution of an individual described in subparagraph (A) for a prostitution or sex trafficking offense, based on the conduct described in subparagraph (A); and

''(C) encourages the diversion of an individual described in subparagraph (A) to appropriate service providers, including child welfare services, victim treatment programs, child advocacy centers, rape crisis centers, or other social services.''; and

(2) in section 1709, by inserting at the end the following:

''(5) 'commercial sex act' has the meaning given the term in section 103 of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

''(6) 'minor' means an individual who has not attained the age of 18 years.

''(7) 'severe form of trafficking in persons' has the meaning given the term in section 103 of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).''.

SEC. 503. REPORT ON RESTITUTION PAID IN CONNECTION WITH CERTAIN TRAFFICKING OFFENSES.

Section 105(d)(7)(Q) of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(d)(7)(Q)) is amended—

(1) by inserting after ''1590,'' the following: ''1591,'';

(2) by striking ''and 1594'' and inserting ''1594, 2251, 2251A, 2421, 2422, and 2423'';

(3) in clause (iv), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(4) in clause (v), by striking ''and'' at the end; and

(5) by inserting after clause (v) the following:

''(vi) the number of individuals required by a court order to pay restitution in connection with a violation of each offense under title 18, United States Code, the amount of restitution required to be paid under each such order, and the amount of restitution actually paid pursuant to each such order; and

''(vii) the age, gender, race, country of origin, country of citizenship, and description of the role in the offense of individuals convicted under each offense; and''.

SEC. 504. NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE.

Section 107(b)(1)(B) of the Victims of Crime Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)(B)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Subject'' and inserting ''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(ii) NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE.—Beginning in fiscal year 2017 and each fiscal year thereafter, of amounts made available for grants under paragraph (2), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall make grants for a national communication system to assist victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons in communicating with service providers. The Secretary shall give priority to grant applicants that have experience in providing telephone services to victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons.''.

SEC. 505. JOB CORPS ELIGIBILITY.

Section 144(a)(3) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3194(a)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(F) A victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103 of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102)). Notwithstanding paragraph (2), an individual described in this subparagraph shall not be required to demonstrate eligibility under such paragraph.''.

SEC. 506. CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITY OF THE UNITED STATES MARSHALS SERVICE.

Section 566(e)(1) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (C), the following:

''(D) assist State, local, and other Federal law enforcement agencies, upon the request of such an agency, in locating and recovering missing children.''.

SEC. 507. ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall implement and maintain a National Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking (referred to in this section as the ''National Strategy'') in accordance with this section.

(b) REQUIRED CONTENTS OF NATIONAL STRATEGY.—The National Strategy shall include the following:

(1) Integrated Federal, State, local, and tribal efforts to investigate and prosecute human trafficking cases, including—

(A) the development by each United States attorney, in consultation with State, local, and tribal government agencies, of a district-specific strategic plan to coordinate the identification of victims and the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking crimes;

(B) the appointment of not fewer than 1 assistant United States attorney in each district dedicated to the prosecution of human trafficking cases or responsible for implementing the National Strategy;

(C) the participation in any Federal, State, local, or tribal human trafficking task force operating in the district of the United States attorney; and

(D) any other efforts intended to enhance the level of coordination and cooperation, as determined by the Attorney General.

(2) Case coordination within the Department of Justice, including specific integration, coordination, and collaboration, as appropriate, on human trafficking investigations between and among the United States attorneys, the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(3) Annual budget priorities and Federal efforts dedicated to preventing and combating human trafficking, including resources dedicated to the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and all other entities that receive Federal support that have a goal or mission to combat the exploitation of adults and children.

(4) An ongoing assessment of the future trends, challenges, and opportunities, including new investigative strategies, techniques, and technologies, that will enhance Federal, State, local, and tribal efforts to combat human trafficking.

(5) Encouragement of cooperation, coordination, and mutual support between private sector and other entities and organizations and Federal agencies to combat human trafficking, including the involvement of State, local, and tribal government agencies to the extent Federal programs are involved.

SA 302. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE IV—PROTECTING STUDENTS FROM SEXUAL AND VIOLENT PREDATORS

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Protecting Students from Sexual and Violent Predators Act''.

SEC. 402. DEFINITIONS.

In this title—

(1) the terms ''elementary school'', ''local educational agency'', ''secondary school'', ''State'', and ''State educational agency'' have the meanings given the terms in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801);

(2) the term ''covered local educational agency'' means a local educational agency that receives funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

(3) the term ''covered school'' means an elementary school or secondary school that receives funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

(4) the term ''covered State'' means a State that receives funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

(5) the term ''covered State educational agency'' means a State educational agency that receives funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);

(6) the term ''current school employee'' means a school employee who has begun employment with a covered school, covered State educational agency, or covered local educational agency or an employee of any person or company who has a contract or agreement to provide services with a covered school, covered local educational agency, or covered State educational agency before the effective date of this title;

(7) the term ''designated State agency'' means the agency designated in section 403(d)(1)(A); and

(8) the term ''school employee'' means—

(A) an employee of, or a person seeking employment with, a covered school, covered local educational agency, or covered State educational agency and who, as a result of such employment, has (or, in the case of a person seeking employment, will have) a job duty that includes unsupervised contact or interaction with elementary school or secondary school students; or

(B) any person, or an employee of any person, who has a contract or agreement to provide services with a covered school, covered local educational agency, or covered State educational agency, and such person or employee, as a result of such contract or agreement, has a job duty that includes unsupervised contact or interaction with elementary school or secondary school students.

SEC. 403. BACKGROUND CHECKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Each covered State shall ensure that the State has in effect laws, regulations, or policies and procedures requiring that—

(1) a criminal background check be conducted for each school employee in a manner that is consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) and otherwise meets the requirements of this section, including—

(A) a search of the State criminal registry or repository of the State in which the school employee resides;

(B) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases of the State in which the school employee resides;

(C) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System, conducted in accordance with section 406; and

(D) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under section 119 of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16919); and

(2) each criminal background check conducted under paragraph (1) be periodically repeated or updated in accordance with State law or the policies of the covered State educational agency or the covered local educational agencies in the State.

(b) TIMING OF BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

(1) CURRENT SCHOOL EMPLOYEES.—For a current school employee—

(A) the criminal background check required under subsection (a) shall be completed by not later than 3 years after the effective date of this title or by the date of the current school employee's next scheduled performance review as provided by State law (including regulations), whichever is first; and

(B) the employment of the current school employee shall not be terminated by reason of this title while the criminal background check is being conducted.

(2) ALL OTHER SCHOOL EMPLOYEES.—For any school employee who is not a current school employee, the criminal background check required under subsection (a) shall be completed before the school employee begins employment.

(c) EXCEPTION FOR CURRENT SCHOOL EMPLOYEES WITH PRIOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A covered State shall not be required to obtain a criminal background check under subsection (a)(1) for a current school employee if—

(A)(i) the current school employee has received 1 or more criminal background checks (whether on one occasion or on separate occasions) that included—

(I) a search of the State criminal registry or repository of the State in which the current school employee resides;

(II) a search of the State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases of the State in which the current school employee resides;

(III) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System, conducted in accordance with section 406; and

(IV) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under section 119 of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16919); or

(ii) the current school employee has received 1 or more criminal background checks (whether on one occasion or on separate occasions) that included 1 or more of the searches and checks described in subclauses (I) through (IV) of clause (i), and the designated State agency ensures that a criminal background check including all of the remaining searches and checks described in such subclauses is conducted for the current school employee within the timeframe established by subsection (b)(1)(A);

(B) each of the searches and checks described in subclauses (I) through (IV) of subparagraph (A)(i) were conducted for the school employee, whether as part of 1 criminal background check or on separate occasions, on or after the date that is 5 years before the effective date of this title;

(C) the appropriate Federal, State, or local agency provides the results of all the searches and checks described in subclauses (I) through (IV) of subparagraph (A)(i) to the appropriate body, as designated by State law or the policies of the covered State educational agency or the employing covered local educational agency; and

(D) the appropriate body, as designated by State law or the policies of the covered State agency or covered local educational agency, takes steps to verify all criminal background checks in accordance with State law or the policies of the covered State educational agency or the employing covered local educational agency.

(2) CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT DURING VERIFICATION PERIOD.—

(A) CONTINUED EMPLOYMENT.—During any period during which the requirements of paragraph (1) are being verified for a current school employee—

(i) the employing covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, or covered school shall not terminate the employment of the covered school employee or reduce the employee's pay or benefits by reason of this title; and

(ii) nothing in this title shall be construed to prohibit the covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, or covered school from transferring the employee to a position not meeting the criteria of section 402(8) during such period of verification.

(3) PERIODIC UPDATING.—Each covered State shall ensure that the State has in effect laws, regulations, or policies and procedures requiring that, for each current school employee who meets the requirements of this title through paragraph (1), all of the searches and checks described in paragraph (1)(A)(i) be periodically repeated or updated through a criminal background check, in accordance with State law or the policies of the covered State educational agency or the

covered local educational agencies in the State.

(d) CONFIDENTIALITY OF AND ACCESS TO BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

(1) CONFIDENTIALITY.—Each covered State shall have in effect laws, regulations, or policies and procedures that—

(A) designate a single State agency to administer the criminal background checks required under subsection (a) and paragraphs (1)(A)(ii) and (3) of subsection (c); and

(B) require that information obtained through a criminal background check under subsection (a) or (c) shall only be revealed to the school employee, the designated representative of the school employee, and persons authorized by the State to receive the information in order to make employment decisions.

(2) COPY OF BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS.—

(A) UPON REQUEST.—Upon a request by a school employee, the designated State agency shall directly provide a copy of the results of the criminal background check conducted pursuant to subsection (a) or (c) to the school employee or to the school employee's designated representative.

(B) UPON TERMINATION OR DISQUALIFICATION.—If a school employee is terminated or disqualified from employment under subparagraphs (B) through (D) of section 404(a)(3), the designated State agency shall provide the school employee with a copy of the results of any criminal background check conducted under this title.

(e) APPEALS PROCESS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each covered State shall have in effect laws, regulations, or policies and procedures—

(A) providing for a process by which a school employee may appeal the results of a criminal background check conducted pursuant to subsection (a) or (c) to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information yielded by the criminal background check; and

(B) ensuring that—

(i) each school employee shall be given prompt notice of the opportunity to appeal;

(ii) each school employee will receive instructions about how to complete the appeals process; and

(iii) the appeals process is completed no later than 30 days after the appeal is filed for each school employee.

(2) EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF CURRENT SCHOOL EMPLOYEES FILING AN APPEAL.—If a current school employee is disqualified from employment under section 404(a) but files an appeal under this subsection, during the pendency of the appeal, such employee shall not lose employment or face a reduction in pay or benefits. During the pendency of the appeal, the employing covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, or covered school may place the school employee in a capacity where the school employee's job duties do not include unsupervised contact or interaction with children.

(f) PUBLICATION OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Each covered State shall ensure that the laws, regulations, or policies and procedures required under this section are published on the website of the covered State educational agency and the website of each covered local educational agency that has a website as of the effective date of this title.

(g) FEES FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

(1) REQUIREMENT FOR REASONABLE FEES.—The Attorney General of the United States, and the State Attorney General or other State law enforcement official of a covered State, may charge a fee for conducting a criminal background check under subsection (a) or (c) if the amount of the fee does not exceed the actual costs to the Federal Government or the State, as the case may be, for processing and administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDS.—A covered State educational agency or covered local educational agency may use administrative funds received under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) to pay any reasonable fees charged for conducting criminal background checks under subsection (a) or (c).

SEC. 404. PROHIBITION ON HIRING & TRANSFER.

(a) PROHIBITION ON HIRING.—Each covered State shall have in effect laws, regulations, or policies and procedures that prohibit any covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, or covered school from employing an individual as a school employee if such employee—

(1) refuses to consent to a criminal background check under section 403;

(2) makes a knowingly false statement in connection with a criminal background check under section 403; or

(3) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

(A) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

(B) child abuse;

(C) child pornography; or

(D) a crime involving rape or sexual assault, except for statutory rape where the victim and perpetrator engaged in consensual sexual conduct, the victim and perpetrator were both under the age of 21, and the victim and perpetrator differed in age by not more than 3 years at the time of the offense.

(b) REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each covered State shall have in effect laws, regulations, or policies and procedures that establish a timely review process, not to exceed 30 days from the date that an appeal is received by the State, through which the State may determine that, notwithstanding paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (a), a school employee identified under paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (a) is eligible for employment with the covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, or covered school. The review process shall be an individualized assessment consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.) and may include consideration of the following factors:

(A) Nature and seriousness of the offense.

(B) Circumstances under which the offense was committed.

(C) Lapse of time since the offense was committed or the individual was released from prison.

(D) Individual's age at the time of the offense.

(E) Social conditions that may have fostered the offense.

(F) Relationship of the nature of the offense to the position sought.

(G) Number of criminal convictions.

(H) Honesty and transparency of the candidate in admitting the conviction record.

(I) Individual's work history, including evidence that the individual performed the same or similar work, post-conviction, with the same or different employer, with no known incidents of criminal conduct.

(J) Evidence of rehabilitation, as demonstrated by the individual's good conduct while in correctional custody or in the community, counseling or psychiatric treatment received, acquisition of additional academic or career or technical schooling, successful participation in a correctional work-release program, or the recommendation of a current or former supervisor of the individual.

(K) Whether the individual is bonded under a Federal, State, or local bonding program.

(L) Any other factor that may lead to the conclusion that the individual does not pose a risk to children.

(2) EMPLOYMENT DURING REVIEW.—During the pendency of the review described in paragraph (1) of a school employee, the employing covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, or covered school may place the school employee in a capacity where the employee's job duties do not include unsupervised contact or interaction with children.

(c) PROHIBITION ON TRANSFER.—A covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, covered school, or any employee or agent of a covered State educational agency, covered local educational agency, or covered school, shall not knowingly transfer or facilitate the transfer of any school employee if the agency, school, employee, or agent knows or has reasonable cause to believe that the school employee engaged in abuse of a child, unless—

(1) the allegations of abuse have been properly reported as required by Federal, State, or local law, including title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.) and the regulations implementing such title under part 106 of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(2) with respect to the allegations—

(A) no prosecution is undertaken by local or Federal prosecutors within 1 year of the report;

(B) the local prosecutors have indicated that the individual will not be charged; or

(C) the school employee has been charged and exonerated of the charges, as defined by law or by regulations or policies of the State, covered State educational agency, or applicable covered local educational agency.

SEC. 405. REPORTING OF ABUSE ALLEGATIONS.

(a) PROHIBITION ON AGREEMENTS TO WITHHOLD ALLEGATIONS.—Each covered State shall have laws, regulations, or policies and procedures that—

(1) prohibit any State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, secondary school, or employee or agent of any State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, or secondary school, from making any agreement—

(A) to withhold, from any law enforcement authority, State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, or secondary school, the reporting of the fact that an allegation of child abuse in an educational setting has been made against a school employee or volunteer; or

(B) to waive any portion of subsection (c); and

(2) provide that the punishment for any violation of paragraph (1) is not less than the punishment for a violation of the State's law requiring mandatory reporting of concerns of child abuse and neglect.

(b) IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY FOR REPORTING.—Each covered State shall have laws, regulations, or policies and procedures ensuring that, notwithstanding any other Federal, State, or local law or any agreement or contract, any State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, secondary school, or employee or agent of any State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, or secondary school who reasonably and in good faith reports to law enforcement officials information regarding allegations of child abuse or a resignation or voluntary suspension due to circumstances described in subsection (a)(1) shall have immunity from any civil or criminal liability.

(c) WARNINGS TO OTHER EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES AND SCHOOLS.—Each covered State shall have in effect laws, regulations, or policies and procedures ensuring that, notwithstanding any other Federal, State, or local law or any agreement or contract, if the State educational agency or any local educational agency, elementary school, secondary school, or employee or agent of the

State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, or secondary school, has reasonably and in good faith reported to law enforcement officials information regarding allegations of child abuse in an educational setting made against a school employee, and the circumstances described in section 404(c)(2) do not apply to such allegations, the agency, school, employee, or agent may share the report with any other State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, or secondary school that is considering hiring that school employee.

(d) TRAINING.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, a local educational agency may use funds provided under part A of title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6601 et seq.) to train school employees in—

(1) recognizing signs of abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse in students;

(2) properly identifying and reporting suspected child physical or sexual abuse, including appropriate behaviors by school personnel and inappropriate behaviors, such as grooming behaviors (defined as actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in order to sexually abuse the child); and

(3) effectively responding to incidents of child physical and sexual abuse, including linking students and families to law enforcement, school, community, mental health, or medical supports.

SEC. 406. FBI REQUIREMENTS FOR FINGERPRINT CHECKS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if a fingerprint check by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, conducted pursuant to section 403(a) or in accordance with section 403(c) after the effective date of this title, reveals a record that indicates that an individual was arrested or criminal proceedings were instituted against an individual, but that does not include the final disposition of the arrest or proceeding, the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall—

(1) further investigate the school employee's criminal history until the earlier of—

(A) the date on which the Bureau is able to determine whether a final disposition was reached and what the final disposition was; or

(B) 3 business days (exclusive of the day on which the initial request is made) after the date of the initial request;

(2) notify the State through the designated State agency of the results of the further investigation; and

(3) promptly correct the record, including by making deletions to the record, if the Federal Bureau of Investigations determined that the record was inaccurate.

SEC. 407. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this title shall be construed to—

(1) alter or otherwise affect the rights and remedies provided for school employees residing in a State that disqualifies individuals for employment as a school employee based on convictions for crimes not specifically listed in this title;

(2) prevent a State or locality from applying the requirements of this title to State educational agencies, local educational agencies, elementary schools, or secondary schools that do not receive funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.); or

(3) create a private right of action against a State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, secondary school, or an employee or agent of a State educational agency, local educational agency, elementary school, or secondary school that is in compliance with this title and with any laws, regulations, or policies and procedures promulgated pursuant to this title.

SEC. 408. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall take effect on the date that is 2 years from the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 303. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE ___—HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS RELIEF AND EMPOWERMENT ACT

SECTION __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Human Trafficking Survivors Relief and Empowerment Act of 2015''.

SEC. __02. PROTECTIONS FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVORS.

Section 1701(c) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd(c)) is amended by striking ''where feasible'' and all that follows, and inserting the following: ''where feasible, to an application—

''(1) for hiring and rehiring additional career law enforcement officers that involves a non-Federal contribution exceeding the 25 percent minimum under subsection (g); or

''(2) from an applicant in a State that has in effect a law—

''(A) that—

''(i) provides a process by which an individual who is a human trafficking survivor can move to vacate any arrest or conviction records for a non-violent offense committed as a direct result of human trafficking, including prostitution or lewdness;

''(ii) establishes a rebuttable presumption that any arrest or conviction of an individual for an offense associated with human trafficking is a result of being trafficked, if the individual—

''(I) is a person granted nonimmigrant status pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(T)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(T)(i));

''(II) is the subject of a certification by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under section 107(b)(1)(E) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(b)(1)(E)); or

''(III) has other similar documentation of trafficking, which has been issued by a Federal, State, or local agency; and

''(iii) protects the identity of individuals who are human trafficking survivors in public and court records; and

''(B) that does not require an individual who is a human trafficking survivor to provide official documentation as described in subclause (I), (II), or (III) of subparagraph (A)(ii) in order to receive protection under the law.''.

SA 304. Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 103 and insert the following:

SEC. 103. VICTIM-CENTERED CHILD HUMAN TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 203 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 14044b) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 203. VICTIM-CENTERED CHILD HUMAN TRAFFICKING DETERRENCE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Attorney General may award block grants to an eligible entity to develop, improve, or expand domestic child human trafficking deterrence programs that assist law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judicial officials, and qualified victims' services organizations in collaborating to rescue and restore the lives of victims, while investigating and prosecuting offenses involving child human trafficking.

''(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Grants awarded under subsection (a) may be used for—

''(1) the establishment or enhancement of specialized training programs for law enforcement officers, first responders, health care officials, child welfare officials, juvenile justice personnel, prosecutors, and judicial personnel to—

''(A) identify victims and acts of child human trafficking;

''(B) address the unique needs of child victims of human trafficking;

''(C) facilitate the rescue of child victims of human trafficking;

''(D) investigate and prosecute acts of human trafficking, including the soliciting, patronizing, or purchasing of commercial sex acts from children, as well as training to build cases against complex criminal networks involved in child human trafficking; and

''(E) utilize, implement, and provide education on safe harbor laws enacted by States, aimed at preventing the criminalization and prosecution of child sex trafficking victims for prostitution offenses, and other laws aimed at the investigation and prosecution of child human trafficking;

''(2) the establishment or enhancement of dedicated anti-trafficking law enforcement units and task forces to investigate child human trafficking offenses and to rescue victims, including—

''(A) funding salaries, in whole or in part, for law enforcement officers, including patrol officers, detectives, and investigators, except that the percentage of the salary of the law enforcement officer paid for by funds from a grant awarded under this section shall not be more than the percentage of the officer's time on duty that is dedicated to working on cases involving child human trafficking;

''(B) investigation expenses for cases involving child human trafficking, including—

''(i) wire taps;

''(ii) consultants with expertise specific to cases involving child human trafficking;

''(iii) travel; and

''(iv) other technical assistance expenditures;

''(C) dedicated anti-trafficking prosecution units, including the funding of salaries for State and local prosecutors, including assisting in paying trial expenses for prosecution of child human trafficking offenders, except that the percentage of the total salary of a State or local prosecutor that is paid using an award under this section shall be not more than the percentage of the total number of hours worked by the prosecutor that is spent working on cases involving child human trafficking;

''(D) the establishment of child human trafficking victim witness safety, assistance, and relocation programs that encourage cooperation with law enforcement investigations of crimes of child human trafficking by leveraging existing resources and delivering child human trafficking victims' services through coordination with—

''(i) child advocacy centers;

''(ii) social service agencies;

''(iii) Federal, tribal, or State governmental health service agencies;

''(iv) housing agencies;

''(v) legal services agencies; and

''(vi) nongovernmental organizations and shelter service providers with substantial experience in delivering wrap-around services to victims of child human trafficking; and

''(E) the establishment or enhancement of other necessary victim assistance programs or personnel, such as victim or child advocates, child-protective services, child forensic interviews, or other necessary service providers; and

''(3) the establishment or enhancement of problem solving court programs for trafficking victims that include—

''(A) mandatory and regular training requirements for judicial officials involved in the administration or operation of the court program described under this paragraph;

''(B) continuing judicial supervision of victims of child human trafficking, including case worker or child welfare supervision in collaboration with judicial officers, who have been identified by a law enforcement or judicial officer as a potential victim of child human trafficking, regardless of whether the victim has been charged with a crime related to human trafficking;

''(C) the development of a specialized and individualized, court-ordered treatment program for identified victims of child human trafficking, including—

''(i) State-administered outpatient treatment;

''(ii) life skills training;

''(iii) housing placement;

''(iv) vocational training;

''(v) education;

''(vi) family support services; and

''(vii) job placement;

''(D) centralized case management involving the consolidation of all of each child human trafficking victim's cases and offenses, and the coordination of all trafficking victim treatment programs and social services;

''(E) regular and mandatory court appearances by the victim during the duration of the treatment program for purposes of ensuring compliance and effectiveness;

''(F) the ultimate dismissal of relevant non-violent criminal charges against the victim, where such victim successfully complies with the terms of the court-ordered treatment program; and

''(G) collaborative efforts with child advocacy centers, child welfare agencies, shelters, tribal services, where appropriate, and nongovernmental organizations with substantial experience in delivering wrap-around services to victims of child human trafficking to provide services to victims and encourage cooperation with law enforcement.

''(c) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity shall submit an application to the Attorney General for a grant under this section in such form and manner as the Attorney General may require.

''(2) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—An application submitted under this subsection shall—

''(A) describe the activities for which assistance under this section is sought;

''(B) include a detailed plan for the use of funds awarded under the grant;

''(C) provide such additional information and assurances as the Attorney General determines to be necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section; and

''(D) disclose—

''(i) any other grant funding from the Department of Justice or from any other Federal department or agency for purposes similar to those described in subsection (b) for which the eligible entity has applied, and which application is pending on the date of the submission of an application under this section; and

''(ii) any other such grant funding that the eligible entity has received during the 5-year period ending on the date of the submission of an application under this section.

''(3) PREFERENCE.—In reviewing applications submitted in accordance with paragraphs (1) and (2), the Attorney General shall give preference to grant applications if—

''(A) the application includes a plan to use awarded funds to engage in all activities described under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (b);

''(B) the application includes a plan by the State or unit of local government to continue funding of all activities funded by the award after the expiration of the award; or

''(C) the application includes a plan by an Indian tribe, State, or unit of local government to reduce the occurrence of trafficking of Indian children or provide support services to Indian children who are victims of human trafficking.

''(d) DURATION AND RENEWAL OF AWARD.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant under this section shall expire 3 years after the date of award of the grant.

''(2) RENEWAL.—A grant under this section shall be renewable not more than 2 times and for a period of not greater than 2 years.

''(e) EVALUATION.—The Attorney General shall—

''(1) enter into a contract with a nongovernmental organization, including an academic or nonprofit organization, that has experience with issues related to child human trafficking and evaluation of grant programs to conduct periodic evaluations of grants made under this section to determine the impact and effectiveness of programs funded with grants awarded under this section;

''(2) instruct the Inspector General of the Department of Justice to review evaluations issued under paragraph (1) to determine the methodological and statistical validity of the evaluations; and

''(3) submit the results of any evaluation conducted pursuant to paragraph (1) to—

''(A) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate; and

''(B) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

''(f) MANDATORY EXCLUSION.—An eligible entity awarded funds under this section that is found to have used grant funds for any unauthorized expenditure or otherwise unallowable cost shall not be eligible for any grant funds awarded under the block grant for 2 fiscal years following the year in which the unauthorized expenditure or unallowable cost is reported.

''(g) COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT.—An eligible entity shall not be eligible to receive a grant under this section if within the 5 fiscal years before submitting an application for a grant under this section, the grantee has been found to have violated the terms or conditions of a Government grant program by utilizing grant funds for unauthorized expenditures or otherwise unallowable costs.

''(h) ADMINISTRATIVE CAP.—The cost of administering the grants authorized by this section shall not exceed 5 percent of the total amount expended to carry out this section.

''(i) FEDERAL SHARE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of the cost of a program funded by a grant awarded under this section shall be—

''(A) 70 percent in the first year;

''(B) 60 percent in the second year; and

''(C) 50 percent in the third year, and in all subsequent years.

''(2) AWARDS TO INDIAN TRIBES.—The Attorney General may waive the cost sharing requirements in paragraph (1) for a grant awarded under this section to an Indian tribe.

''(j) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING; FULLY OFFSET.—For purposes of carrying out this section, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, is authorized to award not more than $7,000,000 of the funds available in the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund, established under section 3014 of title 18, United States Code, for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.

''(k) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'child' means a person under the age of 18;

''(2) the term 'child advocacy center' means a center created under subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13001 et seq.);

''(3) the term 'child human trafficking' means 1 or more severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102)) involving a victim who is a child;

''(4) the term 'eligible entity' means a State, Indian tribe, or unit of local government that—

''(A) has significant criminal activity involving child human trafficking;

''(B) has demonstrated cooperation between Federal, State, local, and, where applicable, tribal law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and social service providers in addressing child human trafficking;

''(C) has developed a workable, multi-disciplinary plan to combat child human trafficking, including—

''(i) the establishment of a shelter for victims of child human trafficking, through existing or new facilities;

''(ii) the provision of trauma-informed, gender-responsive rehabilitative care to victims of child human trafficking;

''(iii) the provision of specialized training for law enforcement officers and social service providers for all forms of human trafficking, with a focus on domestic child human trafficking;

''(iv) prevention, deterrence, and prosecution of offenses involving child human trafficking, including soliciting, patronizing, or purchasing human acts with children;

''(v) cooperation or referral agreements with organizations providing outreach or other related services to runaway and homeless youth;

''(vi) law enforcement protocols or procedures to screen all individuals arrested for prostitution, whether adult or child, for victimization by sex trafficking and by other crimes, such as sexual assault and domestic violence; and

''(vii) cooperation or referral agreements with State child welfare agencies and child advocacy centers; and

''(D) provides an assurance that, under the plan under subparagraph (C), a victim of child human trafficking shall not be required to collaborate with law enforcement officers to have access to any shelter or services provided with a grant under this section;

''(5) the term 'Indian child' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Child Welfare Act (25 U.S.C. 1903); and

''(6) the term 'Indian tribe' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

''(l) GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY; SPECIALIZED VICTIMS' SERVICE REQUIREMENT.—No grant funds under this section may be awarded or transferred to any entity unless such entity has demonstrated substantial experience

providing services to victims of human trafficking or related populations (such as runaway and homeless youth), or employs staff specialized in the treatment of human trafficking victims.''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (22 U.S.C. 7101 note) is amended by striking the item relating to section 203 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 203. Victim-centered child human trafficking deterrence block grant program.''.

SA 305. Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING GRANTS.

Section 520J of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 290bb-41) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting ''**MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS**'' before ''**TRAINING**''; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking ''ILLNESS'' and inserting ''HEALTH'';

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting ''and other categories of individuals, as determined by the Secretary,'' after ''emergency services personnel'';

(C) in paragraph (5)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''grant to—'' and inserting ''grant for evidence-based programs for the purpose of—''; and

(ii) by striking subparagraphs (A) through (C) and inserting the following:

''(A) recognizing the signs and symptoms of mental illness; and

''(B)(i) providing education to personnel regarding resources available in the community for individuals with a mental illness and other relevant resources; or

''(ii) the safe de-escalation of crisis situations involving individuals with a mental illness.''; and

(D) in paragraph (7), by striking '', $25,000,000'' and all that follows through the period and inserting ''$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2020.''.

SA 306. Ms. HIRONO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title I, add the following:

SEC. 118. INCREASE IN U VISA ANNUAL LIMIT.

Section 214(p)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(p)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''10,000'' and inserting ''30,000''.

SA 307. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. __. REVOCATION OF IMMIGRATION BENEFITS FOR ALIENS CONVICTED OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If an alien is convicted of human trafficking or any conspiracy related to human trafficking, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall—

(1) revoke any immigration benefit granted to such alien, including deferred action or other relief from removal provided pursuant to policies implemented under, or substantially similar to policies implemented under, an Executive action set out under subsection (b); and

(2) place such alien in expedited proceedings for removal from the United States after the alien completes any term of imprisonment for such a conviction.

(b) EXECUTIVE ACTIONS.—The Executive actions set out under this subsection are the following:

(1) The memorandum from the Director of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Civil Immigration Enforcement: Priorities for the Apprehension, Detention, and Removal of Aliens'' dated March 2, 2011.

(2) The memorandum from the Director of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion Consistent with the Civil Immigration Enforcement Priorities of the Agency for the Apprehension, Detention, and Removal of Aliens'' dated June 17, 2011.

(3) The memorandum from the Principal Legal Advisor of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Case-by-Case Review of Incoming and Certain Pending Cases'' dated November 17, 2011.

(4) The memorandum from the Director of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Civil Immigration Enforcement: Guidance on the Use of Detainers in the Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Criminal Justice Systems'' dated December 21, 2012.

(5) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Southern Border and Approaches Campaign'' dated November 20, 2014.

(6) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Policies for the Apprehension, Detention and Removal of Undocumented Immigrants'' dated November 20, 2014.

(7) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Secure Communities'' dated November 20, 2014.

(8) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children and with Respect to Certain Individuals Who Are the Parents of U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents'' dated November 20, 2014.

(9) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Expansion of the Provisional Waiver Program'' dated November 20, 2014.

(10) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Policies Supporting U.S. High-Skilled Businesses and Workers'' dated November 20, 2014.

(11) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Families of U.S. Armed Forces Members and Enlistees'' dated November 20, 2014.

(12) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Directive to Provide Consistency Regarding Advance Parole'' dated November 20, 2014.

(13) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Policies to Promote and Increase Access to U.S. Citizenship'' dated November 20, 2014.

(14) The memorandum from the President entitled ''Modernizing and Streamlining the U.S. Immigrant Visa System for the 21st Century'' dated November 21, 2014.

(15) The memorandum from the President entitled ''Creating Welcoming Communities and Fully Integrating Immigrants and Refugees'' dated November 21, 2014.

SA 308. Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ___—TRAFFICKING AWARENESS TRAINING FOR HEALTH CARE

SEC. __01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Trafficking Awareness Training for Health Care Act of 2015''.

SEC. ___02. DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES.

(a) GRANT OR CONTRACT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF BEST PRACTICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, and in consultation with the Administration on Children and Families and other agencies with experience in serving victims of human trafficking, shall award, on a competitive basis, a grant or contract to an eligible entity to train health care professionals to recognize and respond to victims of a severe form of trafficking.

(2) DEVELOPMENT OF EVIDENCE-BASED BEST PRACTICES.—An entity receiving a grant under paragraph (1) shall develop evidence-based best practices for health care professionals to recognize and respond to victims of a severe form of trafficking, including—

(A) consultation with law enforcement officials, social service providers, health professionals, experts in the field of human trafficking, and other experts, as appropriate, to inform the development of such best practices;

(B) the identification of any existing best practices or tools for health professionals to recognize potential victims of a severe form of trafficking; and

(C) the development of educational materials to train health care professionals on the best practices developed under this subsection.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—Best practices developed under this subsection shall address—

(A) risk factors and indicators to recognize victims of a severe form of trafficking;

(B) patient safety and security;

(C) the management of medical records of patients who are victims of a severe form of trafficking;

(D) public and private social services available for rescue, food, clothing, and shelter referrals;

(E) the hotlines for reporting human trafficking maintained by the National Human Trafficking Resource Center and the Department of Homeland Security;

(F) validated assessment tools for the identification of victims of a severe form of trafficking; and

(G) referral options and procedures for sharing information on human trafficking with a patient and making referrals for legal and social services as appropriate.

(4) PILOT PROGRAM.—An entity receiving a grant under paragraph (1) shall design and implement a pilot program to test the best practices and educational materials identified or developed with respect to the recognition of victims of human trafficking by health professionals at health care sites located near an established anti-human trafficking task force initiative in each of the 10 administrative regions of the Department of Health and Human Services.

(5) ANALYSIS AND REPORT.—Not later than 24 months after the date on which an entity implements a pilot program under paragraph (4), the entity shall—

(A) analyze the results of the pilot programs, including through an assessment of—

(i) changes in the skills, knowledge, and attitude of health care professionals resulting from the implementation of the program;

(ii) the number of victims of a severe form of trafficking who were identified under the program;

(iii) of those victims identified, the number who received information or referrals for services offered; and

(iv) of those victims who received such information or referrals—

(I) the number who participated in follow up services; and

(II) the type of follow up services received;

(B) determine, using the results of the analysis conducted under subparagraph (A), the extent to which the best practices developed under this subsection are evidence-based; and

(C) submit to the Secretary of Health and Human Services a report concerning the pilot program and the analysis of the pilot program under subparagraph (A), including an identification of the best practices that were identified as effective and those that require further review.

(b) DISSEMINATION.—Not later than 30 months after date on which a grant is awarded to an eligible entity under subsection (a), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall—

(1) collaborate with appropriate professional associations and health care professional schools to disseminate best practices identified or developed under subsection (a) for purposes of recognizing potential victims of a severe form of trafficking; and

(2) post on the public website of the Department of Health and Human Services the best practices that are identified by the as effective under subsection (a)(5).

SEC. __03. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) The term ''eligible entity'' means an accredited school of medicine or nursing with experience in the study or treatment of victims of a severe form of trafficking.

(2) The term ''eligible site'' means a health center that is receiving assistance under section 330, 399Z–1, or 1001 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b, 280h-5, and 300).

(3) The term ''health care professional'' means a person employed by a health care provider who provides to patients information (including information not related to medical treatment), scheduling, services, or referrals.

(4) The term ''HIPAA privacy and security law'' has the meaning given to such term in section 3009 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300jj–19).

(5) The term ''victim of a severe form of trafficking'' has the meaning given to such term in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102).

SEC. __04. NO ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title, and this title shall be carried out using amounts otherwise available for such purpose.

SA 309. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 101, strike line 1 and all the follows through page 112, line 24 and insert the following:

SEC. 302. HERO ACT.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The illegal market for the production and distribution of child abuse imagery is a growing threat to children in the United States. International demand for this material creates a powerful incentive for the rape, abuse, and torture of children within the United States.

(2) The targeting of United States children by transnational criminal networks is a threat to the homeland security of the United States. This threat must be fought with trained personnel and highly specialized counter-child-exploitation strategies and technologies.

(3) The United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security serves a critical national security role in protecting the United States from the growing international threat of child exploitation and human trafficking.

(4) The Cyber Crimes Center of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement is a vital national resource in the effort to combat international child exploitation, providing advanced expertise and assistance in investigations, computer forensics, and victim identification.

(5) The returning military heroes of the United States possess unique and valuable skills that can assist law enforcement in combating global sexual and child exploitation, and the Department of Homeland Security should use this national resource to the maximum extent possible.

(6) Through the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child Rescue Corps program, the returning military heroes of the United States are trained and hired to investigate crimes of child exploitation in order to target predators and rescue children from sexual abuse and slavery.

(b) CYBER CRIMES CENTER, CHILD EXPLOITATION INVESTIGATIONS UNIT, AND COMPUTER FORENSICS UNIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle H of title VIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 451 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 890A. CYBER CRIMES CENTER, CHILD EXPLOITATION INVESTIGATIONS UNIT, COMPUTER FORENSICS UNIT, AND CYBER CRIMES UNIT.

''(a) CYBER CRIMES CENTER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may operate, within United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a Cyber Crimes Center (referred to in this section as the 'Center').

''(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Center shall be to provide investigative assistance, training, and equipment to support United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's domestic and international investigations of cyber-related crimes.

''(b) CHILD EXPLOITATION INVESTIGATIONS UNIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may operate, within the Center, a Child Exploitation Investigations Unit (referred to in this subsection as the 'CEIU').

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The CEIU—

''(A) shall coordinate all United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement child exploitation initiatives, including investigations into—

''(i) child exploitation;

''(ii) child pornography;

''(iii) child victim identification;

''(iv) traveling child sex offenders; and

''(v) forced child labor, including the sexual exploitation of minors;

''(B) shall, among other things, focus on—

''(i) child exploitation prevention;

''(ii) investigative capacity building;

''(iii) enforcement operations; and

''(iv) training for Federal, State, local, tribal, and foreign law enforcement agency personnel, upon request and subject to the availability of funds;

''(C) may provide training, technical expertise, support, or coordination of child exploitation investigations, as needed, to cooperating law enforcement agencies and personnel;

''(D) shall provide psychological support and counseling services for United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel engaged in child exploitation prevention initiatives, including making available other existing services to assist employees who are exposed to child exploitation material during investigations;

''(E) is authorized to collaborate with the Department of Defense and the National Association to Protect Children for the purpose of the recruiting, training, equipping and hiring of wounded, ill, and injured veterans and transitioning service members, through the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child Rescue Corps program; and

''(F) shall collaborate with other governmental, nongovernmental, and nonprofit entities approved by the Secretary for the sponsorship of, and participation in, outreach and training activities.

''(3) DATA COLLECTION.—The CEIU shall collect and maintain data concerning—

''(A) the total number of suspects identified by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

''(B) the number of arrests by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, disaggregated by type, including—

''(i) the number of victims identified through investigations carried out by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and

''(ii) the number of suspects arrested who were in positions of trust or authority over children;

''(C) the number of cases opened for investigation by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and

''(D) the number of cases resulting in a Federal, State, foreign, or military prosecution.

''(4) AVAILABILITY OF DATA TO CONGRESS.—In addition to submitting the reports required under paragraph (7), the CEIU shall make the data collected and maintained under paragraph (3) available to the committees of Congress described in paragraph (7).

''(5) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The CEIU is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to accomplish the functions set forth in paragraphs (2) and (3).

''(6) ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to accept monies and in-kind donations from the Virtual Global Taskforce, national laboratories, Federal agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and educational institutions to create and expand public awareness campaigns in support of the functions of the CEIU.

''(B) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—Gifts authorized under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulation for competition when the services provided by the entities referred to in such subparagraph are donated or of minimal cost to the Department.

''(7) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the HERO Act of 2015, and annually for the following 4 years, the CEIU shall—

''(A) submit a report containing a summary of the data collected pursuant to paragraph (3) during the previous year to—

''(i) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

''(ii) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

''(iii) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

''(iv) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

''(v) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives; and

''(vi) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) make, to the extent feasible, a copy of each report submitted under subparagraph (A) publicly available on the website of the Department.

''(c) COMPUTER FORENSICS UNIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may operate, within the Center, a Computer Forensics Unit (referred to in this subsection as the 'CFU').

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The CFU—

''(A) shall provide training and technical support in digital forensics to—

''(i) United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel; and

''(ii) Federal, State, local, tribal, military, and foreign law enforcement agency personnel engaged in the investigation of crimes within their respective jurisdictions, upon request and subject to the availability of funds;

''(B) shall provide computer hardware, software, and forensic licenses for all computer forensics personnel within United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

''(C) shall participate in research and development in the area of digital forensics, in coordination with appropriate components of the Department; and

''(D) is authorized to collaborate with the Department of Defense and the National Association to Protect Children for the purpose of recruiting, training, equipping, and hiring wounded, ill, and injured veterans and transitioning service members, through the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child Rescue Corps program.

''(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The CFU is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to accomplish the functions set forth in paragraph (2).

''(4) ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to accept monies and in-kind donations from the Virtual Global Task Force, national laboratories, Federal agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and educational institutions to create and expand public awareness campaigns in support of the functions of the CFU.

''(B) EXEMPTION FROM FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION.—Gifts authorized under subparagraph (A) shall not be subject to the Federal Acquisition Regulation for competition when the services provided by the entities referred to in such subparagraph are donated or of minimal cost to the Department.

''(d) CYBER CRIMES UNIT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may operate, within the Center, a Cyber Crimes Unit (referred to in this subsection as the 'CCU').

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The CCU—

''(A) shall oversee the cyber security strategy and cyber-related operations and programs for United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

''(B) shall enhance United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement's ability to combat criminal enterprises operating on or through the Internet, with specific focus in the areas of—

''(i) cyber economic crime;

''(ii) digital theft of intellectual property;

''(iii) illicit e-commerce (including hidden marketplaces);

''(iv) Internet-facilitated proliferation of arms and strategic technology; and

''(v) cyber-enabled smuggling and money laundering;

''(C) shall provide training and technical support in cyber investigations to—

''(i) United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement personnel; and

''(ii) Federal, State, local, tribal, military, and foreign law enforcement agency personnel engaged in the investigation of crimes within their respective jurisdictions, upon request and subject to the availability of funds;

''(D) shall participate in research and development in the area of cyber investigations, in coordination with appropriate components of the Department; and

''(E) is authorized to recruit participants of the Human Exploitation Rescue Operative (HERO) Child Rescue Corps program for investigative and forensic positions in support of the functions of the CCU.

''(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The CCU is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements to accomplish the functions set forth in paragraph (2).''.

(2) TABLE OF CONTENTS AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 note) is amended by adding after the item relating to section 890 the following:

''Sec. 890A. Cyber crimes center, child exploitation investigations unit, computer forensics unit, and cyber crimes unit.''.

(c) HERO CORPS HIRING.—It is the sense of Congress that Homeland Security Investigations of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement should, to the maximum extent possible, hire, recruit, train, and equip wounded, ill, or injured military veterans (as defined in section 101, title 38, United States Code) who are affiliated with the HERO Child Rescue Corps program for investigative, analyst, and forensic positions.

(d) INVESTIGATING CHILD EXPLOITATION.—Section 307(b)(3) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 187(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(D) conduct research and development for the purpose of advancing technology for the investigation of child exploitation crimes, including child victim identification, trafficking in persons, and child pornography, and for advanced forensics.''.

TITLE IV—COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY PAY-AS-YOU-GO ACT

SEC. 401. BUDGET COMPLIANCE.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go-Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled ''Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation'' for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

SA 310. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 57, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

''(3) activities of law enforcement agencies to find homeless and runaway youth, including salaries and associated expenses for retired Federal law enforcement officers assisting the law enforcement agencies in finding homeless and runaway youth; and

SA 311. Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

TITLE ____—RAPE SURVIVOR CHILD CUSTODY

SEC. ____01. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Rape Survivor Child Custody Act''.

SEC. ____02. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) COVERED FORMULA GRANT.—The term ''covered formula grant'' means a grant under—

(A) part T of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796gg et seq.) (commonly referred to as the ''STOP Violence Against Women Formula Grant Program''); or

(B) section 41601 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043g) (commonly referred to as the ''Sexual Assault Services Program'').

(2) TERMINATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''termination'' means, when used with respect to parental rights, a complete and final termination of the parent's right to custody of, guardianship of, visitation with, access to, and inheritance from a child.

(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require a State, in order to receive an increase in the amount provided to the State under the covered formula grants under this title, to have in place a law that terminates any obligation of a person who fathered a child through rape to support the child.

SEC. ____03. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Men who father children through rape should be prohibited from visiting or having custody of those children.

(2) Thousands of rape-related pregnancies occur annually in the United States.

(3) A substantial number of women choose to raise their child conceived through rape and, as a result, may face custody battles with their rapists.

(4) Rape is one of the most under-prosecuted serious crimes, with estimates of criminal conviction occurring in less than 5 percent of rapes.

(5) The clear and convincing evidence standard is the most common standard for termination of parental rights among the 50 States, territories, and the District of Columbia.

(6) The Supreme Court established that the clear and convincing evidence standard satisfies due process for allegations to terminate or restrict parental rights in Santosky v. Kramer (455 U.S. 745 (1982)).

(7) Currently only 10 States have statutes allowing rape survivors to petition for the termination of parental rights of the rapist based on clear and convincing evidence that the child was conceived through rape.

(8) A rapist pursuing parental or custody rights causes the survivor to have continued interaction with the rapist, which can have traumatic psychological effects on the survivor, and can make it more difficult for her to recover.

(9) These traumatic effects on the mother can severely negatively impact her ability to raise a healthy child.

(10) Rapists may use the threat of pursuing custody or parental rights to coerce survivors into not prosecuting rape, or otherwise harass, intimidate, or manipulate them.

SEC. ___04. INCREASED FUNDING FOR FORMULA GRANTS AUTHORIZED.

The Attorney General shall increase the amount provided to a State under the covered formula grants in accordance with this title if the State has in place a law that allows the mother of any child that was conceived through rape to seek court-ordered termination of the parental rights of her rapist with regard to that child, which the court is authorized to grant upon clear and convincing evidence of rape.

SEC. ___05. APPLICATION.

A State seeking an increase in the amount provided to the State under the covered formula grants shall include in the application of the State for each covered formula grant such information as the Attorney General may reasonably require, including information about the law described in section ___04.

SEC. ___06. GRANT INCREASE.

The amount of the increase provided to a State under the covered formula grants under this title shall be equal to not more than 10 percent of the average of the total amount of funding provided to the State under the covered formula grants under the 3 most recent awards to the State.

SEC. ___07. PERIOD OF INCREASE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall provide an increase in the amount provided to a State under the covered formula grants under this title for a 2-year period.

(b) LIMIT.—The Attorney General may not provide an increase in the amount provided to a State under the covered formula grants under this title more than 4 times.

SEC. ___08. ALLOCATION OF INCREASED FORMULA GRANT FUNDS.

The Attorney General shall allocate an increase in the amount provided to a State under the covered formula grants under this title such that—

(1) 25 percent the amount of the increase is provided under the program described in section ___02(1)(A); and

(2) 75 percent the amount of the increase is provided under the program described in section ___02(1)(B).

SEC. ___09. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title $5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019.

SA 312. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle D—Expanded Training

SEC. 231. EXPANDED TRAINING RELATING TO TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

Section 105(c)(4) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7105(c)(4)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Appropriate personnel'' and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Appropriate personnel'';

(2) in subparagraph (A), as redesignated, by inserting '', including members of the Service (as such term is defined in section 103 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3903))'' after ''Department of State''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) TRAINING COMPONENTS.—Training under this paragraph shall include—

''(i) a distance learning course on trafficking-in-persons issues and the Department of State's obligations under this Act, which shall be designed for embassy reporting officers, regional bureaus' trafficking-in-persons coordinators, and their superiors;

''(ii) specific trafficking-in-persons briefings for all ambassadors and deputy chiefs of mission before such individuals depart for their posts; and

''(iii) at least annual reminders to all personnel referred to in clauses (i) and (ii), including appropriate personnel from other Federal departments and agencies, at each diplomatic or consular post of the Department of State located outside the United States of—

''(I) key problems, threats, methods, and warning signs of trafficking in persons specific to the country or jurisdiction in which each such post is located; and

''(II) appropriate procedures to report information that any such personnel may acquire about possible cases of trafficking in persons.''.

SA 313. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle D—Prioritization Within the Department of State

SEC. 231. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State will be more effective in carrying out duties mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if the Office status is changed to that of a Bureau within the Department hierarchy;

(2) the change in status from Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to a Bureau can be accomplished without increasing the number of personnel or the budget of the current Office;

(3) a Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking would be more effective in carrying out duties mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if the Bureau were headed by an Assistant Secretary with direct access to the Secretary of State, rather than an Ambassador-at-Large; and

(4) the Secretary of State should review the current use of the 24 Assistant Secretary positions authorized by section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)) and make appropriate revisions, consolidations, and eliminations, to ensure that those positions reflect the highest Departmental needs and foreign policy priorities of the United States, including efforts to combat trafficking in persons.

SEC. 232. BUREAU TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 105(e) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(e)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking'' and inserting ''Bureau To Combat Trafficking in Persons'';

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking ''Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking'' and inserting ''Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons'';

(B) in the second sentence, by striking ''Office'' and inserting ''Bureau''; and

(C) in the sixth sentence, by striking ''Office'' and inserting ''Bureau''; and

(3) in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2), by striking ''Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking'' and inserting ''Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons''.

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 or in any other Act to the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking shall be deemed to be a reference to the Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

SEC. 233. REPORT REGARDING DESIGNATION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit, to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, a report detailing—

(1) for each current Assistant Secretary of State position—

(A) the title of that Assistant Secretary of State;

(B) how long that particular Assistant Secretary designation has been in existence; and

(C) whether that particular Assistant Secretary designation was legislatively mandated or authorized and, if so, the relevant statutory citation for such mandate or authorization; and

(2) whether the Secretary intends to designate 1 of the Assistant Secretary of State positions authorized under section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)) as the Assistant Secretary of State to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and the reasons for that decision.

SEC. 234. COST LIMITATION.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for ''Diplomatic and Consular Programs'' to carry out the provisions of this subtitle.

SA 314. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle D—Prioritization Within the Department of State

SEC. 231. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State will be more effective in carrying out duties mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if the Office status is changed to that of a Bureau within the Department hierarchy;

(2) the change in status from Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking to a Bureau can be accomplished without increasing the number of personnel or the budget of the current Office;

(3) a Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking would be more effective in carrying out duties mandated by Congress in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 if the Bureau were headed by an Assistant Secretary with direct access to the Secretary of State, rather than an Ambassador-at-Large; and

(4) the Secretary of State should review the current use of the 24 Assistant Secretary positions authorized by section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)) and make appropriate revisions, consolidations, and eliminations, to ensure that those positions reflect the highest Departmental needs and foreign policy priorities of the United States, including efforts to combat trafficking in persons.

SEC. 232. BUREAU TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 105(e) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7103(e)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking'' and inserting ''Bureau To Combat Trafficking in Persons'';

(2) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking ''Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking'' and inserting ''Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons'';

(B) in the second sentence, by striking ''Office'' and inserting ''Bureau''; and

(C) in the sixth sentence, by striking ''Office'' and inserting ''Bureau''; and

(3) in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2), by striking ''Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking'' and inserting ''Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons''.

(b) REFERENCE.—Any reference in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 or in any other Act to the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking shall be deemed to be a reference to the Bureau to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

SEC. 233. REPORT REGARDING DESIGNATION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit, to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, a report detailing—

(1) for each current Assistant Secretary of State position—

(A) the title of that Assistant Secretary of State;

(B) how long that particular Assistant Secretary designation has been in existence; and

(C) whether that particular Assistant Secretary designation was legislatively mandated or authorized and, if so, the relevant statutory citation for such mandate or authorization; and

(2) whether the Secretary intends to designate 1 of the Assistant Secretary of State positions authorized under section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2651a(c)(1)) as the Assistant Secretary of State to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and the reasons for that decision.

SEC. 234. COST LIMITATION.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated for ''Diplomatic and Consular Programs'' to carry out the provisions of this subtitle.

SA 315. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle D—Special Watch List

SEC. 231. COUNTRIES ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST FOR 4 CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT ARE DOWNGRADED AND REINSTATED ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST.

Section 110(b)(2) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7107(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(F) COUNTRIES ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST FOR 4 CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT ARE DOWNGRADED AND REINSTATED ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST.—Notwithstanding subparagraphs (D) and (E), a country that—

''(i) was included on the special watch list described in subparagraph (A) for 4 consecutive years after the date of the enactment of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008; and

''(ii) was subsequently included on the list of countries described in paragraph (1)(C), may not thereafter be included on the special watch list described in subparagraph (A) for more than 1 consecutive year.''.

SA 316. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title II, add the following:

Subtitle D—Special Watch List

SEC. 231. COUNTRIES ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST FOR 4 CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT ARE DOWNGRADED AND REINSTATED ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST.

Section 110(b)(2) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7107(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(F) COUNTRIES ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST FOR 4 CONSECUTIVE YEARS THAT ARE DOWNGRADED AND REINSTATED ON SPECIAL WATCH LIST.—Notwithstanding subparagraphs (D) and (E), a country that—

''(i) was included on the special watch list described in subparagraph (A) for 4 consecutive years after the date of the enactment of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008; and

''(ii) was subsequently included on the list of countries described in paragraph (1)(C), may not thereafter be included on the special watch list described in subparagraph (A) for more than 1 consecutive year.''.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ALEXANDER. The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet during the session of the Senate on March 24, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Continuing America's Leadership: Advancing Research and Development for Patients.''

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Jamie Garden of the committee staff on (202) 224–1409.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 16, 2015, at 4 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Examining Federal Improper Payments and the Death Master File.''

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

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that privileges of the floor be granted to the following member of my staff: Francis Cissna, during the pendency of the remainder of the 114th Congress.

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

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, pursuant to Public Law 106–286, hereby notifies the Senate of an amendment to the majority membership appointment made in the Senate on February 25, 2015, to serve on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: the Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida, Co-Chair.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d–276g, as amended, appoints the following Senator as vice chairman of the Senate delegation to the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: the Honorable AMY KLOBUCHAR of Minnesota.

The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276l, appoints the following Senator as vice chairman of the Senate delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: the Honorable PATRICK J. LEAHY of Vermont.

The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276n, as amended, appoints the following Senator as vice chairman of the U.S.-China Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: the Honorable MAZIE K. HIRONO of Hawaii.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h–276k, as amended, appoints the following Senator as vice chairman of the Senate delegation to the Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: the Honorable TIM KAINE of Virginia.

FILING DEADLINE—S. 178

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to S. 178 be set for 10:30 a.m. tomorrow, March 17.

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

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, March 17; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 178, with the time until the

cloture vote at 11 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; finally, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, at 11 a.m. tomorrow, the Senate will vote on cloture on the committee substitute to the antitrafficking bill. If cloture is not invoked, there will be a second immediate vote on cloture on the underlying bill.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator COTTON for up to 45 minutes and Senator BROWN for up to 15 minutes.

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

The Senator from Arkansas.

AMERICA'S MILITARY STRENGTH

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I speak for the first time from the Senate floor with a simple message: The world is growing ever more dangerous and our defense spending is wholly inadequate to confront the danger. To be exact:

> During the last four or five years the world has grown gravely darker. . . . We have steadily disarmed, partly with a sincere desire to give a lead to other countries, and partly through the severe financial pressure of the time. But a change must now be made. We must not continue longer on a course in which we alone are growing weaker while every other nation is growing stronger.

I wish I could take credit for those eloquent and ominous words, but I cannot. Winston Churchill sounded that warning in 1933, as Adolph Hitler had taken power in Germany.

Tragically, Great Britain and the West did not heed this warning when they might have strangled that monster in his crib.

Rather than let the locusts continue to eat away at the common defense, the Axis Powers were stronger and the West weaker, conciliating with and appeasing them, hoping their appetite for conquest and death might be sated. As we all know, however, that appetite only grew until it launched the most terrible war in human history.

Today, perhaps more tragically because we ought to benefit from those lessons of history, the United States is again engaged in something of a grand experiment of the kind we saw in the 1930s. As then, military strength is seen in many quarters as a cause of military adventurism. Strength and confidence in the defense of our interests, alliances, and liberties is not seen to deter aggression but to provoke it.

Rather than confront our adversaries, our President apologizes for our supposed transgressions. The administration is harsh and unyielding to our friends, soothing and suffocating to our enemies. The President minimizes the threat we confront, in the face of territory seized, weapons of mass destruction used and proliferated, and innocents murdered.

The concrete expression of this experiment is our collapsing defense budget. For years, we have systematically underfunded our military, marrying this philosophy of retreat with a misplaced understanding of our larger budgetary burdens. We have strained our fighting forces today to the breaking point, even as we have eaten away at our investments in future forces, creating our own ''locust years,'' as Churchill would have put it. Meanwhile, our long-term debt crisis looks hardly any better, even as we ask our troops to shoulder the burden of deficit reduction, rather than shoulder the arms necessary to keep the peace.

The results of this experiment, it should come as no surprise, are little different from the results from the same experiment in the 1930s. American weakness and leading from behind have produced nothing but a more dangerous world. When we take stock of that world and our position in it, there can be no doubt a change must now be made.

An alarm should be sounding in our ears. Our enemies, sensing weakness and hence opportunity, have become steadily more aggressive. Our allies, uncertain of our commitment and capability, have begun to conclude that they must look out for themselves, even where it is unhelpful to stability and order. Our military, suffering from years of neglect, has seen its relative strength decline to historic levels.

Let's start with the enemy who attacked us on September 11: radical Islamists. During his last campaign, the President was fond of saying Al Qaeda was ''on the run.'' In a fashion, I suppose this was true. Al Qaeda was and is running wild around the world, now in control of more territory than ever before. This global network of Islamic jihadists continues to plot attacks against America and the West. They sow the seeds of conflict in failed states and maintain active affiliates throughout Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, the Greater Middle East, and South Asia.

Further, Al Qaeda in Iraq was let off the mat when the President disregarded its commanders' best military judgment and withdrew all troops from Iraq in 2011. Given a chance to regroup, it morphed into the Islamic State, which now controls much of Syria and Iraq. The Islamic State cuts the heads off of Americans, burns alive hostages from allied countries, executes Christians, and enslaves women and girls. The Islamic State aspires and actively plots to attack us here at home, whether by foreign plots or by recruiting a lone wolf in our midst.

The President's suggestions, in other words, that the war on terror is over or ending, are far from true. Indeed, the Director of National Intelligence recently testified that ''when the final accounting is done, 2014 will have been the most lethal year for global terrorism in the 45 years such data has been compiled.'' Yet the President will not even speak our enemy's name.

The threat of radical Islamic terrorism brings us to Iran, the world's worst state sponsor of terrorism. My objections to the ongoing nuclear negotiations are well known and need not be rehearsed at length here. I will simply note that the deal foreshadowed by the President, allowing Iran to have uranium enrichment capabilities and accepting an expiration date on any agreement—to quote Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—''doesn't block Iran's path to the bomb; it paves Iran's path to the bomb.'' If you think, as I do, the Islamic State is dangerous, a nuclear-armed Islamic Republic is even more so.

Recall, after all, what Iran already does without the bomb. Iran is an outlaw regime that has been killing Americans for 35 years, from Lebanon to Saudi Arabia, to Iraq. Unsurprisingly, Iran is only growing bolder and more aggressive as America retreats from the Middle East. Ayatollah Khamenei continues to call for Israel's elimination. Iranian-backed Shiite militias now control much of Iraq, led by Qassem Suleimani, the commander of the Quds Force, a man with the blood of hundreds of American solders on his hands.

Iran continues to prop up Bashar al-Assad's outlaw regime in Syria. Iranian-aligned Shiite militants recently seized Sana'a, the capital of Yemen. Hezbollah remains Iran's cat's paw in Lebanon. Put simply, Iran dominates or controls five capitals in its drive for regional hegemony. Moreover, Iran has rapidly increased the size and capability of its ballistic missile arsenal, recently launching new a satellite. Just 2 weeks ago, Iran blew up a mock U.S. aircraft carrier in naval exercises and publicized it with great fanfare.

Iran does all of these things without the bomb. Just imagine what it will do with the bomb. Imagine the United States further down the road of appeasement, largely defenseless against this tyranny.

You do not have to imagine much, though; simply look to North Korea. Because of a naive and failed nuclear agreement, that outlaw state acquired nuclear weapons. Now America is largely handcuffed, watching as this rogue regime builds more bombs and missiles capable of striking the U.S. homeland and endangering our allies.

But perhaps an even more obvious result of this experiment with retreat is the resurgence or Russia. The President aspired for a reset with Russia and made one-sided concessions such as withdrawing ballistic missile defenses from Poland and the Czech Republic.

So Vladimir Putin saw these concessions as weakness and continues to violate the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The West refused to assist the new Ukranian President, so Putin invaded and stole Crimea. The Western response was modest sanctions. So Russian-supplied rebels shot a civilian airliner out of the sky in the heart of Europe. The President dithers in providing defensive weapons to Ukraine, so Putin reignites the war, takes Debaltseve, and stages outside Mariupol. When bombs and bullets were called for, blankets were rushed to the frontline.

That is just in Ukraine. Putin is also testing NATO's resolve. Russia has tested a ballistic missile with multiple warheads, designed to threaten our European allies in direct violation of the INF treaty. Russian bombers recently flew over the English Channel, disrupting British civil aviation. Estonia asserts that Russia kidnapped an Estonian security officer on its Russian border. And Russia continues to intimidate and harass other NATO partners such as Sweden, Moldova, and Georgia.

Finally, Russia's ability to continue its aggression will only grow because its defense spending has more than quadrupled over the last 15 years. Moreover, the Russian military today is qualitatively better than the old Soviet military, despite its smaller size, as Admiral Bill Gortney, Commander of NORAD testified just last week.

Some say that falling oil prices will restrain Putin. In fact, Russia's Finance Minister recently announced 10 percent across-the-board budget cuts to all departments of their government—except defense. This should give us some insights into Putin's intentions and ambitions.

Among major nation-state competitors, Russia's military buildup is exceeded only by China's. Over the same period of the last 15 years, China's military spending has increased by 600 percent. Moreover, the bulk of the spending is directed quite clearly against the United States as China pursues its anti-access and area denial strategy. This strategy is designed to keep American forces outside the so-called first island chain and give China regional hegemony from the Korean Peninsula to the Indonesian archipelago. Thus, China is on a spending spree for more submarines, aircraft carriers, antiship ballistic missiles, and other air and naval systems.

The impact of China's rapid military expansion is clear. China has challenged Japan's control of the Senkaku Islands and purported to establish an exclusive air defense zone over the East China Sea. By expanding its activities in the Spratlys, China is precipitating a confrontation with the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Taiwan. Further, China's repressive actions against protesters in Hong Kong only serve to undermine Taiwanese support of reunification, which itself could spark further Chinese aggression. All of this is to say nothing of China's cyber theft and economic espionage against American interests or its atrocious record on human rights.

While America has retreated, not only have our enemies been on the march, our allies, anxious for years about American resolve, now worry increasingly about American capabilities. With the enemy on their borders, many have begun to conclude they have no choice but to take matters into their own hands, sometimes in ways unhelpful to our interests.

Even our core NATO allies appear unsettled by our recent experiment with retreat. The French intervened in Mali to confront Islamic insurgents, but without adequate advance coordination, they quickly found themselves in need of emergency logistical support from our Air Force.

Turkey just announced a new missile defense system that will not be interoperable with NATO systems. Greece has a new governing coalition that is hinting at greater cooperation with Russia.

The picture is no better outside NATO. Japan has significantly increased its defense budget because of a rising China and may feel compelled to reinterpret its post-war constitutional ban on overseas ''collective self-defense.'' Saudi Arabia just entered a nuclear pact with South Korea, likely a response to Iran's nuclear program. Similarly, the Persian Gulf States have increased defense spending by 44 percent in the last 2 years. While we should encourage our partners to carry their share of the defense load, the Sunni states are building up their defenses, not to help us, but because they fear we won't help them against Iran.

We should never take our allies for granted, but we also shouldn't take for granted the vast influence our security guarantees give us with our allies' behavior. Germany and Japan are not nuclear powers today because of our nuclear umbrella. Israel didn't retaliate against Hussein's Scud missile attacks in the gulf war, and thus we preserved the war coalition because we asked them for restraint and committed significant resources to hunting down Scud launchers. This kind of influence has been essential for American security throughout the postwar period, yet it has begun to wane as our allies doubt our commitment and our capabilities.

Make no mistake, our military capabilities have declined. In recent years, we have dramatically underfunded our military to the detriment of our security. To fully understand the military aspect of our experiment with retreat, some historical perspective is needed.

Defense spending reached its peak in 2008, when the base budget and wartime spending combined was $760 billion. Incredibly, the total defense budget plummeted by $200 billion in the last year.

Today, defense spending is only 16 percent of all Federal spending, a historic low rivaled only by the post-Cold War period. To give some context, during the Cold War, defense spending regularly accounted for 60 percent of Federal spending. But if we don't end the experiment of retreat, this President will leave office with a mere 12 percent of all Federal dollars spent on defense.

The picture is no prettier when cast in the light of our economy. In the early Cold War, defense spending was approximately 9 percent of gross domestic product. Today, it sits at a paltry 3.5 percent. But our defense budget isn't just about numbers and arithmetic. It is about our ability to accomplish the mission of defending our country from all threats.

The consequences of these cuts are real, concrete, and immediate. As former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta explained, these cuts to defense spending have put us on the path to the smallest Army since before World War II, the smallest Navy since World War, and the smallest Air Force ever. Let's look more closely at each service.

Our Army has shrunk by nearly 100,000 troops. The Army has lost 13 combat brigades, and only a third of the remaining brigades are fully ready to meet America's threats. Further, investments in modernization have fallen by 25 percent. If we continue on the current path, the Army will lose another 70,000 soldiers, and every modernization program designed to preserve the Army's technological advantage will be eviscerated.

The Navy, meanwhile, has had to cancel five ship deployments and significantly delay the deployment of a carrier strike group. The Navy's mission requires it to keep three carrier strike groups and amphibious readiness groups prepared to respond to a major crisis within 30 years, but the Navy can only fulfill a third of its mission because of cuts to maintenance and training.

Similarly, the Air Force is less than one-third of its size 25 years ago. Moreover, the Air Force depends upon modernization to preserve its technological edge, perhaps more than any other service, but current funding levels could require cancellation of airborne-refueling tankers and surveillance aircraft, set back fighter and nuclear weapons modernization, and shorten the life of tactical airlift and weapons recovery programs.

Nor are these impacts just immediate; they will be felt long into the future. Key programs, once divested, will be difficult to restart. Manufacturing competencies will be lost, the skilled-labor pool will shrink, and the defense manufacturing base will atrophy. Today's weapons systems and equipment will begin to age and break down. Our troops won't be able to train, and their weapons and equipment won't be ready to fight. In short, we will have a hollow force incapable of defending our national security.

What is to be done then? Our experiment with retreat must end. This Congress must again recognize that our national security is the first priority of this government. Our national security strategy must drive our military budget rather than the budget setting our strategy. The military budget must reflect the threats we face rather than the budget defining those threats.

In the face of these threats and after years of improvident defense cuts, we must significantly increase our defense spending. After hundreds of billions of dollars of these cuts, the base defense budget next year is set to be only $498 billion. That is wholly inadequate. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter recently testified: ''I want to be clear about this—parts of our nation's defense strategy cannot be executed under sequestration.'' All four of the military service chiefs, in addition, have testified that these cuts put American lives at risk.

The President has proposed a modest increase to $534 billion, which is better than nothing. Senators JOHN MCCAIN and JACK REED have called for the full repeal of sequestration, which would raise the base defense budget to $577 billion. I applaud and thank these veterans of both the Senate and our military for this correct and clear-eyed recommendation.

Yet I also want to highlight their support for the recommendation of the National Defense Panel, which estimated that base defense spending for fiscal year 2016 should be $611 billion at a minimum.

The National Defense Panel was a bipartisan group of eminent national security experts convened by Congress to analyze the Quadrennial Defense Review. They unanimously concluded that then-Secretary of Defense Bob Gates' fiscal year 2012 budget was the proper starting point to analyze our current defense needs—for at least two reasons.

First, Secretary Gates had already initiated significant defense cuts and reforms totaling $478 billion. It is hard to say, given those efforts, that his 2012 budget had left much fat in the Department of Defense.

Second, Secretary Gates and the Department assembled and submitted this budget in late January 2010 and early 2011, or just months before the Budget Control Act with its draconian defense cuts became law. That budget, therefore, was the last time the Defense Department was able to submit a threat- and strategy-based budget, instead of the budget-based strategies we have seen over the last 4 years.

This logic is compelling, even unassailable. Thus, I agree we should spend not merely $611 billion on the base defense budget next year but substantially more than that. After all, as we have seen earlier, and as the National Defense Panel has noted, the world has become much more dangerous since 2011. Islamic terrorism, Iranian aggression, Russian revisionism, and Chinese interventionism have all worsened—to say nothing of other challenges. The $611 billion is necessary, but it is not sufficient.

What then should our defense budget be next year? I will readily admit we cannot be sure how much is needed above $611 billion. As the National Defense Panel explained, ''because of the highly constrained and unstable budget environment under which the Department has been working,'' the Quadrennial Review ''is not adequate as a comprehensive long-term planning document.'' Thus, the panel recommends that Congress ''should ask the Department for such a plan, which should be developed without undue emphasis on current budgetary restraints.''

I endorse this recommendation. In the meantime, though, even if we can't specify a precise dollar amount, we can identify the critical needs on which to spend the additional money.

First, our military faces a readiness crisis from budget cuts and a decade of war. Our young soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are the greatest weapons systems our country could ever have, but they need training—live-fire exercises, flight time, and so forth. Their weapons, equipment, and vehicles need maintenance and reset. If we faced a major crisis today, our troops would no doubt suffer more casualties and greater likelihood of mission failure. Of course, they know all of this, and morale suffers because of it.

Second and related, our military is shrinking rapidly to historically small levels. This decline must be reversed. Our Navy probably needs 350-plus ships, not a budget-dictated 260 ships. The Army needs to maintain its pre-9/11 end strength of 490,000 Active-Duty soldiers, as the Marine Corps needs 182,000 marines. The Air Force needs more aircraft of virtually every type—bomber, fighter, airlift, and surveillance. It is the deepest folly to reduce our military below its 1990s size as the world has grown considerably more dangerous since that quiet decade.

Third, we should increase research, development, and procurement funds to ensure our military retains its historic technological advantage, particularly as our adversaries gain more access to advanced, low-cost technologies. This should start with the essential tools of command and control: cyber space, space, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. The Air Force needs to modernize its bomber and mobility aircraft, in particular. The Navy needs to continue to improve its surface-ship and especially its submarine capabilities.

These critical priorities will no doubt be expensive, probably tens of billions of dollars more than the $611 billion baseline suggested by the National Defense Panel. Because the massive cuts to our defense budget resulted in part from record deficits, the question arises, however: Can we afford all of this?

The answer is yes—without question and without doubt, yes. The facts here, as we have seen, are indisputable. The defense budget has been slashed by hundreds of billions of dollars over the last 6 years. The defense budget is only 16 percent of all Federal spending, a historic low and heading much lower if we don't act. And using the broadest measure of affordability and national priorities, defense spending as a percentage of our economy, last year we spent only 3.5 percent of our national income on defense, which is approaching historic lows and may surpass them by 2019.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that our military needs $700 billion in the coming year, an immediate increase of $200 billion. To some, that may sound staggering and unrealistic, yet it would still be barely 4 percent of our economy—a full 1 percent lower than the 5 percent from which President Reagan started his buildup. If we increased spending merely to that level—which both President Reagan and a Democratic House considered dangerously low—we would spend $885 billion on defense next year.

Furthermore, trying to balance the budget through defense cuts is both counterproductive and impossible. First, the threats we face will eventually catch up with us, as they did on September 11, and we will have no choice but to increase our defense budget. When we do, it will cost more to achieve the same end state of readiness and modernization than it would have without the intervening cuts. This was the lesson we learned in the 1980s after the severe cuts to defense in the 1970s.

Second, we need a healthy, growing economy to generate the government revenue necessary to fund our military and balance the budget. In our globalized world, our domestic prosperity depends heavily on the world economy, which, of course, requires stability and order. Who provides that stability and order? The U.S. military.

Finally, in the short term, ephemeral gains in deficit reduction from defense cuts merely mask the genuine driver of our long-term debt crisis: retirement and health care programs. The Budget Control Act ultimately failed to control these programs—a failure not only of promises made to our citizens but also because the deficit-reduction default became annual discretionary funding, particularly the defense budget. In the 4 years since, relative deficits have declined, alleviating the imperative to reform these programs yet doing nothing to solve their long-term insolvency and our debt crisis.

A better question to ask is: Can we afford to continue our experiment in retreat? I suggest we cannot. Imagine a world in which we continue our current trajectory, where America remains in retreat and our military loses even more of its edge. What would such a world look like?

It is not a pretty picture. Russia might soon possess the entire north shore of the Black Sea. An emboldened

Putin, sensing Western weakness for what it is, could be tempted to replay his Ukrainian playbook in Estonia or Latvia, forcing NATO into war or obsolescence.

China could escalate its island conflicts in the East and South China Seas. Without an adequate American response—or worse, with China denying American forces access to those seas—countries as diverse as South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines would feel compelled to conciliate or confront regional stability.

While North Korea already possesses nuclear weapons, Iran appears to be on the path to a nuclear bomb, whether it breaks or upholds a potential nuclear agreement. Not only might Iran use its weapon, but its nuclear umbrella would also embolden its drive for regional hegemony. Moreover, Iran could provide its terrorist proxies with nuclear materials.

And does anyone doubt that Saudi Arabia and other Sunni states will follow Iran down this path? Nuclear tripwires may soon ring the world's most volatile region, increasing the risk of nuclear war, as well as the possibility that Islamist insurgents might seize nuclear materials if they can topple the right government.

Islamic terrorists, meanwhile, will continue to rampage throughout Syria and Iraq, aspiring always for more attacks in Europe and on American soil. Emboldened by America's retreat and by their own battlefield successes, they will continue to attract thousands of hateful fighters from around the world, all eager for the chance to kill Americans.

All these are nightmare scenarios, but sadly not unrealistic ones. The alternative, however, is not war. No leader—whether a President, a general or platoon leader—wishes to put his troops in harm's way. War is an awful thing, and it takes an unimaginable toll on the men and women who fight it and their families.

But the best way to avoid war is to be willing and prepared to fight a war in the first place. That is the alternative: military strength and moral confidence in the defense of America's national security. Our enemies and allies alike must know that aggressors will pay an unspeakable price for challenging the United States.

The best way to impose that price is global military dominance. When it comes to war, narrow margins are not enough, for they are nothing more than an invitation to war. We must have such hegemonic strength that no sane adversary would ever imagine challenging the United States. ''Good enough'' is not and will never be good enough.

We can look to a very recent historic example to prove this point. Just 25 years ago, a dominant American military ended the Cold War without firing a shot. If we return to the dominance of that era, aggressive despots such as Vladimir Putin, rising powers such as China, and state sponsors of terrorism such as Iran's Ayatollahs will think long and hard before crossing us. And while we may not deter terrorist groups such as the Islamic State, Al Qaeda, and Hezbollah, we will kill their adherents more effectively, while also sending a needed lesson to their sympathizers: Join and you too will die.

Bringing about this future by being prepared for war will no doubt take a lot of money. But what could be a higher priority than a safe and prosperous America, leading a stable and orderly world? What better use of precious taxpayer dollars? What more lessons from history do we need?

I began with Churchill's prescient words from 1933. Alas, the West did not take his advice, did not rearm and prepare to deter Nazi Germany. The predictable result was the German remilitarization of the Rhineland and the long march to war. Now let me close with his regretful words from 1936:

> The era of procrastination, of half-measures, of soothing and baffling expedients, of delays, is coming to its close. In its place we are entering a period of consequences.

Churchill later called World War II the unnecessary war because it could have been stopped so easily with Western strength and confidence in the 1930s. I know many of you in this Chamber stand with me, and I humbly urge you all—Democrat and Republican alike—to join in rebuilding our common defense, so that we will not face our own unnecessary war, our own period of consequences.

I will now yield the floor, but I will never yield in the defense of America's national security on any front or at any time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR COTTON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, we just had an opportunity to hear from our new colleague from Arkansas, who has laid out the national security requirements of our country quite effectively. As someone who has served in the military himself in recent conflicts, he speaks with extra authority. I want to congratulate the junior Senator from Arkansas for an extraordinary initial speech and look forward to his leadership on all of these issues in the coming years.

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

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

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, time is running out for us to extend the Children's Health Insurance Program, a program that began almost 20 years ago in this body and the other body and that right now is taking care of 10 million children—the children of parents who in most cases have full-time jobs that don't offer insurance and full-time jobs that don't pay enough so these families can buy insurance for their children.

We know that CHIP works. It works for parents, and it works for children. We know that if we don't act now, States will start rolling back the CHIP programs. Legislatures are adjourning almost as we speak. We need to provide States with certainty so they can budget for CHIP now and 4 years into the future.

Unfortunately, the deal currently being floated in the House would not fund CHIP for a full 4 years. Instead, if reports are true, it would permanently repeal the sustainable growth rate—the so-called doctors fix—while failing to provide much needed certainty to children's health care. I want to take care of doctors. I want to make sure this is done right because it affects doctors. It affects doctors' ability to deliver care. It affects those patients whom doctors serve. But how do we leave here taking care of the doctors permanently and shortchanging children, only giving them 2 years of health insurance? It is past time we fix SGR.

In 2001, when I was a member of the House, Congressman BILIRAKIS as the Republican chair of the Health Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee and I as the Democratic ranking member wrote the first SGR fix, so I have been fixing the SGR for a long time. But we shouldn't be focused in this body and that body on paying doctors at the cost of shortchanging our children. Our priority must be passing a full 4-year, clean extension of the current CHIP program, on which 130,000 children in my State depend—again, sons and daughters of working Oklahoma families and working Ohio families who are working in jobs where they simply don't get insurance and don't get paid enough that they can buy insurance. These 10 million children in our Nation depend on this.

A 4-year extension of CHIP will provide Congress, the administration, and our States with the necessary time to collect relevant data and information to fully analyze and prepare for the future of kids covered. Doing only 2 years is not just shortchanging these children and creating anxiety in their families, it is also truncating our ability, compromising our ability to really understand how to fully integrate CHIP into a health care system overall in the future. We should be providing certainty and stability for these families, not the cliche of kicking the can down the road in favor of a short-term fix. A

4-year extension provides that certainty and will make a difference into the next decade on how, in fact, we take care of low-income children.

In Ohio alone, CHIP provides insurance to 130,000 children. Enrollment is expected to grow over the next couple of years. I have traveled across Ohio in the last few weeks and have met with parents and children, doctors and nurses, to discuss CHIP. I have been to Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Toledo Children's Hospital, Columbus's Nationwide Children's Hospital and Cleveland's Rainbow Children's Hospital. This morning, I was in Mahoning Valley in Boardman, a suburb of Youngstown, at the Akron Children's Hospital. More than 6,000 children in Mahoning Valley rely on CHIP for care.

I met with Ericka Flaherty, a Youngstown parent whose children could lose comprehensive coverage if we don't extend CHIP now. Her son Chase was born prematurely, born at 27 weeks. He was immediately diagnosed with a number of chronic conditions, including a heart defect, chronic lung disease, and asthma. Chase spent more than 4 months in neonatal care, and, thanks to outstanding doctors at Akron Children's Hospital, he is alive and growing today. But he needs many routine medical visits—visits his family simply can't afford. His parents work, but they simply can't afford to treat his conditions, including visits to lung specialists, neurologists, an eye specialist, and the regular hospital checkup every 2 months. Without CHIP, Ericka would face significant financial hurdles in getting Chase the care he needs.

I also met with Jessica Miller of Lisbon, a community just south of Mahoning County, during this roundtable. Her youngest son, Payton, was diagnosed with a serious respiratory condition. He had to be life-flighted to Akron Children's Hospital to receive care when he couldn't breathe. He has been diagnosed with type 1 juvenile diabetes. His grandmother joined us. Jessica told me that she is so thankful for CHIP, that she gets Payton all the care he needs to treat these conditions—care she and her husband Justin would have a hard time affording otherwise. Justin is working as a paramedic. He was called out and couldn't be at our meeting today. Justin is full time in nursing school. They are making something of their lives. I don't want them to be anxious about the health care of their children.

Throughout Ohio, I hear the same thing: Providing health insurance to children like Chase and Payton isn't just the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. It means children do better in school. They feel better when they are in school. They miss fewer days in school because they get preventive care because their health care needs are taken care of.

CHIP has been around 18, almost 20 years. It has always been bipartisan. If we follow these children later in life, we see they have higher rates of going to college and higher earnings than non-CHIP kids who don't have insurance. By all kinds of very quantifiable measurements, CHIP is not just good for those families, it is not just the right thing to do to continue to fund CHIP over 4 years, it is also the smart thing to do for our country.

Together with more than 40 of my colleagues, I introduced the Protecting & Retaining Our Children's Health Insurance Program—PRO-CHIP—Act, which is a clean 4-year extension of funding for CHIP. PRO-CHIP would protect the Pediatric Quality Measures Program and provide funding to sustain this program through 2019.

It would also extend the Performance Incentive Program, which provides bonus payments to States that help increase Medicaid enrollment among children, because if we provide insurance for low-income children, they are going to do better, and society is going to do better. They are less likely to end up in the emergency room for something much more serious. For instance, for a child without insurance who has an earache, the mother and father think that it is going to cost a lot of money to go to the doctor and that maybe it will just get better, they wait a week. Into the second week, the pain is worse. The child can't sleep. The child cries. They eventually go to the emergency room, which costs a lot more money than going to the doctor's office, with the possibility that the child has had hearing loss. That is just one example of why we want to provide insurance and get them into the doctor early rather than waiting until later.

PRO-CHIP has been endorsed by every children's hospital in Ohio, the Association of Children's Hospitals, virtually every children's hospital, I believe, in the country, and other national groups—the March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Children's Hospital Association, and Families USA, all of which want a clean CHIP. All of them want a 4-year extension for all the reasons we talked about.

More than 1,500 organizations from across the country—including more than 75 groups from Ohio and a number from Oklahoma, the Presiding Officer's State—have written to Congress asking us to ''take action as soon as possible to provide a four-year funding extension for CHIP.''

Groups, including the Urban Institute, the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, and the Bipartisan Policy Center, have all noted the importance of the current CHIP program.

The Urban Institute estimated that an additional 1.1 million children will become uninsured if separate CHIP coverage were eliminated. Again, these are sons and daughters of parents who have jobs—jobs that don't provide insurance and jobs that don't pay enough that they can afford insurance. This would be a 40-percent increase, if this were to happen, in the number of uninsured children in the United States relative to the number projected under the ACA with the continuation of CHIP.

The Bipartisan Policy Center has called for extending CHIP for more than just the 2 years, but note what they say when calling for a CHIP extension: ''Two years does not provide sufficient time for state and federal elected officials and agencies to address major programmatic changes sought by policymakers on both sides of the aisle and at both levels of government.''

Support for CHIP has always been bipartisan. Senator HATCH, Republican from Utah; Senator Kennedy, Democrat from Massachusetts; a number of us on the Energy and Commerce Committee in the House of Representatives back in 1997, Republicans and Democrats alike; and Chairman BILIRAKIS and I and others helped to write this legislation which has been successful at bringing the uninsured rate for children down by more than 50 percent. I am encouraged that Members of both parties have shown a willingness to come together. Senate Democrats will have a hard time supporting any plan that doesn't extend CHIP for a full 4 years.

I want to support the sustainable growth rate. I helped write the original one. I have supported it for 20 years. We shouldn't be doing it like this on a temporary 1- or 2-year basis. This is finally going to get done right, but we don't do that and then leave out the children by only providing 2 years.

Parents like Ericka and Jessica face enough uncertainty with their children's health. Most of us in this body are parents, and a number of us are grandparents. Most of us, because we dress like this and we are Senators and have good insurance provided by taxpayers—we may have anxiety about our children and our grandchildren's health, but we don't have anxiety about their insurance and their ability to go to hospitals and doctors and specialists to get care. Certainly, we are anxious about our children and all the things that could happen, but our anxiety doesn't reach into the whole sphere of worrying about how to provide insurance for children.

Ericka and Jessica can't be anything but anxious when they hear that CHIP could end, and they understand that it should be 4 years. CHIP gives parents like them peace of mind that they will be able to get their children the care they need without bankrupting those families. We need to make sure these parents continue to have that peace of mind with a 4-year extension. The PRO-CHIP legislation we have introduced in the Senate with almost four dozen cosponsors makes sure those kids don't lose critical coverage by saying no to any deal that doesn't fund CHIP for the full 4 years.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:55 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES

PATRICIA M. LOUI–SCHMICKER, OF HAWAII, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK OF THE UNITED STATES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 20, 2019. (REAPPOINTMENT)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

IAN C. KELLY, OF ILLINOIS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO GEORGIA.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. ARNOLD W. BUNCH, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. STEPHEN W. WILSON

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. JAMES F. CALDWELL, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. MICHAEL T. FRANKEN

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 16, 2015:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

CARLOS A. MONJE, JR., OF LOUISIANA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

MANSON K. BROWN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA'S RICHARD W. ''DICK'' JONES, JR.

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a good friend, Mr. Richard W. ''Dick'' Jones, Jr. I am saddened by his passing, but fortunate to have experienced his friendship, kind-hearted nature, selfless character, and unwavering loyalty.

Dick was a native Northwest Floridian, born and raised on the beautiful Emerald Coast. He was born in Pensacola, Florida on May 7, 1930, to Richard W. Jones, Sr. and Agnes Curry Jones. Dick was a standout athlete, and, following his high school graduation, he attended the University of Florida, where he played on the school's varsity tennis team. Dick's passion for both tennis and the Florida Gators were constants throughout his life, and he was known as a top tennis player in Northwest Florida and an avid Gator fan.

Dick was also a true patriot, who answered the call of duty and served our Nation with honor and distinction as a member of the United States Air Force. Following his Air Force service, Dick began a successful career in the petroleum industry, while he and his loving wife, Sally, raised their two children.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize the life of Dick Jones. As with so many great Americans, Dick's impact cannot be truly captured in words. To all those who had the pleasure of knowing him, his legacy will forever live on in cherished memories, and he will long be remembered as a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend. My wife Vicki and I extend our prayers and deepest condolences to his wife, Sally; son, John R. (Rusty) Jones and wife Becky; son, Richard W. (Rick) Jones, III and wife Tonya; four grandchildren, Jessica Jones and husband Jonathan, Katherine Ann Jones, Grace Ellen Jones, and Richard W. (Will) Jones, IV; one great-grandchild, Mason Jones; brother, Robert C. (Bert) Jones and wife Dolores; sister, Dixie Jones Beal and husband Burnell; aunt, Mary Ann Curry and her family; dear friends and brother-in-law, John C. Green and John's daughter, Sherry Herring and family; and the entire Jones family.

CONGRESSIONAL TEACHER AWARD

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of outstanding public school teachers in Florida's 16th Congressional District.

I was once told that children are 25 percent of the population, but they are 100 percent of the future.

And it's true. The education of a child is an investment, not only in that student, but in the future of our country.

Therefore, I established the Congressional Teacher Awards to honor educators for their ability to teach and inspire students.

An independent panel has chosen Amanda Rojas from Haile Middle School in Bradenton for Florida's 16th District 2015 Congressional Teacher Award for her accomplishments as a middle school social studies teacher.

The following teachers were also nominated and chosen for recognition:

Edward Hashey from Wilkinson Elementary School in Sarasota for his accomplishments as a Fifth Grade teacher.

Christi McDowell-Cameron from Brookside Middle School for her accomplishments as the International Baccalaureate Coordinator.

Russell Finger from Suncoast Polytechnical High, for his accomplishments as a high school science teacher.

Michelle Carpenter from Team Success School, for her accomplishments as a first grade teacher.

On behalf of the people of Florida's 16th District I congratulate each of these outstanding teachers and offer my sincere appreciation for their service and dedication.

MOWEAQUA CENTRAL A&M GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, Congressman RODNEY DAVIS and I rise today to acknowledge the outstanding victory of the Moweaqua Central A&M Girls Basketball Team as State Champions.

The Raiders won the Class 1A State Championship in a 51–41 victory. We would like to congratulate Coach Tom Dooley, Assistant Coaches Todd Rork and Mike Garner, the Athletic Director Jess Lehman and Athletic Trainer Timothy Berger who have worked hard to help the Central A&M High School Raiders achieve this victory.

Members of the state championship team include: Ryan Dooley, Taylor Jordan, Kaylee Collins, Kaylee Hennings, Kaylan Schinzler, Kayla Gibson, Jorji Sparrgrove, Olivia Jordan, Mikah Maples, Shelby Dailey, Gabby Cole, Katie Conlin, Taryn Sams, Morgan Damery, and Abigail Hilton.

Congressman DAVIS and I both look forward to the continued success of the Moweaqua Central A&M Raiders and we extend our best wishes for another outstanding season next year.

TRIBUTE TO WADSWORTH, OHIO

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a city I am proud to call home: Wadsworth, Ohio.

This past year, Wadsworth celebrated its bicentennial. It was an opportunity to reflect on how far our city has come and how much we can achieve in the years ahead.

Founded in 1814, the city was named after Elijah Wadsworth, a Revolutionary War hero. Though he never lived in Wadsworth, he was an active member of his community and served as the postmaster, sheriff, and the commander of the 4th Division State Militia. He led by example and showed us just how important it is to give back to a community that has given you so much.

Wadsworth is important to me not only because it's where I have called home for more than 30 years, it's also where I raised my three children. That is why over a span of 18 years I served the city in capacities as a volunteer firefighter, a member of the Board of Zoning appeals, a member of the Planning Commission, president of the city council, and as mayor.

Now, as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, I am working on behalf of the people of Wadsworth and Ohio's 16th District to encourage economic growth in our region and solutions that hold the promise of a brighter future.

President Lincoln once said, ''The best way to predict the future is to create it.'' I came to Washington to fight to pass on a better America with more opportunities to our children and grandchildren, and each day I work toward that goal.

RECOGNIZING CHRIST TEMPLE CHURCH OF CHRIST (HOLINESS)

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and admiration that I congratulate Christ Temple Church of Christ (Holiness) U.S.A. of Gary, Indiana, as its congregation and church leaders join together in celebration of the church's 90th anniversary. The congregation, along with the church's pastor, Bishop Dr. Dale L. Cudjoe, the Executive Board, and the Board of Deacons, commemorated this momentous occasion on Sunday, March 15, 2015, at the church.

Christ Temple Church of Christ (Holiness) U.S.A. was organized by Sister Ella Bradley and Elder William A. Nolley when the two met and shared a common goal of starting a church in Gary, Indiana, that reflected the faith

they had both known growing up in Mississippi and Missouri. Sister Bradley opened her home in Gary for the very first meeting, and the church was founded on November 25, 1925. Soon after, a lot of land was purchased on Pierce Street for the construction of the church building. Finally, in 1933, under the direction of Elder Johnny James Peterson, the first church was built. Years later, the church's pastor, Elder L. M. Relf, helped to ensure that remodeling work was completed on the church. Due to the growing congregation, a larger place of worship was needed and, in 1980, under the leadership of Elder James K. Mitchell Jr., a bigger church was purchased at its current location on Washington Street in Gary. Bishop O.W. McInnis became the interim pastor in 1988 and worked to pay off the church's mortgage. Bishop McInnis appointed Elder Dale L. Cudjoe as the next pastor of the church in 1989, and he became the full-time pastor in 1993. In 2010, Pastor Cudjoe was elected to the bishopric and became the presiding prelate of the Northern Diocese Church of Christ (Holiness) U.S.A., which includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio.

Led by Bishop Cudjoe, Christ Temple Church of Christ (Holiness) U.S.A. continues to be a source of hope and charity for the community of Gary. Every week, members of the church organize a clothing and toy giveaway for those in need within the community. Through the church's youth ministry, children of the community can participate in the Youth Choir, Sunday School, and the Gym Ministry. In addition, the Brotherhood Ministry and the Temple Music Ministry programs are successful in building a spirit of unity throughout the church and the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring and congratulating Christ Temple Church of Christ (Holiness) U.S.A. in Gary, Indiana, on its 90th anniversary. For their commitment to service, and for touching the lives of countless individuals, the church leaders, parishioners, and board members are worthy of the blessings that have been bestowed upon them.

A TRIBUTE TO SEDA KHOJAYAN—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Seda Khojayan of Glendale, California.

Seda Khojayan immigrated to the United States from Iraq in 1976. Currently, she is a member of the Soroptimist International of Glendale, serves as a Commissioner on the City of Glendale Commission on the Status of Women, and on the Board of Directors of the YWCA of Glendale. Mrs. Khojayan has been a dedicated member of the Armenian Relief Society of Western U.S.A., Inc. (ARS) for over three decades, serving on its Regional Executive Board for two terms and in the capacities of Chair, Treasurer and Advisor for the ARS Sepan Chapter in Glendale.

Seda uses her professional experience as a Programmer/Data Security Analyst for a major car manufacturer and education in Economics and Public Administration, to help plan and implement fundraising efforts, including grant writing, to help Armenian organizations such as the ARS secure funding for various philanthropic, educational and social projects for low income families and for the needy. She also served as a fundraising committee member of Homenetmen Glendale ''Ararat'' Chapter, Homenetmen Navasartian Games & Festival, Armenian Cultural Foundation (ACF), and for the City of Glendale, including the Unity Fest, Man's Inhumanity to Man, and Relay For Life.

Throughout the years, Seda has received numerous awards, including the City of Glendale Commission on the Status of Women's Jewels of Glendale Women of Courage Award in 2008, the ACF's Community Service Award in 2013, and the Armenian American Chamber of Commerce's Woman in Community Service Award in 2014. Mrs. Khojayan and her husband, Shirak, have two sons, Shaun, a federal criminal defense attorney, and Dikran, an industrial engineer, and one granddaughter, Lillian.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Seda Khojayan.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SAMUEL WANG

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding young man from my district, Samuel Wang. Samuel was selected as a member of the 2015 National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, which is a great accomplishment.

The National Youth Orchestra, hosted by Carnegie Hall, is a competitive opportunity for 16 through 19 year old musicians from across the country. Samuel is a young violinist from Medford, New Jersey, who stood out among his peers and earned the high honor of being chosen to participate in this year's orchestra. The young men and women selected will perform at Carnegie Hall this summer, then tour seven cities in China. On their trip, they will have the opportunity to serve as cultural representatives of our country, share in the exchange of art and music, and collaborate and gather with young Chinese musicians.

I am honored to represent bright young people in South Jersey like Samuel, and I am excited to hear from him when he returns from his trip this summer. Best of luck, Samuel, and congratulations.

RECOGNIZING WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, to mark World Down Syndrome Day on March 21st, 2015, the San Diego Congressional Delegation honors individuals challenged by Down syndrome.

World Down Syndrome Day was established by the United Nations in 2011 and is marked each year on the 21st of March to raise awareness for those affected by this condition. Down syndrome is the most common genetic condition in the U.S., affecting approximately 400,000 Americans. Each year nearly 6,000 babies are born in the United States with Down syndrome. Over the years, research and improved therapy options have led to great advances in the health and quality of life for those affected by Down syndrome. And Congress needs to continue to build upon those efforts.

We applaud the efforts of Special Heroes and their San Diego Down Syndrome chapter for their mission to serve individuals diagnosed with Down syndrome and their families in the San Diego community—improving their daily lives by providing opportunities for success while promoting community education and engagement is paramount.

Special Heroes has partnered with The Arc of San Diego to be a valuable foundation and resource of support to many families in the San Diego Community. Mr. Speaker, the San Diego Congressional Delegation stands to recognize World Down Syndrome Day.

HONORING THE SAN ANTONIO MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the San Antonio Music Teachers Association (SAMTA) in San Antonio, Texas. SAMTA has provided education and performance opportunities for music teachers and their students, including recitals, auditions, competitions and lecture series. SAMTA provides scholarships necessary to many students who need financial assistance to continue with thier music education. Members of SAMTA serve on the faculty of schools, colleges and universities. Members also perform on the concert stage and in houses of worship. SAMTA has elevated the level of professional standards and musicianship in San Antonio and the surrounding area. We are very grateful for the service they provide to aspiring musicians in our local community.

HONORING GORDON MICHAEL HENDRIX

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Gordon Michael Hendrix. Gordon is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Gordon has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the

many years Gordon has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Gordon has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Gordon Michael Hendrix for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

''SHARK LADY'' OF MOTE PASSES AWAY AFTER NEARLY 75 YEARS OF MARINE RESEARCH

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of America's great ocean research pioneers, Dr. Eugenie Clark.

''Genie'' Clark—known as the ''Shark Lady''—founded Mote Marine Laboratory in Southwest Florida. She died at age 92 on Feb. 25 at her home in Sarasota.

Genie visited the New York Aquarium in 1922 at age nine and was fascinated by the sharks and other fish of many shapes and colors. She began sharing what she learned about the fish with others.

After carrying out a distinguished career spanning almost 75 years, raising four children and inspiring students and others, Clark will be remembered for her amazing discoveries.

Her legacy is impressive: blazing trails for women in science; inspiring generations of people from ocean experts to school children; swimming with sharks to learn about them; and founding a world-class marine laboratory that turned 60 this year.

Clark was a world authority on fish—particularly sharks and tropical sand fish. A courageous diver and explorer, Clark conducted 72 submersible dives as deep as 12,000 feet and led over 200 field research expeditions to the Red Sea and Gulf of Aqaba, Caribbean, Mexico, Japan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Thailand, Indonesia and Borneo to study sand fish, whale sharks, deep sea sharks and spotted oceanic triggerfish. She wrote three books and more than 175 articles, including research publications in leading peer-reviewed journals such as Science and a dozen popular stories in National Geographic magazine.

In 1955, Clark started the one-room Cape Haze Marine Laboratory in Placida, Fla., with her fisherman assistant and with philanthropic support and encouragement from the Vanderbilt family. The Lab thrived in partnership with its community and became Mote Marine Laboratory in 1967 to honor major benefactor William R. Mote. Today the Lab is based on City Island, Sarasota, and it hosts 24 diverse marine research and conservation programs, education programs for all ages and a major public Aquarium. The Lab has six campuses in Florida and more than 200 staff, including scientists who work in oceans surrounding all seven continents.

Clark joined the Zoology faculty at the University of Maryland in 1968, and she officially retired in 1992. She returned to Mote in 2000 as Senior Scientist and Director Emerita and later became a Trustee. There, she continued to build upon and champion the groundbreaking research that she started 60 years ago.

Clark dove as recently as June 2014, when she brought a team of volunteer research divers to study deep water triggerfish in the Solomon Islands. The divers had been searching for nests and monitoring how the fish behaved.

Clark is the recipient of three honorary degrees and numerous awards including The Explorers Club Medal; the Medal of Excellence from the American Society of Oceanographers; The NOGI award in Arts from Underwater Society of America; the Dugan Award in Aquatic Sciences from the American Littoral Society; a Gold Medal from the Society of Women Geographers; the Distinguished Fellow Award from the American Elasmobranch Society; and the Franklin L. Burr Award from the National Geographic Society. Several fish species have been named in her honor: Callogobius clarki (Goren), Sticharium clarkae (George and Springer), Enneapterygius clarkae (Holleman), and Atrobucca geniae (Ben-Tuvia and Trewavas).

Clark is survived by her four children: Hera, Aya, Tak and Niki Konstantinou, and her grandson, Eli Weiss.

A TRIBUTE TO TRACY A. STONE—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Tracy Stone, of Elysian Valley, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Tracy Stone received a Bachelor's Degree in Art History from Cornell University in New York, a Master's Degree in Architecture from The University of Texas at Austin, and in 1989, was licensed as an Architect by the State of California. In 1991, Ms. Stone opened her own firm, Tracy A. Stone Architect. The office has completed a variety of projects, including a 'green' teahouse, an animal shelter and a children's dance studio.

Ms. Stone and members of her firm created and organized the annual ''Frogtown Artwalk'' in Elysian Valley, which started in 2006, as a small event showcasing the artists and artisans inhabiting the small commercial/industrial buildings along the Los Angeles River in Elysian Valley. It has grown into a full-scale community event that engages musicians from the surrounding areas, community organizations, local residents, as well as artists and artisans. The event has also featured various activities geared to parents and youth. The Frogtown Artwalk has traditionally celebrated the relationship between the Elysian Valley and the adjacent Los Angeles River, helping to bring interest as well as attention to a long forgotten resource. In 2008, Tracy Stone and Allen Anderson established a non-profit organization, the Elysian Valley Arts Collective, which manages and funds the annual artwalk, and which has allowed the event to grow in complexity and size.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Tracy A. Stone.

CELEBRATING MS. MAXINE MILNER'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Ms. Maxine Milner, who is turning 100 years old March 23rd, 2015. She embodies the American dream as someone who has worked every day to improve the lives of her family and loved ones.

As we celebrate Ms. Milner's birth we can look back on a century filled with family and hard work. She was born in Kokomo, Indiana, and has remained a lifelong Hoosier who has never strayed far from home. In 1932, she married Edward V. Brown, and they were married for 74 years before he passed away in 2008. Shortly after marrying Edward, Maxine began working in 1935 at Crosley Radio. Crosley was eventually bought by Delco Radio where she continued to work for 39 years. Maxine was blessed with three children, four grandchildren, and is also a proud great grandmother of two. Since her retirement in 1974 she has been living out her retirement on Grissom Air Force base in Peru, Indiana.

It is an honor to wish Ms. Maxine Milner a very happy birthday and to celebrate a century of achievement. On behalf of Indiana's Second District, I am proud to recognize Maxine's birthday and wish her good health and many more birthdays.

TRIBUTE TO TODD JACOBSON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. Todd Jacobson, a history teacher at Creston High School. Mr. Jacobson received the 2014–2015 VFW High School Teacher of the Year Award.

Mr. Jacobson received this award after being nominated by fellow teacher and 2009 award recipient, Lesa Downing. Mr. Jacobson served overseas during the Gulf War, and now says that he believes that there are no two greater professions, no more honorable professions than to have been a soldier and a teacher. He feels fortunate to have been able to do both. Todd plans to use his monetary award to provide a seating area at Creston's Freedom Rock in honor of his late father-in-law, Wilbur Chubick, who served in the Navy during the early 1950s.

I applaud and congratulate Todd Jacobson for his award, for providing the youth in Iowa's 3rd congressional district the education that they will need to be successful in the future and for serving our country during the Gulf

War. I am proud to represent him, his family and his fellow teachers and students in the United States Congress. I know that my colleagues join me in congratulating Todd Jacobson and wishing him well and continued success in the future.

HONORING JOHN EVANS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to have local leaders in the business community who are civic-minded, and work hard to better the neighborhood. John Evans, the friendly face the community knows so well from Brown's Jewelers on Riverdale Avenue, has been one of those community-minded business leaders for many years.

John was born and bred in the Bronx. The grandson of a Greenwich Village artisan jeweler, he and a partner started in the jewelry business in 1967, building a successful business in the East Bronx. At age 30, John was ready for a new challenge, and took his talents to Fuji Film. For 20 years John rose through the ranks of the company, becoming upper-level management in Fuji's bio-medical engineering division.

As successful as his tenure at Fuji Film was, John decided to return to jewelry, this time at Brown's in Riverdale. For 18 years as owner, John has become a pillar of the Riverdale community. He has selflessly provided both financial and moral support to organizations throughout the entire area, including the Riverdale Jewish Community Relations Council (RJCRC), the South Riverdale Little League, the children's basketball program at the Riverdale Y, Rising Stars program at the Riverdale Y, and the Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel of Riverdale. John's warmth and positive nature are evident in everything he does, and the Riverdale community has benefitted greatly from all of his efforts.

This year, the RJCRC is honoring John with the Community Business Award at their annual Legislative Breakfast on March 15th. I want to congratulate my good friend John on this wonderful honor, and thank him for everything he has done on behalf of the Riverdale community. No one deserves this recognition or honor more than him.

HONORING CADET MAXWELL ROSE

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Cadet Maxwell Rose of Missouri for his achievement and commitment to serving our country.

Cadet Rose has reached the second milestone of the Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program, and is being promoted to the rank of Cadet 2nd Lieutenant. To complete the program and achieve this milestone, Cadet Rose had to excel in different trainings and leadership classes. He then went before a Promotion Review Board of his peers who acknowledged his achievements and awarded him this recognition. This is quite an honor as only a few distinguished cadets nationwide achieve this status.

At a young age Cadet Rose has shown an admirable commitment to serve our country, and I am very thankful for patriots like him who will lead the future generation of airmen. It is my pleasure to recognize his efforts and achievements before the House of Representatives.

A TRIBUTE TO CHERYL ORTEGA—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Cheryl Ortega of Echo Park, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Born in Los Feliz and raised in the Echo Park area of Los Angeles, California, Ms. Ortega's father's family arrived in Echo Park from Massachusetts in 1917, hoping to be part of the early movie industry. Ms. Ortega attended Los Feliz Elementary School, Our Mother of Good Counsel School, Immaculate Heart High School and Immaculate Heart College. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in French and a Bilingual Teaching Credential in Spanish.

Cheryl has been passionate about education from a very young age. She has been a teacher for nearly half a century, and has been teaching in Echo Park at Logan Span School for over two decades. Ms. Ortega's close association with the immigrant community has led her to actively advocate for people whose children she has taught in bilingual early education programs for almost 50 years. Along with her professional career, Cheryl is active and engaged in volunteering for the community and its schools. Currently, she serves on the Board of Directors of United Teachers Los Angeles, representing English Learner students and their teachers. She also serves as the Co-Chair of the Schools, Libraries, and Community Organizations of the Greater Echo Park Elysian Neighborhood Council, and has been a member of the Council through several different administrations.

Cheryl and her husband, John, have three children, John, Kristina and Sara, and five grandchildren, Danny, Jake, Amanda, Ben and Caleb.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Cheryl Ortega.

IN HONOR OF MR. MIKE MOYNIHAN

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the works of Mr. Mike Moynihan whose achievements, contributions and service to the people of New Jersey as an advocate and leader, have not gone unnoticed.

Mr. Moynihan recently retired after eighteen years with the United Way of Camden County and the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey. Mr. Moynihan has also served across the nation with the United Way for nearly thirty years.

Mike was an effective and valuable member of the United Way of Camden County as its President and CEO. He was an advocate for the needs of the whole community, assisting in the merger that created a powerful and effective United Way in our area. I know Mike as a vital member of the community, and I enjoyed our time working together.

In addition to his work with the United Way, Mike also serves on the executive committee of the Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs at Rutgers University, the Camden County Government Ethics Board, and has also been involved in a variety of community service organizations.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Moynihan is a great man who demonstrates for us all the good that can be accomplished by pairing true leadership and great compassion. I join with my community and all of New Jersey in honoring the achievements of this truly exceptional man.

HONORING BRYSON DEAN GRAU

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Bryson Dean Grau. Bryson is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Bryson has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Bryson has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Bryson has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Bryson Dean Grau for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

REMEMBERING JIM ''LIBBY'' LIBERATORE

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a great man in my district, Jim ''Libby'' Liberatore, who passed away this month at the age of 60. Mr. Liberatore was a former Burlington Township fire chief, and dedicated his life to emergency services and caring for his community.

It is not often that we come across public servants who not only embody the spirit of service, but who approach that service with passion and excitement. Libby was truly one of those men—he began his career as a volunteer firefighter in 1971 and went on to fill countless positions and duties over the next 43 years. He spent six years as fire chief and received the State Firefighter of the Year Award in 1992.

His friends and colleagues describe him as the key individual responsible for bringing people together. Mr. Liberatore organized educational trips to conventions, encouraged a spirit of healthy competition, and led fundraisers for the fire station. His devotion to those around him never went unnoticed, and the South Jersey community is greatly improved because of his life and work.

It is my sincere hope that Libby will continue be an inspiration to those who knew him, and that we can all strive to reflect the same values of service, love, and dedication he personified. May he rest in peace.

TRIBUTE TO MAX MEKUS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Max Mekus for his many years of service on the Ringgold County Board of Health.

For the past 26 years, Dr. Mekus has served as a faithful servant to his county. All members of this board are volunteers and have jurisdiction over public health matters in the county.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending Dr. Max Mekus for his service to Ringgold County and wish him the best in his retirement from his duties. I consider it an honor to represent him in Congress, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

COLUMBUS NORTH GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of the Columbus North girls basketball team.

The Columbus North girls' basketball team recently captured the team's first state championship. The Bulldogs won the Indiana High School Athletic Association Class 4A State Final 62–56 over Homestead High School.

The team embodied the best of Hoosier sportsmanship with their dedication, grit, and execution shown not only in the championship game but throughout the entire season. For the leadership and support of this championship team, congratulations and accolades go to Superintendent Dr. John Quick, Principal David Clark, Athletic Director Jeff Hester, Coach Pat McKee, the assistant coaches, all other support staff, and the 27 young women who worked so hard to achieve their championship goal.

I ask the entire 6th Congressional District to join me in congratulating the Columbus North Bulldogs for their impressive victory. I look forward to seeing what each of these talented young women will achieve in the future.

A TRIBUTE TO JEAN MALUCCIO—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Jean Maluccio of La Crescenta, California.

Jean is a savvy businesswoman who helps oversee the Maluccio Company, a local investment firm, but is best known for her unparalleled volunteerism that benefits the entire Crescenta Valley. Jean served as the Executive Director of the Crescenta Valley Chamber of Commerce for more than 18 years, without pay, and continues to have an active role with the chamber as an advisor, and helps ensure the smooth operation of chamber events that include the Taste of the Foothills and Hometown Country Fair. She served as President of the Crescenta Valley Chamber of Commerce in 1994, 1995, 2009 and 2010. Jean was also one of the founders of the Crescenta Valley Fireworks Association, a nonprofit which organizes an annual 4th of July fireworks display, and works countless hours each year arranging for the carnival entertainment, handling site permits, working with security for the event and selling tickets.

Ms. Maluccio has also been actively involved with Prom Plus, where she was on hand to secure donations of food and serve food to guests at the organization's 20th anniversary gala. She also gives of her time with Relay For Life, an annual 24-hour event held at Clark Magnet High School, where hundreds of people walk on the school field to raise funds to fight cancer. Jean not only obtains the donated food to feed the participants, but also stays for most of the 24 hours to ensure that the food is ready when needed. In addition, Jean also volunteers for the Glendale Police Department, working at the Montrose COPPS substation representing the department in many capacities and answering questions from the public.

A strong supporter of our nation's military, Jean was a driving force in raising awareness and helped organize fundraisers for the refurbishment of the war memorial at Two Strike Park in La Crescenta.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Jean Maluccio.

HONORING YAEL LEVY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, my district is blessed to have an incredible array of natural beauty, and community members that work to highlight and preserve this beauty do a wonderful service for the neighborhood. When it comes to Yael Levy, who founded Riverdale Riverfest, the commitment to highlighting the need for expanded access to our scenic Hudson waterway has turned a simple passion into a community calling.

Yael founded Riverdale Riverfest in June, 2010 in hopes of advancing the timetable for construction of the Hudson River Greenway Link, a waterfront park that would connect the Manhattan Hudson River Greenway to the old Croton Aqueduct Trail in Westchester County. The festival has become an annual tradition for many, bringing people from all over the Northwest Bronx to the campus of the College of Mount Saint Vincent, which sits on the Hudson's shores. The festival is a great time for the entire family, and offers everything from stage performances and local vendors to boat rides. By giving the community a taste of how wonderful year round public access to the waterfront would be, the festival has gone a long way toward building the public support necessary to make the Greenway Link a reality.

When Yael is not working to expand river access, she is serving as Deputy Chief of the Appeals Bureau at the Nassau County District Attorney's Office, and teaching New York Criminal Practice at St. John's University School of Law.

A proud mother of three, Yael has loved raising her family in Riverdale, and hopes to someday be able to cycle with them along the Hudson without having to start by leaving the Bronx.

This year, The Riverdale Jewish Community Relations Council is honoring Yael with the Community Builder Award at their annual Legislative Breakfast. I want to congratulate Yael on this wonderful honor, and thank her for all she has done to enhance and promote our beautiful community.

H.R. 648, THE TRAUMA SYSTEMS AND REGIONALIZATION OF EMERGENCY CARE REAUTHORIZATION ACT AND H.R. 647, THE ACCESS TO LIFE-SAVING TRAUMA CARE FOR ALL AMERICANS ACT

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged that today the House will consider two

important public health bills that deal with traumatic injury. These two bills would reauthorize a number of important trauma programs to help equip states to deliver these critical medical services.

Traumatic injury is the leading cause of death for children and adults under the age of 45. After an accident, the care received in the first hour presents the highest likelihood that the patient will survive rapid intervention after a traumatic injury. Without that immediate care, their survival rates decrease by 25 percent. Trauma systems not only provide rapid intervention at the time of injury but also include supporting equipment and personnel, and a continuum of care, including pre-hospital, hospital, and rehabilitation services

The first bill, H.R. 648, the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act, which passed the House last year, allows for planning and implementing trauma care systems in the States. The bill would also establish pilot projects for innovative models of regionalized trauma care.

The second bill, H.R. 647, the Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act, reauthorizes two additional trauma programs that will increase the availability of trauma services. Trauma centers should be available for all victims of traumatic injury. Unfortunately, many trauma centers are at serious risk of closure and financial insolvency. In fact, nearly thirty trauma centers have closed in the past fifteen years.

The programs included in this bill will provide critically needed federal funding to help cover uncompensated costs in trauma centers, support core mission trauma services, provide emergency finding to trauma centers, and address trauma center physician shortages in order to ensure the future availability of trauma care for all our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, none of these programs have received funding during the appropriations process in recent years. I hope that our consideration of these measures signals the importance of these programs to Members of Congress. I would like to thank Mr. GREEN and Mr. BURGESS, who are both leaders on trauma care, for their work on these bills.

I urge Members to support H.R. 647 and H.R. 648.

HONORING BRET MARCKX

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Bret Marckx. Bret is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Bret has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Bret has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Bret has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Bret Marckx for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD ''BUTCH'' MILLER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Richard ''Butch'' Miller, of Creston, Iowa for being inducted into the Iowa High School Officials Hall of Fame.

Over his 27 year career as a sports official, Butch officiated in hundreds of football games, 10 years of football playoffs and one championship football contest. In basketball, he officiated sectional, district and substate game for 17 years, and many girls and boys regular season games. Mr. Miller also officiated softball games and numerous junior college contests.

In addition to these many responsibilities, Butch Miller spent the early 1980s, working with the Harlem Globe Trotters as an official. He traveled to the Far East, South America, Australia and all 50 states. He worked at Madison Square Garden and all the big venues throughout the country.

I am honored to represent Butch Miller and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues in the House of Representatives join me in congratulating him on this latest honor and wish him the best of luck in the future.

IN HONOR OF THE DILLARD HIGH SCHOOL LADY PANTHERS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Dillard High School ''Lady Panthers'' Basketball team for winning the Class 5A Florida State Championship on February 21, 2015. With their 51–35 victory over the Jacksonville Paxon School for Advanced Studies the Lady Panthers brought home their 9th state championship for Hall of Fame coach Marcia Pinder.

Coach Pinder now has the most girls basketball state titles of any coach in state history, and is the winningest coach in Florida high school basketball—boys or girls—history. I would like to take this opportunity to personally congratulate all of the outstanding players and coaches for this amazing achievement:

#3 Jamesha Paul, #4 Destiny Frazier, #10 Tiera Wilks, #11 Tyler Wilks, #12 Jacaira Allen, #20 Jade Alexander, #21 Dominique Fields, #25 Jade Wyatt, #30 Ragene Grier, #31 Amber Lee, #32 Courtney Parson, #33 Harmony Adams, #35 Daymia Ware, #40 Katrina Savage, #44 Linsey Francois.

Head Coach: Marcia Pinder, Asst. Coach: George Adams, Asst. Coach: Brandon Adams, Asst. Coach: Tania Miller, Asst. Coach: Enewetok Ramsey, Asst. Coach: Chanell Washington.

The Lady Panthers displayed hard work, perseverance, and dominance on their road to winning the state championship, losing only one game all season and winning their six previous postseason games by an average of nearly 30 points. This state championship is the Lady Panthers' fifth in the last six years—a truly remarkable feat that has made South Florida very proud. I commend the players and coaching staff for their dedication to excellence, and I wish them continued success in the future. Go Lady Panthers!

A TRIBUTE TO LYNN WHITE–SHELBY—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Lynn White-Shelby of Burbank, California.

Lynn graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with a major in physical education and science, and began her teaching career at Franklin High School in the Highland Park area of Los Angeles, California. Ms. White-Shelby's business career began in the Public Relations Department at the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic, where she was promptly promoted to Secretary to the President, and later as Assistant to the President and Assistant Director of the Postgraduate Department, developing the first Chiropractic Assistants program. Lynn then went on to work at ACCO Engineered Systems in Glendale, California, as Secretary to the President, which soon led to a management position as their Corporate Insurance and Safety Administrator.

Ms. White-Shelby is a dedicated volunteer. Upon retirement, she jumped right into volunteering at the learning center at the Boys & Girls Club of Burbank and Greater East Valley, tutoring at the Main Club, and co-teaching a storytelling/acting class at Burbank's Roosevelt Elementary School. She is also a devoted and giving member of the La Providencia Guild of Children's Hospital Los Angeles, serving on numerous committees, working at the Thrift Shop and is currently the First Vice President/President Elect. Lynn also served five terms as President of the Verdugo-Glen Chapter of the American Business Women's Association (ABWA), where she has been a member for over three decades, and currently serves as the Education Chair, which awards scholarships to women students. In addition, Lynn serves as Vice Chairman on the City of Burbank's Senior Citizen Board, and as Secretary on the Boys & Girls Club of Burbank and Greater East Valley's Board of Directors.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Lynn White-Shelby.

HONORING AMELIA BOYNTON ROBINSON

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Amelia Boynton Robinson, a woman who made vast contributions to the civil rights movement.

Amelia Boynton was born on August 18, 1911 in Savannah, Georgia, and was first exposed to the fight for equal rights at the age of 9, when she joined her mother in the women's suffrage movement. She learned four principles of life that she still carries on today: daily praying, always helping and showing compassion for others, standing up for the morally right, and becoming economically independent.

After graduating from Tuskegee University, she also studied at Tennessee State, Virginia State, and Temple University. She became a registered voter in 1932, and was one of the first people to pass tests used as a barrier to prevent Southern blacks from being able to vote.

In 1930, Amelia met Dallas County extension agent Samuel Boynton. The two shared the desire to improve the lives of African-Americans in their community. As a result, the Boynton's became co-founders of the Dallas County Voters League in 1933. In 1936, Amelia and Samuel married and had two sons, Bill, Jr. and Bruce Carver. After losing her husband in 1963, Amelia was not deterred from her commitment to improve the lives of African Americans.

On February 29, 1964, Amelia Boynton ran on the Democratic ticket for a seat in Congress representing the state of Alabama, becoming the first African-American woman to run as a Democratic candidate as well as the first woman to run in the state's history.

On March 7, 1965, at the age of 53, Amelia joined fellow civil rights activist Martin Luther King, Jr. in organizing the marches from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. On that fateful day, 600 peaceful protestors tried to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge and were met with the violence known as ''Bloody Sunday.'' Forever immortalized by photograph, the nation saw Amelia Boynton beaten unconscious and left for dead on this tragic day.

''Bloody Sunday'' prompted swift action by Congress and resulted in President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965. President Johnson invited Amelia as a guest of honor during the signing of this important civil rights legislation.

After the signing of the Voting Rights Act, Amelia continued her leadership across the nation as a writer, speaker, and social change ambassador.

In 1990, Boynton was awarded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medal of Freedom. She continued to tour the United States on behalf of the Schiller Institute, which continues to defend the human and moral rights of all.

And on March 7, 2015, I was proud to have walked alongside Amelia Boynton during the 50th Anniversary of the March in Selma, Alabama. I ask my colleagues who also traced the very footsteps that Amelia took to pledge to go beyond just remembering those who sacrificed for us and resolve to carry on their legacy with action.

HONORING GWEN McCLAIN

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gwen McClain of Steeleville, Missouri, for her outstanding achievement of receiving the Patriot's Pen Award. The National Patriot's Pen Essay Contest is an annual competition sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. While over 200 essays were submitted in the state of Missouri, Gwen's stood out above the rest.

The theme of the 2015 National Patriot's Pen Contest was ''Why I appreciate America's Veterans.'' Students were encouraged to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society. As a recipient of this award, Gwen has shown remarkable creativity and maturity.

It is my pleasure to congratulate Gwen McClain on her great accomplishment before the U.S. House of Representatives.

HONORING BRANDAN SCOTT FITZGERALD

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Brandan Scott Fitzgerald. Brandan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Brandan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Brandan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Brandan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Brandan Scott Fitzgerald for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 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 $18,152,457,339,107.97. We've added $7,525,580,290,194.89 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 ANN NEILSON—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Ann Neilson of La Cañada Flintridge, California.

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Manhattan Beach, Ms. Neilson and her husband, Bob, have lived in La Cañada Flintridge for over fifty years. Well-regarded as a straightforward, tireless community leader, Ann is involved in numerous charitable organizations in La Cañada Flintridge. She has been a Docent at the Lanterman House for over two decades, and is a past and present Board member. She is active in the Assistance League of Flintridge (ALF), a nonprofit service organization of volunteers committed to serving the needs of the community through philanthropic programs developed and administered by its members. Ms. Neilson was Chair of the College Application Essay Committee, Chair of the Retired Service Volunteer Committee, a volunteer at the Bargain Box Thrift Shop, and a member of the Budget Committee. Ann's current project with ALF is Chair of their impressive Summer School program for La Cañada Flintridge children grades one through eight, a project that the league subsidizes.

Another organization that is near and dear to her heart, Ann has been active in the Girl Scouts of America for nearly forty-six years. She served as a Leader, was President of the Mt. Wilson/Vista Girl Scout Council for six years, Director and Co-Director of two Girl Scout Day Camps in La Cañada Flintridge, and Co-Organizer of the 100th Anniversary Girl Scout Float for the 2012 Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade. Ms. Neilson is also very involved in the La Cañada Flintridge Tournament of Roses Association, established in 1979, where she is a Founding Member. The association has produced volunteer-made floats for the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parades for nearly four decades, winning awards in the majority of the parades. She served as President for three years and now serves as Past President.

Married for nearly sixty years, Ann and Bob have four children, Beth, Karen, Nancy and Jim, and one grandchild, Emily.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Ann Neilson.

TRIBUTE TO DORIS DIDDY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Doris Diddy for her many years of service at the bank in Menlo, Iowa.

For the past 55 years, Ms. Diddy has served the people of Menlo as an outstanding and dedicated employee, offering reliable and friendly service. Her first day of employment was January 15, 1960, and since that time she has seen four company changes, but she has stayed at her post at the bank, serving her fellow community members. Great service goes a long way, and I am honored to see fellow Iowans like Doris providing service second to none.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending Doris Diddy for her service to Menlo and Rolling Hills Band and Trust as she faithfully defended their vault for 55 years. I consider it an honor to represent her in Congress, and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA VFW DEPARTMENT PRESIDENT BRENDA JOHNSON

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, the Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States was established to serve our nation's veterans and their families. This organization honors military service and ensures that the history of America's veterans is preserved for future generations. With the help of its 500,000 members, the organization serves those who have been called to the highest honor by maintaining veterans' memorials, sharing veterans' history with the community, volunteering at veterans' hospitals, and providing scholarships to students recognizing patriotism through art and volunteerism. One very special member, who I would like to recognize today, President Brenda Johnson, rallies the theme ''LOVE FOR OUR VETERANS'' in my home state of Pennsylvania. President Johnson, a resident of Falls Township, is a Life Auxiliary member of the VFW#6495 located on Haines Road in Levittown, Bucks County, PA, one of seven auxiliaries in my home district. I would like to thank President Johnson and the Ladies Auxiliary for their continued support and dedication and wish them continued success as they serve our veterans and their families.

IN HONOR OF LOUIS F. CAPPELLI, SR.

HON. DONALD NORCROSS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Louis F. Cappelli, Sr. for his achievements, contributions and service to the people of New Jersey as an educator, advocate and leader. Mr. Cappelli passed away at the age of eighty this year and will truly be missed.

Mr. Cappelli graduated with a bachelor's degree from Trenton State College and a Master's degree from Temple University both in education. Particularly valuing his work with young athletes, Mr. Cappelli was a physical education teacher as well as a football and track coach. Over his many years in education Mr. Cappelli served as a vice-principal at Triton High School for ten years and as its principal for another twenty-four years.

Mr. Cappelli also served the people of New Jersey in a number of civic posts. He honored his heritage through his leadership with Order of the Sons of Italy, serving as the president for his local Lodge 494 and the Grand Lodge of the State of New Jersey. Serving on the board of directors for the Cerebral Palsy School & Treatment Center of Camden County, Mr. Cappelli never shied away from being a part of a good movement.

He was an effective and beloved member of the Collingswood Board of Education, and was known as advocate for the needs of the students, even when those positions were unpopular. He was also a valued member of the Camden County College board of trustees. I knew Mr. Cappelli as a vital member of the community, who couldn't have been more proud of his family.

Mr. Speaker, Louis Cappelli, Sr. was a great man who exemplified the true meaning of community leader and family-man. I join with my community and all of New Jersey in honoring the achievements of this truly exceptional man.

A TRIBUTE TO RENAE PLANT—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Renae Plant of Los Feliz, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Born in Eumundi, Queensland, Australia, Renae moved to the United States in 1994 with dreams of becoming an actor. After living in New York for six years, where she was a model and actor, she moved to Los Angeles in 2000, and established a management company, Nebula Management. Shortly after, she began a second business, a maternity tee shirt line. In 2007, Renae and her husband, Livinio, rescued the local preschool their daughter attended, Camelot Kids, located in the Silver Lake area of Los Angeles, which had been on the verge of permanent closure. After three months of meetings, the preschool was able to re-open its doors. Now eight years later, with Ms. Plant as the Director, the preschool is known for its warm, nurturing environment that encourages a natural love of learning, and is an award-winning school with a long waiting list.

An accomplished organizer, Renae has recently given her time and talent to the Thomas Starr King Middle School, where her daughter, Ilan attends the Environmental Magnet program. In 2014, she joined the Executive Board as Treasurer of Friends of King, a parent support and fundraising group for the school, and that same year, was instrumental in raising substantial funds that will be used to paint the entire school. She launched the ''I Keep King Clean'' project with a group of parents who clean the school and carry out other beautification tasks, and was ultimately successful in obtaining a professional cleaning service for the school. In addition, Ms. Plant has been a key force with upcoming efforts to decorate the perimeter fences at the school, the ''Chain Link Art Gallery'' project, and the upcoming renovation of the library and the gym.

Married for eleven years, Renae and her husband, Livinio, have three children, Ilan, Mateo and Deklan.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Renae Plant.

HONORING POTS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, as the Congressional Representative for New York's 16th District, I am always amazed by some of the work our great civic organizations do to better the community. Part of the Solution, better known as POTS, is one of those fantastic organizations that has done so much for so very many throughout the Bronx.

POTS is a 501(c)(3) organization that serves as a ''one-stop shop'' for individuals living in poverty. The goal of the organization is to help those in need on their journeys from crisis to stability and, ultimately, self-sufficiency. By nourishing the basic needs and hunger of those who come through their doors, the organization seeks to create a positive, loving, and caring community in the Bronx. POTS offers a wide variety of services that were designed to work in concert to address diverse and complex issues. From clothing and food pantry programs to comprehensive legal services, POTS does it all. Even in instances where POTS does not provide directly needed service, their staff will link incoming clients with other groups or organizations that can help them. Simply put, anyone who comes to POTS for help gets it.

Since the very first meal in 1982, POTS has served hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, and this year will help more than 20,000 individuals, including 6,000 children. They have been an absolute godsend to the Bronx and continue to do more and more every year to help those in trying times.

The Riverdale Jewish Community Relations Council is honoring POTS with the Community Organization Award at their annual Legislative Breakfast. They have chosen a wonderful organization to honor. My sincere congratulations go out to the entire Board and staff of POTS on receiving this well deserved recognition and award.

TRIBUTE TO JACLYN EASTER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jaclyn Easter, a middle school science

teacher at Bergman Academy School in Des Moines. Jaclyn received the Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award for New Science Teachers.

This award, from the National Science Teaching Association, is given to only 25 outstanding teachers from around the country and provides mentorship, tracking and continuing opportunities for meaningful involvement with NSTA, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) professional development.

I applaud and congratulate Jaclyn for her award and for providing the youth in Iowa's 3rd Congressional 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 Jaclyn Easter and wishing her well and continued success in the future.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT WILLIAMS' SERVICE TO CARTHAGE WATER & ELECTRIC PLANT

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Robert Williams on his upcoming retirement this April as general manager of Carthage Water & Electric Plant and thank him for his service to the community.

Robert joined Carthage Water & Electric Plant in January 1998 and has been the general manager since 1999. The utility provides and distributes energy and water to residents, businesses and industrial facilities; also the company now provides fiber and wireless Internet services.

Robert's invaluable skills and expertise in the field of energy were acquired over years of experience. When he joined the U.S. Army in 1972, he was trained as a power generation technician. He was assigned to a special nuclear power program where he ran nuclear power generators in an air defense unit. After his time in the Army, Robert worked with Springfield's City Utilities, as well as utilities in Higginsville, Missouri, and Miami, Oklahoma. He graduated from Missouri State University.

During his career Robert chaired numerous utility-related organizations on a regional, state and national level. He served on the executive committee of American Public Power Association, Southwestern Power Resources Association, Missouri Public Utility Association, Tri-State Water Coalition and Southwest Missouri Joint Municipal Water Utility Commission.

I again am honored to recognize Robert Williams and congratulate him on his retirement after 40 years of dedicated work in the utility industry.

A TRIBUTE TO SUSAN B. STEWART—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Susan B. Stewart of Sunland, California.

Born and raised in Vermont, Susan Bishop moved to the Sunland-Tujunga area in the late 1990's, and in 2010, she married Richard Stewart. Well-regarded in her community, Susan is involved in numerous organizations where she puts her superior organizing skills to good use. Ms. Stewart is on the Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the chamber's Spring Carnival Committee, and has served on the Nomination Committee, By-Laws Committee and Marketing and Membership Committee. Susan is a Founding Board member and current Board member of the Sunland-Tujunga-Shadow Hills Community Fund whose mission is to support student programs at Verdugo Hills High School and the local newspaper, Voice of the Village, and is on the fund's Fireworks Festival Committee. In addition, she is an active member of the Sunland-Tujunga Rotary Club, has served as President and Secretary, and continues to help with many of their annual events, including Winterfest and the Fourth of July Parade. Past President and Past Secretary of Renaissance Speakers Toastmasters Club, Past Secretary of District 52 of Toastmasters International, she is currently an Ambassador for the organization.

With a long career as a management consultant, specializing in the areas of ethics, expansion and establishment, Susan assists with the management of her husband's painting contracting business in Sunland. Ms. Stewart is an avid horsewoman, and has taught horseback riding for many years, and one of her greatest joys is riding on the trails in the beautiful Sunland-Tujunga foothills.

Between Susan and Richard, they have four children: Moriah, Thoreau, Jake and Justin, and two grandchildren: River Jane and Elliot.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Susan B. Stewart.

PALM BEACH LAKES HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the girls basketball team of Palm Beach Lakes High School located in West Palm Beach, Florida.

On Saturday, February 21, 2015, the Lady Rams soundly defeated last year's state champions, Apopka-Wekiva, 58–40 for the team's first state championship win. Their 28–2 record and convincing win in the title game are two things for which the Palm Beach County community should be very proud of.

I want to congratulate Coach Cassandra Rahming, herself a former star at Palm Beach Lakes, and the entire team for a job very well done. I especially want to praise star guard Kayla Thigpen, who scored nine points in the second quarter, and power forward Jackie Johnson, who recorded six points, nine rebounds, three blocks and four steals in the first half.

Mr. Speaker, the Palm Beach Lakes High School Lady Rams are fine examples of young women who have excelled at athletics and academics. By working hard and focusing on the tasks at hand, they have reached the pinnacle of their sport. I wish the entire team much success and look forward to Palm Beach Lakes High School winning more championships for years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE VARSITY FOOTBALL TEAM OF CHERRY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the varsity football team of Cherry Creek High School in Greenwood Village, Colorado on winning the 2014 Colorado 5A Football State Championship game on November 29, 2014.

A crowd of more than 13,000 watched the Bruins in their stunning 25–24 win over Valor Christian High School. Late in the fourth quarter Cherry Creek scored a touchdown to bring the game to 23–24. Rather than kicking a field goal, the Bruins made a bold move opting for a two point conversion to win the game.

In this extremely close game, the young men of Cherry Creek High School's football team proved that hard work, dedication, and a little courage is a recipe for greatness. These football players were led to the championship title through the tireless leadership of their head football coach, Dave Logan, and his commendable staff.

Additionally, I recognize senior running back and star player, Milo Hall, for his superior performance in the game rushing 214 yards and scoring two touchdowns.

It is with great pride that I join with the citizens of Greenwood Village, as well as the entire Sixth Congressional District of Colorado, in congratulating the Cherry Creek Bruins on their ninth State Championship. This outstanding accomplishment is now preserved in the United States CONGRESSIONAL RECORD which will endure forever.

A TRIBUTE TO NADIA SUTTON—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year,

we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Nadia Sutton of West Hollywood, California.

Born in Brussels, Belgium, Nadia has led an interesting life both as an actress and an activist. She has traveled extensively and lived all over the world, including residing in Israel, France, Spain, England and the United States, where she moved in 1979. As an actress, Ms. Sutton has worked in theater, radio, television and film. Passionate about civil rights, she began her activism career by supporting the Algerian independence cause while in France, and in England by helping create an alternative radio station and working against the censure of a Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender (LGBT) magazine.

Ms. Sutton has been involved in numerous organizations in the Los Angeles area with a primary focus on LGBT, women's rights, and animal issues. For many years, she has organized protests, lobbied legislatively and fought against LGBT discrimination, and for marriage equality. Nadia served on the West Hollywood Lesbian and Gay Advisory Board for twelve years, and is a Founding Board member of The Lavender Effect, a virtual museum dedicated to educating the public about the historical contributions of LGBT people, especially those from the Southern California area. She sits on the West Hollywood Women's Advisory Board, on the Board of Directors of the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, and is active with C.I.T.Y. x1 (Community Intervention Through Youth), an organization dedicated to organizing free social events for LGBT youth. A devoted animal lover, she co-founded PAWS LA (Pets Are Wonderful Support), an organization dedicated to helping people living with AIDS keep their beloved animal companions, where she is currently serving as a Board member, and is a volunteer with Catnippers, an association that helps spay and neuter feral cats and kittens. Nadia resides in West Hollywood with her cat, Barnaby.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Nadia Sutton.

HONORING ANDREW NEIL DANNER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Andrew Neil Danner. Andrew is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Andrew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Andrew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Andrew has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Andrew Neil Danner for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO DR. KEVIN V. DE REGNIER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Kevin de Regnier for being inducted as the 62nd President of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP). He is an Iowa native and I'm proud to recognize him today for his great achievement.

Dr. de Regnier earned a B.A. in chemistry with a biology minor from the University of Northern Iowa before going on to receive his osteopathy degree from the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences (Now Des Moines University). He completed his residency in family practice at Des Moines General Hospital shortly after. He also received his certification from the National Board of Examiners for Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons.

Dr. de Regnier has served on the ACOFP Board of Governors since 2006, and has been an active leader in the Osteopathic medicine community for years. He has also been appointed by the Governor to serve on the Iowa Health Systems and Plans Committee of Iowa Health Regulation Task Force and continues to serve as an adjunct professor of family medicine at Des Moines University.

Dr. de Regnier is an Iowan who has made our state proud. He has dedicated his life to helping and serving others and it is with great honor that I recognize him today. I know that my colleagues in the House join me in honoring his accomplishments. I thank him for his service and wish him and his family all the best moving forward.

HONORING BRAD SILVER

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, there are few things more noble than a life dedicated to public service. The work my good friend Brad Silver has done as part of the Bronx Jewish Community Council (BJCC), an organization that represents the combined community relations and anti-poverty efforts of all the local Jewish community councils in the Bronx, has left an indelible mark on the lives of countless individuals in the area.

Brad began his professional career in 1971 as an Outreach Worker for Teens at the Bronx House, a local Jewish community center. While serving as Teen Program Director and finally Co-op City Program Director at Bronx House, he somehow found time to pursue and receive his Masters Degree in Social Work at Yeshiva University. In 1978 Brad began working at the Hawthorne Cedar Knolls School, a residential treatment center for adolescents of the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services.

Following six successful years at Cedar Knolls, Brad moved onto the BJCC, where he began serving as the Director of Social Services in 1984. As his role and responsibilities grew, Brad began moving up the BJCC ladder, becoming the Executive Vice President of the Council in 1999. In his time with the BJCC, the organization has achieved a remarkable reputation as a pillar of community betterment. With a budget now exceeding $17 million annually, the BJCC serves over 10,000 people annually with everything from home attendant services to neighborhood resource centers. Their success is a tremendous testament to Brad's work.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Brad is also an accomplished family man. He continues to reside in the community he was raised in, the Amalgamated Houses in the Bronx, with his wife, and lives just a block away from his mother.

This year the Riverdale Jewish Community Relations Council is honoring Brad with the Community Service Award at their Legislative Breakfast. In working with him personally, I know no one is more deserving of this honor.

A TRIBUTE TO KELLYE NAKAHARA WALLETT—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Kellye Nakahara Wallett of Pasadena, California.

Born and raised in Oahu, Hawaii, Ms. Nakahara moved to San Francisco in the 1960's to establish herself as a professional artist, selling her watercolors of the San Francisco waterfront. In 1968, she married David Wallett and they moved to Los Angeles, where she began her career as an actress. Halfway through the first season of the popular television series "M*A*S*H", she landed the role of "Nurse Kellye." A renowned and award-winning artist who generously donates her artwork to many charitable organizations, Kellye's artwork has been displayed in Pasadena City Hall, the California State Capitol, and in the White House, where at Congressman SCHIFF's invitation, she painted a Christmas ornament for the official White House Christmas Tree in 2008.

Well-regarded as an enthusiastic and energetic community leader, Ms. Nakahara Wallett's past volunteer service includes eight years on Pasadena's Arts and Culture Commission, serving as an Ambassador for the Southern California Cherry Blossom Festival, and an Honorary Committee member and volunteer for the Latino Heritage Parade in Pasadena. She was also active in the American Diabetes Foundation, Neighborhood USA Conference, and the American Red Cross. Currently, she is a twenty-three year volunteer

with The Sunshine Kids, a non-profit organization dedicated to children with cancer, and a frequent guest speaker for various Japanese reparation organizations. Kellye is the Artistic Director and Artist-in-Residence for the Towne Singers, sings with the California Philharmonic, and has been a long-time volunteer judge for Representative SCHIFF's 28th Congressional District Art Competition Forum & Exhibit.

Long-time Pasadena residents, Kellye and her husband David, have two children, daughter Nalani, son William, and four grandchildren, David, William, Max and Grayson.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Kellye Nakahara Wallett.

RARE DISEASE MONTH, HONORING DR. ABRAHAM ABUCHOWSKI

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Abraham Abuchowski, a constituent from Warren, NJ, for his contributions to the rare disease community, his important role in bringing innovative orphan therapies to market and his support of the biotechnology industry in New Jersey.

Last month Dr. Abuchowski was presented with the Dr. Sol J. Barer Award for Vision, Innovation and Leadership. This award recognizes outstanding research and business leaders who have made and who continue to make significant contributions to the growth and prosperity of the biosciences industry in New Jersey and throughout the world.

After receiving his doctorate from Rutgers University, Dr. Abuchowski went on to develop PEGylation, the most widely used protein drug delivery system in the world. He founded Enzon to commercialize the technology and it later became the first biotechnology company in New Jersey to obtain Food and Drug Administration approval of a product.

Three decades later, New Jersey has become a leader in the biotechnology industry and our companies have secured more than thirty drug and medical device approvals in 2014 alone. Dr. Abuchowski is continuing his work to improve health outcomes for individuals affected by rare diseases and the company he currently leads, Prolong Pharmaceuticals, recently received an orphan drug designation from the Food and Drug Administration for a therapy he has been working on to treat sickle cell disease.

I am proud of the contributions that Dr. Abuchowski has made to advance medical research and to develop innovative treatments for rare diseases in New Jersey and around the world. I ask my colleagues to continue to support rare disease research and treatment development to ensure affected individuals have access to innovative therapies and improved health outcomes.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 17, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 18

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on SeaPower

To hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR–222

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine S. 697, to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to reauthorize and modernize that Act.

SD–406

10 a.m.

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 Forest Service.

SD–124

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Transportation.

SD–562

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the impact of patent litigation practices on the American economy.

SD–226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation from multiple veterans service organizations.

SD–G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Missile Defense Agency.

SD–192

2 p.m.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine Northern Ireland, focusing on Stormont, collusion, and the Finucane inquiry, including other issues of accountability for past government collusion in paramilitary crimes.

RHOB–2175

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the postures of the Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD–106

Committee on the Budget

Business meeting to markup the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

SD–608

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SR–253

Committee on Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 35, to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, S. 438, to provide for the repair, replacement, and maintenance of certain Indian irrigation projects, S. 465, to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe, and the nomination of Jonodev Osceola Chaudhuri, of Arizona, to be Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine an original bill, entitled ''the Reauthorization of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 2015''.

SD–628

Joint Economic Committee

To hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President 2015.

SD–562

MARCH 19

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Transportation Command, and U.S. Cyber Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD–G50

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the Affordable Care Act at five years.

SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy

To hold hearings to examine the United States-Africa leaders summit seven months later, focusing on progress and setbacks.

SD–419

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the regulatory regime for regional banks.

SD–538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security

To hold hearings to examine the evolving cyber insurance marketplace.

SR–253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine U.S. crude oil export policy.
SD–366

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management
To hold hearings to examine Federal rulemaking challenges and areas of improvement within the existing regulatory process.
SD–342

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
To hold hearings to examine patent reform, focusing on protecting innovation and entrepreneurship.
SR–428A

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for the Veterans Benefits Administration.
SD–124

2 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the United States Secret Service.
SD–138

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
To hold hearings to examine Air Force force structure and modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH–219

3:30 p.m.
Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts
To hold hearings to examine reining in amnesty, focusing on *Texas v. United States* and its implications.
SD–226

MARCH 24

10 a.m.
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine waters of the United States, focusing on stakeholder perspectives on the impacts of the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rule.
SD–106

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine management reforms to improve forest health and socioeconomic opportunities on the nation's forest system.
SD–366

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine continuing America's leadership, focusing on advancing research and development for patients.
SD–430

MARCH 25

9 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Defense Health Program.
SD–192

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine the current state of readiness of U.S. forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

MARCH 26

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the Administration's Quadrennial Energy Review.
SD–366

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
To hold hearings to examine Army modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1511–S1557

Measures Introduced: Ten bills were introduced, as follows: S. 739–748. **Page S1528**

Measures Considered:

Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking, taking action on the following amendments and motions proposed thereto: **Pages S1517–22**

Pending:

Portman Amendment No. 270, to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to enable State child protective services systems to improve the identification and assessment of child victims of sex trafficking. **Page S1517**

Portman Amendment No. 271, to amend the definition of ''homeless person'' under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to include certain homeless children and youth. **Page S1517**

Vitter Amendment No. 284 (to Amendment No. 271), to amend section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to clarify those classes of individuals born in the United States who are nationals and citizens of the United States at birth. **Page S1517**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 10 a.m., on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, with the time until the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill at 11 a.m. equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees. **Pages S1551–52**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to the bill be at 10:30 a.m., on Tuesday, March 17, 2015. **Pages S1551–52**

Appointments:

Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: The Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, pursuant to Public Law 106–286, hereby notifies the Senate of an amendment to the Majority membership appointment made in the Senate on February 25, 2015, to serve on the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Senator Rubio, Co-Chair. **Page S1551**

Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d–276g, as amended, appointed the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: Senator Klobuchar. **Page S1551**

British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, appointed the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: Senator Leahy. **Page S1551**

U.S.-China Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276n, as amended, appointed the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the U.S.-China Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: Senator Hirono. **Page S1551**

Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h–276k, as amended, appointed the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 114th Congress: Senator Kaine. **Page S1551**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By a unanimous vote of 94 yeas (Vote No. EX. 71), Carlos A. Monje, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation. **Pages S1523, S1557**

Manson K. Brown, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce. **Pages S1522–23, S1557**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Patricia M. Loui-Schmicker, of Hawaii, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2019.

Ian C. Kelly, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to Georgia.

2 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

2 Navy nominations in the rank of admiral.

Page S1557

Executive Communications: **Pages S1527–28**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1528–30**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1530–32**

Additional Statements: **Pages S1526–27**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1532–51**

Notices of Hearings/Meetings: **Page S1551**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1551**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S1551**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—71) **Page S1523**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 3 p.m., and adjourned at 6:55 p.m., until 10 a.m., on Tuesday, March 17, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's record on page S1552.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

DEATH MASTER FILE

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine Federal improper payments and errors in the Death Master File, after receiving testimony from Sean Brune, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Commissioner, Office of Budget, Finance, Quality and Management, and Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr., Inspector General, both of the Social Security Administration; David Mader, Controller, Office of Management and Budget; Beryl H. Davis, Director, Financial Management and Assurance, and Daniel Bertoni, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, both of the Government Accountability Office; and Judy C. Rivers, Logan, Alabama.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 20 public bills, H.R. 1365–1384; and 2 resolutions, H. Res. 150–151 were introduced. **Pages H1660–62**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H1662–63**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 639, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–41, Part 1);

H.R. 647, to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–42);

H.R. 648, to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–43); and

H. Res. 132, providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress (H. Rept. 114–44). **Page H1660**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Emmer (MN) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1637**

Recess: The House recessed at 12:06 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. **Page H1638**

Recess: The House recessed at 2:05 p.m. and reconvened at 3:30 p.m. **Page H1638**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Hurd wherein he resigned from the Committee on Small Business. **Page H1643**

Recess: The House recessed at 3:55 p.m. and reconvened at 4:30 p.m. **Page H1643**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act: H.R. 639, amended, to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing; **Pages H1638–41**

Access to Life-Saving Trauma Care for All Americans Act: H.R. 647, to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain

trauma care programs, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 389 yeas to 10 nays, Roll No. 113;

Pages H1641–42, H1649–50

Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act: H.R. 648, to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 382 yeas to 15 nays, Roll No. 114; **Pages H1642–43, H1650**

Notice of Observation Treatment and Implication for Care Eligibility Act: H.R. 876, amended, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require hospitals to provide certain notifications to individuals classified by such hospitals under observation status rather than admitted as inpatients of such hospitals, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 395 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 115; and

Pages H1644–46, H1650–51

Medicare DMEPOS Competitive Bidding Improvement Act of 2015: H.R. 284, amended, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require State licensure and bid surety bonds for entities submitting bids under the Medicare durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) competitive acquisition program.

Pages H1646–47

Recess: The House recessed at 5:02 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

Suspension—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measure under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act: H.R. 1191, amended, 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. **Page H1647**

Authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and agree to S. Con. Res. 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.

Pages H1651–52

National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following individuals on the part of the House to the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity for a term of six years: Upon the recommendation of the Minority Leader: Dr. George T. French of Fairfield, AL; Dr. Kathleen Sullivan Alioto of New York, NY; and Mr. Ralph A. Wolff of Oakland, CA. **Page H1660**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H1638.

Senate Referral: S. Con. Res. 7 was held at the desk. **Page H1638**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1649–50, H1650 and H1650–51. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12 noon and adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

APPROPRIATIONS—OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on Office of Management and Budget budget. Testimony was heard from Shaun Donovan, Director, Office of Management and Budget.

THE POWER OF LEGISLATIVE INQUIRY—IMPROVING THE VA BY IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "The Power of Legislative Inquiry—Improving the VA by Improving Transparency". Testimony was heard from Leigh A. Bradley, General Counsel, Department of Veterans Affairs; Maureen T. Regan, Counselor to the Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Agriculture, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the military services, 2:30 p.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol, 3 p.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: to receive a closed briefing on cyber, space and strategic competition with China and Russia in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SVC–217.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's

proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine the state of technological innovation related to the electric grid, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife, to hold hearings to examine S. 659, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine building a competitive United States international tax system, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues, to hold hearings to examine the deepening political and economic crisis in Venezuela, focusing on implications for United States interests and the Western Hemisphere, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine America's health information technology (IT) transformation, focusing on translating the promise of electronic health records into better care, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine securing the Southwest border, focusing on perspectives from beyond the beltway, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine immigration reform, focusing on the American worker, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry, hearing to review the definition of ''waters of the United States'' proposed rule and its impact on rural America, 2 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing on Fish and Wildlife Service budget, 9 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Agriculture Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on National Guard and Reserve budget, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Department of Energy, Applied Energy Programs budget, 10 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, hearing on Secret Service budget, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, hearing on Department of Labor budget, 10 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, hearing on Federal Aviation Administration budget, 10 a.m., 2358–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, hearing on National Science Foundation budget, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on General Services Administration budget, 11 a.m., HT–2 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Department of Energy, Office of Science budget, 1 p.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing on National Park Service budget, 1 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, hearing on U.S. Agency for International Development budget, 2:30 p.m., H–140 Capitol.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Military Departments'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Assuring Assured Access to Space'', 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, hearing entitled ''Strengthening America's Higher Education System'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''EPA's Proposed 111(d) Rule for Existing Power Plants: Legal and Cost Issues'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Annual Testimony of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the International Financial System'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The FY 2016 Budget Request: Assessing U.S. Foreign Assistance Effectiveness'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, hearing entitled ''National Security Benefits of Trade Agreements with Asia and Europe'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security, hearing entitled ''Combating Terrorist Travel: Does the Visa Waiver Program Keep Our Nation Safe?'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice, hearing on H.R. 758, the ''Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act of 2015'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Federal Lands, hearing entitled ''Examining the Spending Priorities and Missions of the National Park Service in the President's FY 2016 Budget Proposal'', 9:30 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled ''Examining the Spending Priorities and Missions of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement and the Office of Natural Resources Revenue in the President's FY 2016 Budget Proposals'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''FCC: Process and Transparency'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules, joint hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Costs of the President's Executive Actions on Immigration'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on 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; and H. Res. 132, providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Reality Check: The Impact and Achievability of EPA's Proposed Ozone Standards'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce, hearing entitled ''Contracting and the Industrial Base II: Bundling, Goaling, and the Office of Hearings and Appeals'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill: Laying the Foundation for U.S. Economic Growth and Job Creation Part II'', 9:30 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled ''A Review of Higher Education Opportunities for the Newest Generation of Veterans'', 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Human Resources, hearing entitled ''Expanding Opportunity by Funding What Works: Using Evidence to Help Low-Income Individuals and Families Get Ahead'', 10 a.m., B–318 Rayburn.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Ongoing Intelligence Activities'', 1 p.m., HVC–304. This hearing will be closed.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of March 17 through March 20, 2015

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, at approximately 10 a.m., Senate will continue consideration of S. 178, Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. At 11 a.m., Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill. If cloture is not invoked, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the bill.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Appropriations: March 17, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Agriculture, 10 a.m., SD–192.

March 17, Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the military services, 2:30 p.m., SD–124.

March 17, Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol, 3 p.m., SD–138.

March 18, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Transportation, 10 a.m., SD–562.

March 18, 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 Forest Service, 10 a.m., SD–124.

March 18, Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Missile Defense Agency, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

March 19, Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for the Veterans Benefits Administration, 10:30 a.m., SD–124.

March 19, Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the United States Secret Service, 2 p.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: March 17, to receive a closed briefing on cyber, space and strategic competition with China and Russia in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SVC–217.

March 18, Subcommittee on SeaPower, to hold hearings to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SR–222.

March 18, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the postures of the Department of the Army and the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SD–106.

March 19, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Transportation Command, and U.S. Cyber Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

March 19, Subcommittee on Airland, to hold hearings to examine Air Force force structure and modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: March 19, to hold hearings to examine the regulatory regime for regional banks, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on the Budget: March 18, business meeting to mark up the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, 2:30 p.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: March 17, Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

March 18, Full Committee, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

March 19, Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security, to hold hearings to examine the evolving cyber insurance marketplace, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: March 17, to hold hearings to examine the state of technological innovation related to the electric grid, 10 a.m., SD–366.

March 19, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine U.S. crude oil export policy, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: March 17, Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife, to hold hearings to examine S. 659, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, 10 a.m., SD–406.

March 18, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine S. 697, to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to reauthorize and modernize that Act, 9:30 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: March 17, to hold hearings to examine building a competitive United States international tax system, 10 a.m., SD–215.

March 19, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the Affordable Care Act at five years, 9:30 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: March 17, Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues, to hold hearings to examine the deepening political and economic crisis in Venezuela, focusing on implications for United States interests and the Western Hemisphere, 10 a.m., SD–419.

March 19, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy, to hold hearings to examine the United States-Africa leaders summit seven months later, focusing on progress and setbacks, 9:30 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: March 17, to hold hearings to examine America's health information technology (IT) transformation, focusing on translating the promise of electronic health records into better care, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: March 17, to hold hearings to examine securing the Southwest border, focusing on perspectives from beyond the beltway, 10 a.m., SD–342.

March 19, Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine Federal rulemaking challenges and areas of improvement within the existing regulatory process, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: March 18, business meeting to consider S. 35, to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, S. 438, to provide for the repair, replacement, and maintenance of certain Indian irrigation projects, S. 465, to extend Federal recognition to the Chickahominy Indian Tribe, the Chickahominy Indian Tribe-Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe, the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., the Monacan Indian Nation, and the Nansemond Indian Tribe, and the nomination of Jonodev Osceola Chaudhuri, of Arizona, to be Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine an original bill, entitled "the Reauthorization of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act of 2015", 2:30 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: March 17, to hold hearings to examine immigration reform, focusing on the American worker, 10 a.m., SD–226.

March 18, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the impact of patent litigation practices on the American economy, 10 a.m., SD–226.

March 19, Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts, to hold hearings to examine reining in amnesty, focusing on *Texas v. United States* and its implications, 3:30 p.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: March 19, to hold hearings to examine patent reform, focusing on protecting innovation and entrepreneurship, 10 a.m., SR–428A.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: March 18, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation from multiple veterans service organizations, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Select Committee on Intelligence: March 17, to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

March 19, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House Committees

Committee on Agriculture, March 18, Full Committee, hearing on the importance of trade to U.S. agriculture, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

March 19, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 897, the "Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2015", 9:30 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, March 18, hearing for public and outside witnesses, 9 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, oversight hearing on closing the achievement gap in higher education, 9:30 a.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Agriculture Rural Development budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on United States Pacific Command and United States Forces Korea budget, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol. This hearing will be closed.

March 18, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Department of Energy, Environmental Management budget, 9:30 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, hearing on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration budget, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

March 18, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on Internal Revenue Service budget, 11 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing for public and outside witnesses, 1 p.m., B–308 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, hearing on related agencies budget, 2 p.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, hearing on Department of Treasury International Programs budget, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing on Bureau of Land Management budget, 9:30 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Inspector General oversight, 9:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

March 19, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Agriculture Farm and Foreign Agricultural Service budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on United States European Command budget, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol. This hearing will be closed.

March 19, Subcommittee on Homeland Security, hearing on Transportation Security Administration budget, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on Consumer Product Safety Commission budget, 11 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, hearing on Surface Transportation Programs budget, 10 a.m., 2358–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, March 18, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The President's Proposed Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against ISIL and the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Department of Defense'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces; and Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, hearing entitled ''Naval Cooperative Strategy'', 2 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, hearing entitled ''Special Operations Forces in an Uncertain Threat Environment: A Review of the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Command'', 3:30 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Missile Defense Hearing'', 9 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Ground Force Modernization and Rotorcraft Modernization Programs'', 10:30 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, March 18, Full Committee, markup on the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016, 10:30 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, March 18, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Reviewing the President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Proposal for the Department of Labor'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, March 18, Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade, hearing on discussion draft of the ''Data Security and Breach Notification Act of 2015'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, hearing on the ''Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2015'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing on H.R. 906, to modify the efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters, 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled ''FCC Reauthorization: Oversight of the Commission'', 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, March 18, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Preserving Consumer Choice and Financial Independence'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

March 19, Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the SEC's Division of Enforcement'', 9 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 18, Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere; and Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, joint hearing entitled ''Iran and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere'', 10:15 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''U.S. Election Support in Africa'', 10:15 a.m., 2255 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, hearing entitled ''Does the President's FY 2016 Budget Request Address the Crises in the Middle East and North Africa?'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

March 19, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Negotiations with Iran: Blocking or Paving Tehran's Path to Nuclear Weapons?'', 8:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, March 18, Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency, hearing entitled ''Unmanned Aerial System Threats: Exploring Security Implications and Mitigation Technologies'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

March 19, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, hearing entitled ''Agents of Opportunity: Responding to the Threat of Chemical Terrorism'', 9:30 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, March 18, Full Committee, markup on 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.

March 19, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Child Exploitation Restitution Following the *Paroline* v. *United States* Decision'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, March 18, Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, hearing entitled ''Effect of the President's FY 2016 Budget and Legislative Proposals for the Office of Surface Mining on Private Sector Job Creation, Domestic Energy Production, State Programs and Deficit Reduction'', 10:30 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

March 18, Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, hearing entitled ''Funding Priorities for and the United States' Responsibilities concerning Indians, Alaska Natives, and Insular Areas in the President's FY 2016 Budget Request for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Health Service, Office of Insular Affairs, and Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians'', 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

March 19, Subcommittee on Federal Lands; and Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, joint hearing entitled ''Examining the Spending Priorities and Missions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the President's FY 2016 Budget Proposal'', 9:30 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, March 18, Subcommittee on Information Technology, hearing entitled ''Cybersecurity: The Evolving Nature of Cyber Threats Facing the Private Sector'', 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

March 18, Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled ''Federal Workforce Tax Accountability'', 1 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

March 19, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''A Review of the Department of Homeland Security's Policies and Procedures for the Apprehension, Detention, and Release of Non-Citizens Unlawfully Present in the United States—Part II'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, March 18, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Tangled in Red Tape: New Challenges for Small Manufacturers'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

March 19, Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce, hearing entitled ''Contracting and the Industrial Base III: Reverse Auctions, Verification and the SBA's Role in Rule Making'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, March 18, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, hearing entitled ''The President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget: Administration Priorities for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency'', 10:30 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, March 19, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing on H.R. 571, the ''Veterans Affairs Retaliation Prevention Act of 2015''; H.R. 593, the ''Aurora VA Hospital Financing and Construction Reform Act of 2015''; H.R. 1015, the ''Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2015''; H.R. 1016, the ''Biological Implant Tracking and Veteran Safety Act of 2015''; H.R. 1017, to improve the information security of the Department of Veterans Affairs by directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out certain actions to improve the transparency and the governance of the information security program of the Department, and for other purposes; H.R. 1128, to amend title 38, United States Code, to make certain improvements in the information security of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; and H.R. 1129, to amend title 38, United States Code, to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs an Office of Whistleblower and Patient Protection, 8 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Committee on Ways and Means, March 18, Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures, organizational meeting for the 114th Congress; hearing on the burdens family businesses and farms face planning for and paying the estate tax, 10 a.m., B–318 Rayburn.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, March 19, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Growing Cyber Threat and Its Impact on American Business'', 9 a.m., HVC–210.

Joint Meetings

Joint Economic Committee: March 18, to hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President 2015, 2:30 p.m., SD–562.

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: March 18, to hold hearings to examine Northern Ireland, focusing on Stormont, collusion, and the Finucane inquiry, including other issues of accountability for past government collusion in paramilitary crimes, 2 p.m., 2175, Rayburn Building.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 17

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will continue consideration of S. 178, Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. At 11 a.m., Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill. If cloture is not invoked, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the bill, with the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to the bill at 10:30 a.m.

(Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 17

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of H.R. 1029—EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule).

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