United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015 No. 45

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 17, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE HOLDING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

FUNDING AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, today the House Budget Committee will reveal the budget for fiscal year 2016. That budget will contain more money for Afghanistan, which is why I am speaking on the floor today. Afghanistan is an absolute waste of taxpayer money. It is a true graveyard of empires.

Mr. Speaker, just 2 years ago, I was speaking on the floor about a New York Times article titled, ''Karzai Says He Was Assured CIA Would Continue Delivering Bags of Cash.'' I will quote from that article again today: ''The CIA money, Mr. Karzai told reporters, was 'an easy source of petty cash,' and some of it was used to pay off members of the political elite and a group dominated by warlords.''

This past Sunday, an article was published in a Raleigh, North Carolina, paper titled, ''CIA Cash Helped to Refill Al Qaeda Coffers.'' According to the article: ''The CIA contribution to al Qaeda's bottom line was just another in a long list of examples of how the United States, largely because of poor oversight and loose financial controls, has sometimes inadvertently financed the very militants'' who have been killing American soldiers. Finally, the article stated: ''The cash flow has slowed since a new Afghan president, Mr. Ghani, assumed office in September, Afghan officials said, but they added that cash was still coming in.''

For at least 5 years, it has been reported that cash from the United States has been funneled to the Afghan Government through the CIA as a sort of slush fund, and some of that money has made its way to al Qaeda. This is only one example of the waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan, yet the current administration has obligated the American taxpayer and soldier to 9 more years in Afghanistan, without even a debate on the floor of the House.

Let me remind the House: Al Qaeda is our enemy. Congress owes the American people and the soldiers a debate to end this failed policy.

Mr. Speaker, after over $685 billion in taxpayer dollars, blood, and limbs lost in Afghanistan, it is time to stop the waste, fraud, and abuse of American taxpayer money there and to start reallocating that money right here in America to help our veterans, to help the infrastructure of America, and to help our children, America's future. Why are we spending this kind of money in Afghanistan that is abused and wasted and used to kill American soldiers? I do not understand it, Mr. Speaker.

Our debt is over $18 trillion. When President Clinton left office in the year 2000, our debt was $5.6 trillion. Today, it is over $18 trillion in debt, and we are going to continue with 9 more years of waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan. We, in Congress, owe the American people a debate.

With that, Mr. Speaker, before closing, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. God, please bless the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. And I will ask God to please bless the President and the House and the Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for God's people today and God's people tomorrow.

HONORING TED FOWLER ON HIS RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BUCK). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Ted Fowler, who recently retired from a storied career at one of North Carolina's and, indeed, one of America's famous dining establishments, Golden Corral.

An inspirational leader, Ted retired after nearly 40 years at the helm of Golden Corral. A humble yet enthusiastic man, Ted is a relentless competitor who achieved great success by demonstrating tireless commitment to his company, employees, and customers.

Ted joined the Golden Corral family not long after its first restaurant opened in 1973. He oversaw the expansion of the franchise from a one-family steakhouse in Fayetteville, North Carolina, to over 500 restaurants nationwide. This includes operations in 41

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States with over 9,000 employees and revenues upward of $195 million. Mr. Speaker, that is no small feat.

Ted steered the company through its brand transition, which was a difficult undertaking in today's restaurant industry. He worked hard to ensure the upward mobility of his employees so that every employee had a chance to achieve a better life. For example, Mr. Speaker, he initiated a company program that helped entry-level employees become managers within a year; and within 5 years, they could run their own franchise.

Mr. Fowler is more than just a respected leader in the restaurant industry. He truly cared about the people who worked and dined at Golden Corral. For instance, since 2001, Golden Corral has served more than 4 million free meals to active and retired military personnel on Veterans Day. He also oversaw Camp Corral, a free, one-of-a-kind summer camp for children of wounded and disabled or fallen military servicemembers. Since its founding, Camp Corral has grown to 20 camps in 16 States and has served over 4,000 children. It is because of big-hearted causes like these that I am proud to call Ted Fowler a friend.

Encouragement and leadership exemplified through many of his company programs are some of the reasons why Mr. Fowler is a past recipient of the North Carolina Restaurateur of the Year Award, the Foodservice Operator of the Year, and the Gold Plate Award.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize and congratulate a proven job creator and an even better man. Ted Fowler embodies all the qualities of a noble, compassionate businessman. I wish him good health and happiness in his retirement.

PRESERVING SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED) for 5 minutes.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about an impending crisis that is going to be coming upon us in 2016. Mr. Speaker, not too many people know or realize that our Social Security disability trust fund is going to be insolvent, bankrupt, underfunded—whatever term you want to use—by the middle of 2016. Mr. Speaker, what that means is that our fellow Americans—approximately 11 million of them—who receive Social Security disability checks are going to be looking at a 20 percent reduction in their benefit come the middle of 2016 if we do not step up to the plate and reform this critical program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I serve on the Ways and Means Committee here in Washington, D.C., and 2 years ago, I questioned our Treasury Secretary from the White House. I said: Mr. Lew, where is the White House's proposal to deal with this issue? Nothing in the budget from the White House, nothing in the Treasury Secretary's testimony addressed this canary in the coal mine that is coming down upon us in 2016.

This year I asked the same question, and essentially what I got was the proposal that they are going to take from Social Security retirees the contributions they make to Social Security retirement and transfer them into the disability trust fund.

Mr. Speaker, in my private practice, my private life as a businessman before I came to Washington, D.C., that was essentially robbing Peter to pay Paul. That is not acceptable.

We need to protect Social Security retirees. We also, Mr. Speaker, need to protect our fellow Americans who suffer from disabilities. We need to do better than robbing Peter to pay Paul. That is why I am looking for input from colleagues on the other side of the aisle, for people across the Nation to say, How can we reform the Social Security disability trust fund so that it meets its obligations and it stands with the disabled community in a way that says, You know what? If you want to return to work, you can.

Because right now, Mr. Speaker, in my humble opinion, the Social Security disability trust fund penalizes those who suffer from disabilities if they return to work because then they lose their benefit. That doesn't make sense.

I support the work ethic of America, and that is why I support reforms that are going to take care of the disability trust fund, that make sure that our fellow Americans receive the benefits that they need and rely upon. But we are also going to stand with our disability community and make sure if they want to return to work and have a capacity to return to work, we in Washington, D.C., will stand with them and reward that work ethic.

Bottom line: I am going to protect our Social Security retirees because to put them in further harm's way, as we know the impending Social Security crisis that is going to come to a head in 2033, just around the corner, will do—to take from that retirement fund is further weakening our Social Security system. We can do better. We must do better.

I care about those retirees. I care about those disabled fellow Americans. That is why I say today that we are not going to maintain the status quo of robbing Peter to pay Paul, but we are actually going to get to the business of reform. We are going to protect retirees and take care of our fellow Americans who are disabled.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 11 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Jon Randles, Victory Life Church, Lubbock, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Holy and most high God, we come before You, grateful for Your gift of life. All good things come from You. We acknowledge that powerful truth.

I pray for these leaders who serve in this Congress today the wisdom to make choices that are righteous, just, and good for all Americans and beyond. I pray those leaders the humility to remember that if they seek Your ways, You will guide their journey to those choices that are always best. I pray that all of us, as Americans, strive to know who we are, to know Whom and what we serve, and to know where we are going.

Bless them as they lead us, and may we all seek with our lives to leave a shadow that makes a difference for freedom, truth, goodness, and always with encouragement.

Acknowledging You, we pray.

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 Minnesota (Mr. EMMER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND JON RANDLES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to welcome to the House of Representatives today's guest chaplain and my fellow Lubbock, Texas, native, Jon Randles. Jon is joined here today by his wife, Kelly; his two sons, Zack and Sam; and their wives, Autumn and Jennifer; his daughter, Hayley; and her husband, Chance; as well as their grandchildren. Also here are 70 members of his congregation.

Jon has been engaged in two career paths: he has served as both a pastor and a nationwide motivational speaker. He began pastoring the first of his four churches as a college sophomore at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. He has a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and did doctorate studies in ancient Roman history at Texas Tech University.

He served as Director of Evangelism at the Baptist General Convention of Texas. In 2010, as a contractor for the U.S. Air Force, he crafted a program for senior officers to mentor members of the junior force.

In 2013, after 20 years as an evangelist and a motivational speaker, he returned to pastoring and is currently the senior pastor at Victory Life Baptist Church in Lubbock, Texas.

In all of his endeavors, Jon has encouraged excellence and character. But most of all, Jon has impacted countless lives by his witness and testimony of Jesus Christ.

Jon has the heart of a lion and a tremendous amount of faith. As he battles pancreatic cancer, he is an amazing example to all of us how to run the race God has set out for each of us.

May God bless Jon Randles, and may He continue to bless the United States of America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Agriculture Week.

If you look around this great building, you will find countless references to our early economy, which depended largely on our Nation's abundant farmland. This vital industry impacts every person in this country, from the food we place before our family to the businesses that keep our citizens gainfully employed.

My home State of Minnesota is the fourth largest agricultural exporter in the country, and Stearns County, which is in my district, is the largest dairy producing county in Minnesota. We are the Land of 10,000 Lakes and 80,000 farms.

As a member of the Agriculture Committee, I am proud to work on behalf of both farmers and consumers to ensure this vibrant industry continues to thrive. Please join me this week in thanking a farmer.

THE GOP'S ''WORK HARDER FOR LESS'' BUDGET

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

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, the Republican budget that has been released today should be called ''Work Harder for Less.'' It squeezes hardworking Americans, making it harder for them to buy a home, harder to send their kids to college, and harder to enjoy a secure retirement.

How does it do these things, Mr. Speaker?

If you want to buy a home, it makes it harder because it continues to stagnate paychecks. If you want to send your kids to college, it makes it harder by slashing tuition assistance and student loans. If you want to save some money for a secure and enjoyable retirement, it privatizes Medicare—again—after all these years of attempts.

Mr. Speaker, this Republican budget takes the tools of opportunity away from hardworking Americans all in order to provide bigger and deeper tax cuts for the superwealthy. It is the same old-same old spiced up with another repeal of the Affordable Care Act, and the American people will understand what the Republican priorities are versus ours.

AMBASSADOR GERARD ARAUD VISITS SOUTH CAROLINA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, as cochairman of the French Caucus, I had the opportunity to escort French Ambassador Gerard Araud across South Carolina, where he met enthusiastic citizens of French heritage along with business leaders who appreciate our valued alliance.

South Carolina's association with France was highlighted by the arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette at Georgetown to support the American Revolution. His portrait is one of only two here in the House Chamber.

Today, French investments are extraordinary with the joint Michelin plants in Lexington, providing over 2,000 jobs at a nearly 2-million-square-foot facility. At the Savannah River site in Aiken, the Ambassador toured the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication facility using AREVA advanced technology to convert weapons-grade plutonium into green fuel. These investments produce jobs for Americans and profits for France.

In between tours, the Ambassador was honored to speak to the Columbia Rotary Club, South Carolina's largest civic organization, led by President John Johnston, with introduction by French Huguenot, Rusty DePass.

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

THE GOP'S ''WORK HARDER FOR LESS'' BUDGET

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, well, today the Republicans are unveiling yet another Republican budget that would ensure hardworking Americans have to continue to work harder and get less.

Our country deserves a budget that puts these hardworking families first, not this damaging budget that guts middle class priorities making it harder to buy a home, harder to send your kids to college, and harder to have a secure retirement. It is all at the expense of handouts to special interests.

This ''work harder, get less'' budget continues to squeeze the middle class by keeping wages stagnant, cutting student loans, and privatizing Medicare. House Democrats stand ready to pass a budget that invests in our families so that they can take home bigger paychecks, send their kids to school, and save for retirement.

The Republican budget takes the tools that build the American Dream away from hardworking Americans to give bigger tax cuts and bigger tax breaks to the superwealthy.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that my Republican colleagues will work with us in a bipartisan fashion to fashion a budget that works for all Americans.

CELEBRATING THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the 191st occasion of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Savannah, Georgia. Among the largest Irish celebrations in the Nation, the St. Patrick's Day Parade is held in the downtown historic district and is always a meaningful occasion for the citizens of Chatham County and the State of Georgia.

In 1824, the Hibernian Society of Savannah, which was formed to aid the early Irish immigrants, began what would become the second largest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the Nation. Peak years have estimated up to 400,000 visitors to the area for St. Patrick's Day festivities. Georgia is proud to welcome visitors from all across the Nation, and it continues to be successful due to the hard work and dedication of those working in Savannah, Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize and honor the members of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, including Chairman Kevin Halligan and the Grand Marshal, Mr. Hugh Coleman, for their tireless efforts and outstanding commitment in organizing this year's parade. Thank you all for all you do in our community and the State of Georgia. I wish you much success in today's event.

A STRONG MIDDLE CLASS IS A STRONG AMERICA

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

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, the Republican budget released today would deny working families the opportunity to earn a fair living that used to ensure a strong middle class in this country.

Their budget would hurt seniors, as Republicans have proposed four times before, by ending Medicare as we know it. It would place the burden of balancing the budget on the poor and keep arbitrary spending caps that hurt young and old alike by decimating Head Start and denying homebound seniors access to meals. It would cut Pell grants, hurting students seeking higher education, and it would leave our military lacking the critical resources we need to defend our country.

Mr. Speaker, our Democratic budget will honor our promises to seniors and will give someone who worked hard the opportunity to earn a fair wage so that they can raise their family. It will keep health care affordable and help students seeking to better themselves attain an affordable education, and it will invest in our future by repairing our crumbling roads and bridges that are vital to a growing economy.

Our budget stands for protecting Medicare, earning a fair wage, and rebuilding our infrastructure, because a strong middle class is a strong America.

THE JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT

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

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to express my outrage that Senate Democrats have refused to allow consideration of desperately needed sex trafficking legislation.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act would strengthen punishments for perpetrators and increase Federal funding for the victims of human trafficking. But instead of supporting this vitally important legislation, Senate Democrats are playing political games. They have refused to support the legislation despite its having a bipartisan group of cosponsors and unanimous approval from the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Speaker, trafficking is a real problem in every State in the United States of America. Right now, almost 300,000 American children are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation. Children are being sold into sexual slavery right now while some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been holding up this critical legislation for 2 weeks.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Senate Democrats to drop their protests, support the thousands of vulnerable women and children this legislation would protect, and join Republicans in the fight against human trafficking.

THERE THEY GO AGAIN

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I never thought I would be quoting Ronald Reagan but, ''There you go again,'' another Republican budget that kicks the poor, the hungry, and the disabled to the curb, that strangles the middle class and deserts hardworking families.

''There you go again,'' another Republican budget that stymies research and development, abandons essential infrastructure, and stifles access to education.

''There you go again,'' another Republican budget that robs senior citizens, degrades the environment, and devastates our cultural institutions.

''There you go again,'' another so-called Republican path to prosperity that is really a road map for distress and decline for all but big corporations and the megawealthy.

So I urge folks, call those Republican Representatives and tell them that the American people don't want to and don't deserve to go that way again.

□ 1215

HONORING CONESTOGA HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Conestoga High School Music Department and their great success in this year's music festivals.

In 2015, Conestoga High School sent an impressive 32 students to the district chorus, band, and orchestra festivals; 19 students to the region chorus, band, and orchestra festivals; six students to the all-State chorus, band, and orchestra festivals; one student to All-Eastern Orchestra; and one student to All-National Orchestra.

In addition, sophomore Jason Bassiliou's music composition has been selected as the winner at the high school level in the 2015 Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Composition Program.

Under the dedicated leadership of department head Sue Dickinger, Conestoga High School Music Department represents among the best of Pennsylvania's Sixth District in the musical arts.

Music is, in fact, an integral part of a student's curriculum, and I commend the students, their teachers, and Conestoga High School on an exceptional year in music.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARCH IN SELMA

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, what an occasion and privilege it was to mark the 50th anniversary of the march in Selma. As my friend and hero Congressman JOHN LEWIS said: ''Selma is more than a place, it is the realization of an idea.''

Selma showed us that true empowerment begins with voting rights. After 50 years of progress, the Supreme Court has rolled back the Voting Rights Act, one of the most effective laws ever passed. Now, House leadership is saying parts of the VRA are ''not necessary.'' Literacy tests may be relics of the past but only because of the VRA.

Some States have replaced old overt forms of voter disenfranchisement with more subtle forms of voter suppression through registration, through redistricting, and voting itself. States need to stop holding people back from voting, and Congress must hold States accountable. The Court may not have done the right thing, but surely Congress can.

Let's restore the VRA and better the voting process for all voters.

NORTHERN LONG-EARED BAT RULE

(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, last Friday, I, along with 15 fellow House colleagues, called upon the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to provide flexibility with the agency's proposal to list the northern long-eared bat under the Endangered Species Act.

Back in December, the Fish and Wildlife Service proposed listing the northern long-eared bat as threatened under the Endangered Species Act through a special 4(d) rule, which would provide exemptions for certain activities if they met prescribed conservation activities.

Apart from forest management, the initial rule did not specify which activities would be granted exemptions. Because this species of bat can be found in 38 States, including all of Pennsylvania, a broad Endangered Species Act listing would have far-reaching impacts upon the States and permissible land uses.

Mr. Speaker, listing the northern long-eared bat as endangered has never been warranted. Since day one, the Fish and Wildlife Service has repeatedly acknowledged the underlying cause of population decline is a disease—white-nose syndrome—not habitat loss through human activity.

Rather than limiting commerce and land use activities—impacting jobs and local economies—the Fish and Wildlife

Service should focus their efforts on combating white-nose syndrome.

HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the Republican budget plan.

Budgets are not just numbers on a piece of paper; they are moral documents, moral documents that demonstrate our Nation's values, ideals, and our priorities.

The House Republican budget of ''work harder and get less'' is not where it is at. Their budget makes it harder for American families to pay for a home, to send their kids to college, and keeps paychecks in this country stagnant; and it is something that we should not tolerate.

Instead, Republicans should work with Democrats to end the sequestration so we can make it easier to send our kids to college, fix our roads that are crumbling every day, and also to make sure that we can keep good-paying jobs here in our country. That is the American Dream; that is the land of opportunity.

I urge the Republicans to work with us, not against us, so we can fix this problem for the American people.

HALABJA ATTACKS

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

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this week marks the 27th anniversary of the Halabja chemical attacks against the Kurdish people in Iraq.

On March 16, 1988, Saddam Hussein's regime created one of modern history's most barbaric crimes. He ordered his forces to drop chemical weapons, including mustard and sarin gas, on the Kurdish town of Halabja.

The brutal attack, which can only be described as a crime against humanity, resulted in painful, agonizing deaths of at least 5,000 innocent men, women, and children, while leaving thousands more maimed, blinded, and otherwise permanently debilitated.

More than two and a half decades later, the aftermath of this horrific atrocity is still apparent with the victims, many of whom have suffered long-term illnesses, paralysis, neurological effects, cancers, and even congenital malformations in children to this day.

Since these atrocities, the Kurds have done a remarkable job of rebuilding. Today, the Kurds are one of America's most steadfast allies. Peshmerga forces continue to shoulder immense burdens while seeking to defeat and destroy our mutual enemy ISIS.

As a uniquely democratic and stable haven amidst a region more often marked by instability and authoritarian rule, Kurdistan also hosts almost 1.6 million Internally Displaced Persons and refugees, including Christians, Yezidis, and other religious minorities.

Today, we remember the unconscionable attack on Halabja, but we also celebrate the achievements and will of the Kurdish people to move forward.

STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES

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

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of policies that will help more students and families afford college.

The cost of obtaining a college degree has increased more than 1,000 percent over the last three decades, and many more students need Federal loans to cover the costs.

After racking up a mountain of debt, graduates struggle to put money into savings, buy a house, or start a business, but many people are shocked to find out that the Federal Government is making billions of dollars in profits off these students by charging higher interest rates than necessary. This is not fair or right.

We should be rewarding our students for pursuing an education, not taxing them for it. Students should get the same low interest rates that the Federal Reserve gives the big banks on Wall Street.

I hope we can find bipartisan support in Congress for commonsense policies to make college more affordable.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate National Women's History Month.

Many famous women have shaped the course of our country's fate; however, there are also women of note in our local communities that have made a real impact. I would like to highlight a constituent of mine, Paula O'Neil, Ph.D.

Dr. O'Neil was elected as the first woman to serve as clerk of the circuit court and county comptroller in Pasco County's history. A true role model, Dr. O'Neil has a long history of exemplary public service in government and serves as a professor at Saint Leo College, now Saint Leo University.

She has also been a courageous voice for others as she bravely battles cancer, stressing the importance of early detection.

This National Women's History Month, I am happy to honor Dr. Paula O'Neil and recognize all women making a positive impact in our communities.

WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BALANCE AMERICA'S CHECKBOOK ON THE BACK OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

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

Mr. AGUILAR. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, we saw encouraging news about our economy continuing to move back from the debilitating recession that we faced only a few years ago. While we still have a ways to go, we are certainly moving in the right direction.

However, if the GOP budget revealed today should come to pass, it would have devastating effects on America's middle class and undo the progress that we have made. This budget will force middle class families to work harder and get less.

The GOP has presented us with legislation that will keep paychecks stagnant, making it harder to buy a home; it would cut student loans, making it difficult for kids to afford college, and it would strip away the secure retirement by privatizing Medicare.

We cannot afford to balance America's checkbook on the backs of the middle class. In the district where I come from—California's Inland Empire—families are struggling from the recession and are fighting to catch up with the rest of the Nation.

I cannot and will not ask them to bear this burden because the GOP can't pass a budget.

CONFIRMATION OF LORETTA LYNCH

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

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, it has been 126 days since the President named Loretta Lynch as his nominee for the U.S. Attorney General position. It has been 46 days since the hearings began, and as we thought that there would soon be a full vote in the Senate, we are now facing another delay as Senate Republicans continue to drag their feet.

This is unprecedented. Loretta Lynch rightfully deserves to be the next Attorney General for the United States. She is a proven litigator who is well qualified. She has a reputation as an accomplished, knowledgeable attorney.

If confirmed, she will be the first African American woman to hold the position. This is a serious position, and it shouldn't fall victim to partisan gridlock.

There is no argument that Loretta Lynch is more than qualified; yet she has been scrutinized more than any other male that has come before her vying for the U.S. Attorney General role: 900 questions, 9 hours of testimony.

A fellow North Carolinian, Ms. Lynch is from a family of clergymen and civil rights community leaders. Throughout her career, she has served twice as U.S. attorney general for New York.

I stand today in full support of Loretta Lynch as our next U.S. Attorney General. Let's confirm her as our next Attorney General, and let's make history.

TWO VISIONS FOR OUR NATION'S FUTURE

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, Americans have a choice of two contrasting visions for our Nation's future.

One vision features higher taxes, more debt, and greater burdens on hardworking families. The administration's budget would drown our Nation $27 trillion in debt. It would never ever balance.

Its proponents pat themselves on the back for running these annual deficits, saying they have and could be worse. Only in D.C. is a half-trillion dollar deficit greeted with a pat on the back.

Further, if Congress had accepted the administration's previous budget proposals, the Federal Government would be 20 percent larger today, more bloated, and less efficient.

The other vision put forth by Congress leads to a balanced budget at the end of the decade, and it stops devastating tax increases. The congressional budget reduces spending by over $5.5 trillion and calls for a fairer and simpler Tax Code so small businesses can create jobs and provide the better-paying jobs Americans are desperate for.

Mr. Speaker, Congress' proposal actually invests in the future and places our Nation on a path towards paying off our debt—rather than adding to it—by making government more efficient, effective, and accountable.

Now is the time for the parties to work together to implement a vision that keeps our Nation on the path to prosperity, that keeps debt off the backs of working families, and that balances our Federal budget.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania) 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 17, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 17, 2015 at 9:19 a.m.:

Appointments:

Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference.

Senate Delegation to the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference.

Senate Delegation to the Mexico-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference.

U.S.-China Interparliamentary Group Conference.

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

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

□ 1230

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 138 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 138

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1029) to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications, public participation, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-10. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1030) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114-11. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 138 provides for the consideration of two important pieces of legislation to create a more transparent

and accountable Environmental Protection Agency, one that works in an open manner for all of America. The rule provides for 1 hour of debate for each of the bills contained within the rule. Further, amendments were made in order for each bill, for a total of six amendments from Members of both parties.

Mr. Speaker, the first bill contained in this rule, H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015, brings greater accountability and oversight to the Board of appointed advisers which the EPA uses to review the scientific basis for its official actions. Created in the late 1970s, the Science Advisory Board was intended to be a check on the EPA in order to ensure that the Agency's math and statistics were all in order before it promulgated rules or regulations.

In fact, the original authorization for the Board made clear that the Science Advisory Board was to report to both the Environmental Protection Agency and to Congress on its findings. However, over the course of the past several decades since its inception, the Science Advisory Board has become little more than a rubberstamp for whatever the EPA Administrator wishes to accomplish. With the Board members being handpicked by the Administrator, they are likely being chosen primarily on the basis that they hold the same view of the environmental world as whoever the head of the EPA is at any given time.

The bill before us would provide for a more balanced representation on the Science Advisory Board, setting out parameters regarding whom the Administrator can choose and ensuring that State and local governments have representation on the Board so the Board is not comprised solely of environmental activists, as has been the case for some time now. Indeed, current regulations exclude industry experts from serving on the Science Advisory Board but not officials from environmental advocacy groups—in other words, special interests. These new regulations are necessary to ensure against any appearance of impropriety on the Science Advisory Board.

This legislation becomes even more critical when one considers that the numerous regulations currently being considered by the Environmental Protection Agency could have enormous impacts on the Nation's economy. From proposed carbon regulations to the ratcheting down of ozone regulations, the Science Advisory Board has been tasked with reviewing the science that will back up some of the most expensive rules in the history of the Environmental Protection Agency. It is critical that the American people have confidence that the Federal Government is doing what is justified. The fear is that, absent significant reforms to the Environmental Protection Agency's process, this simply will not be the case.

The second bill contained in this rule, H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act, is also intended to make the Environmental Protection Agency's rulemaking process more transparent. This was at one time a goal of the current administration's. We seem to have lost that somewhere along the way. The legislation states that the Environmental Protection Agency may take official action on an environmental regulation only if it has identified all of the scientific and technical information upon which it has based its decision, and these must be publicly available studies that can be independently peer reviewed. This would bring the EPA's process in line with how many scientific journals operate when they publish peer-reviewed studies.

Further, the bill is prospective, and it will not interfere with any enacted rules or regulations by the Environmental Protection Agency. To address concerns expressed during the Science Committee's consideration of the bill, the legislation spells out that nothing in these requirements would jeopardize any privacy concerns with scientific studies. The CDC successfully makes its studies available. It redacts personal information, and it does not expose any test subject's personal information. The EPA should have no problem similarly complying with these requirements.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are waking up to how much of the United States economy the EPA is attempting to regulate—from carbon dioxide to ozone—and people are rightly anxious over how these new and, in some cases, unprecedented rules will affect some consumers' wallets. It is reasonable and expeditious to ensure that the science that the EPA relies upon to craft its regulations simply be transparent and simply be available for all to see and not for just that select group of industry insiders that the EPA deems worthy to see its work products.

Even the congressional committees that are charged with the legitimate oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency's actions have had difficulty in obtaining basic scientific justifications for the actions taken by the EPA over the last few years. The bills before us today will begin the process of making the Environmental Protection Agency accountable to the very constituency that it claims to protect—the American people.

I encourage all of my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and ''yes'' on the underlying bills, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I thank the gentleman from Texas, Dr. BURGESS, for yielding the customary 30 minutes. I rise today in opposition to the rule and the underlying bills.

Mr. Speaker, we are fortunate to have put the most recent Republican manufactured crisis of funding the Department of Homeland Security behind us. This was not the first crisis caused by the extreme rightwing in this body, and I am certain that it won't be the last. In looking ahead to the balance of the year, I am sure that my Republican colleagues are preparing themselves to continue with the same trend.

For example, the current suspension of the debt limit, which expired on March 15, is a crisis. By the end of this month, Congress has to act on the so-called ''doc fix'' or else—crisis. The highway trust fund is set to run out of money in about 3 months. There is another crisis. At the end of June, the Export-Import Bank will have to be reauthorized—crisis. That takes us all the way to the end of the fiscal year, in September, when we push reset and have to do it all again from the beginning. This is no way to govern, and it is not what Americans who are struggling to put food on the table want or deserve.

I haven't mentioned the two bills in question today. That is not by accident. It is because they are typical go nowhere, do-nothing pet projects. Mr. Speaker, having served on the Rules Committee for as long as I have and having made the prediction, as my colleagues on the Democratic side of the Rules Committee have repeated, that the legislation is going nowhere, I think that we have been confirmed virtually every time.

These two measures are attempts by corporate interests to compromise the Environmental Protection Agency's integrity and stock its scientific review board with sympathizers. Neither will become law. ''Secret science'' might sound scary, but the rhetoric has outpaced the reality. Furthermore, this bill will not improve the EPA's science or make it more transparent. In fact, the bill's impossible standards and mechanisms will actually force the Environmental Protection Agency to ignore major and consequential studies.

De-identifying the data is not so simple. Firstly, just because the data is de-identified doesn't mean that it will stay de-identified. We are all familiar with how much personal information is readily available. Only a few pieces of information are required to reconnect the de-identified dots across the Internet and social media. Moreover, de-identifying the data means removing critical information that often renders the results not reproducible, which, under the regime created by this bill, would then force the EPA to ignore legitimate and, possibly, important studies.

□ 1245

Dr. BURGESS pointed out that it would protect the wallets of some. I am equally concerned about the bodies of all.

The other measure we are considering today, H.R. 1029, will give private industry substantial influence over the EPA. As we should have learned from the economic collapse, stuffing the regulatory agency with industry-affiliated experts is like leaving the wolves to mind the flock.

Mr. Speaker, I find it most unfortunate that my Republican colleagues continue to bring up do-nothing bills that will go nowhere and then spend the rest of their time doing everything in their power to oppose the President of the United States. Quite frankly, the American people deserve better.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes for the purpose of response.

Mr. Speaker, I remind the body that there was an election held in November of last year, and the results of that election are now part of history. Prior to that election, it is true, there were bills passed in the House of Representatives that were submitted to the Senate for action, and basically nothing happened. The then-Senate majority leader had made a decision that he was going to prevent any legislation from passing, he was going to prevent his Members from having to take a vote that might be construed as difficult, and he was certainly going to prevent the President from being in a position of having to veto any legislation.

I would just remind people that the process is the House and Senate each pass their bills; they agree in a conference committee to any differences. If that conference report is passed by both Houses, indeed, it is submitted to the White House for action, and that action may, indeed, be a veto. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? That veto is actually an important part of the process.

Right now people are unaware of where the President is on several issues because he has simply never had to render a decision; it has always been a full stop over at the Senate majority leader's desk. The American people spoke loudly last November that they did not want that process to continue.

Now, one may successfully argue that in 2012 the American people voted for divided government, but in 2014 they said: You know, that is not working out so well for us, and we are willing to give the Senate, to return a voice to the Senate.

We are now giving the Senate an opportunity. These bills were both passed last year. The gentleman from Florida knows that very well. We had this very same argument on the floor of the House last fall. Both bills essentially died in the Senate. It is my hope now that we will give the Senate yet another opportunity. It is a new day, new Senators, new majority leader. Let them have a chance to act.

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

Mr. BURGESS. I yield myself an additional 2 minutes just to speak briefly on the substance of H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act. This is a bill that requires the Environmental Protection Agency to base its regulations on science, not only on science, but science that is available to the public and subject to independent verification. Who could be against that?

That is part of the scientific process. That is part of scientific inquiry. You balance things, propose a theory; someone proposes an alternate; you get the data, collect the evidence, do the studies, do the experiments, make that generally available, and come to a conclusion.

This is a transparency bill. The administration ran on the concept of transparency. We are simply trying to help them fulfill that obligation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the March 3, 2014, statements of the administration on the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act and Secret Science Reform Act.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1029—EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REFORM ACT OF 2015

(Rep. Lucas, R–OK and 24 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 1029, which would affect the ability of EPA's Science Advisory Board (SAB) to form panels and perform its essential functions. The SAB, along with other functions, reviews the quality and adequacy of certain scientific and technical information used by EPA or proposed as the basis for EPA regulations. Therefore, it is imperative that the SAB be composed of the most knowledgeable scientific and technical experts available. The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), which governs Federal advisory committees such as the SAB, provides for balanced panels and subcommittees that include experts with diverse backgrounds who represent wide-ranging perspectives.

H.R. 1029 would negatively affect the appointment of experts and would weaken the scientific independence and integrity of the SAB. For example, the bill would impose a hiring quota for SAB members based on employment by a State, local, or tribal government as opposed to scientific expertise. The bill would also place limitations on SAB members' participation in ''advisory activities that directly or indirectly involve review and evaluation of their own work.'' Determining the practical meaning of ''indirect'' involvement will be difficult and consequently problematic to implement. The provisions on appointment of experts to the SAB and various other requirements could also preclude the nomination of scientists with significant expertise in their fields.

In addition, H.R. 1029 would add burdensome requirements on the SAB with respect to solicitation of and response to public comments, above and beyond those imposed by FACA. These new requirements would saddle the SAB with workload that would impair its ability to carry out its mandate. Further, H.R. 1029 would add an unnecessary, burdensome, and costly layer of requirements for hazard and risk assessments without defining the scope of these requirements and absent recognition that many high profile assessments already are reviewed by the SAB.

If the President were presented with H.R. 1029, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1030—SECRET SCIENCE REFORM ACT OF 2015

(Rep. Smith, R–TX and 28 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly supports regulatory transparency, but strongly opposes H.R. 1030. The bill would impose arbitrary, unnecessary, and expensive requirements that would seriously impede the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) ability to use science to protect public health and the environment, as required under an array of environmental laws, while increasing uncertainty for businesses and States.

H.R. 1030 could be used to prevent EPA from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating any ''covered action'' until legal challenges about the legitimate withholding of certain scientific and technical information are resolved. Provisions of the bill could be interpreted to prevent EPA from taking important, and possibly legally required, actions, where supporting data is not publicly available, and legal challenges could delay important environmental and health protections. For example, the data underlying some scientifically-important studies is not made broadly available in order to protect the privacy of test subjects, and modeling that EPA uses for a variety of purposes are not EPA property and therefore cannot be publicly released. H.R. 1030 could interfere with EPA's ability to take actions based on such data. In short, the bill would undermine EPA's ability to protect the health of Americans, would impose expensive new mandates on EPA, and could impose substantial litigation costs on the Federal government. It also could impede EPA's reliance on the best available science.

Instead of an overly broad bill that would tie EPA's hands, the Administration urges the Congress to support the Administration's efforts to make scientific and technical information more accessible and regulations more transparent. A bill consistent with the principles expressed in the Administration's Executive Order 13563 ''Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review'' and the December 2010 Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Memorandum on Scientific Integrity, as well as implementation of the Administration's recent open data and public access initiatives (e.g., OSTP's February 2013 policy memorandum on Increasing Access to the Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research) would greatly benefit the American people. EPA also has embarked on several initiatives that enhance access to and transparency of data and science used to inform policy and regulatory decisions.

If the President were presented with H.R. 1030, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Mr. HASTINGS. I would urge that my colleague who made the comment that we don't know where the President is, well, there is where the President is.

I would also ask rhetorically, if it is that all these things that we passed that I said were going nowhere last year, why is it that we haven't had anything go anywhere this year with both a Republican Senate and a Republican House, and neither of these measures is going to go anywhere nor are they going to go to conference, and I believe people know that.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, we are going to offer an amendment to the rule that would allow the House to consider the Promoting U.S. Jobs Through Exports Act. This bill would renew the Export-Import Bank's charter for an additional 7 years, ensuring certainty for U.S. exporters and businesses through 2022.

To discuss our proposal, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services and my good friend.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I would like to thank the gentleman from Florida for his leadership on this important issue. I applaud him, Leader PELOSI, and Whip HOYER for their efforts to ensure we support policies that create American jobs and keep U.S. businesses competitive.

I find the contrast with the bills we consider this week particularly striking as the out-of-touch Republican leadership wastes our time with measures that deny science and strip workers of critical rights.

Mr. Speaker, I am in disbelief that we are still debating the future of the Export-Import Bank, which we know supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and levels the playing field so that American businesses, large and small, can compete globally. The facts underscore what is at stake.

In fiscal year 2014, Ex-Im Bank approved more than 3,400 transactions with a total estimated export value of $27.5 billion. This support is estimated to have sustained 164,000 export-related U.S. jobs. Over the past 5 years, it is estimated that the Bank has created or sustained more than 1.2 million private sector jobs. Moreover, all this was accomplished as the Bank returned over $674 million back to the American taxpayers just last year.

Over the past two decades, the Bank has generated a surplus of $6.9 billion for U.S. taxpayers, but for months a handful of extremists in this Chamber have refused to accept the numerous and widespread benefits provided by the Export-Import Bank to our economy. They have ignored these numbers as well as the diverse array of interests who support the Bank, such as the United States Chamber of Commerce; the National Small Business Association; the National Association of Manufacturers; labor unions, such as the AFL–CIO; and many others.

Instead, they have decided to follow the talking points of extremist groups like Heritage Action and the Club for Growth. I find it ironic that Republicans are actively working to ensure this important engine of job creation closes its doors while also waging war with President Obama over the Keystone XL pipeline, which even the most inflated estimates say would create far fewer jobs than Ex-Im.

However, I have been heartened to see a number of frustrated Republicans, some of them even Tea Partiers themselves, say enough is enough and have chosen to stand up for real workers and businesses rather than a handful of ideologues dictating policy from a Washington think tank. I applaud the 58 Republicans who courageously have come out against their leadership in favor of renewing the Export-Import Bank's charter.

As we take an important vote that will bring Export-Import Bank legislation to the floor today, I ask those Republicans to once again show their courage, show their leadership, and show your constituents who rely on the Export-Import Bank for jobs and economic growth that you are willing to do what is best for them and not what is politically expedient.

Democrats want to provide certainty for the businesses and workers who rely on the Bank, and that is why I, along with Mr. HECK of Washington, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, and Whip HOYER of Maryland, recently introduced legislation to reauthorize, reform, and reenergize the Export-Import Bank. The measure takes a sensible approach to renewing the Bank, extending its charter for 7 years, increasing its lending authority to meet the needs of U.S. exporters, and modernizing the Bank's programs to better serve small- and medium-sized businesses.

I couldn't be prouder of my democratic colleagues, 189 of whom joined as cosponsors just a few days after being introduced. Such widespread support sends a strong message to America's manufacturers, businesses, and workers that Democrats are united in preserving an institution that for decades has helped this Nation create jobs and grow the economy; and it makes clear that if those supportive Republicans were to join us, this Congress could pass an extension of the Export-Import Bank's charter today.

Mr. Speaker and Members, this is the right thing to do for our workers and for our businesses and for our Nation. Let's stand up for what is right.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute for the purpose of a response.

I appreciate the comments on the Export-Import Bank. I would point out to the body that today's rule has under consideration bills dealing with regulating the Environmental Protection Agency. The House did pass an extension of the Export-Import Bank charter last December that follows through until June of this year. There will be ample opportunity for us to have this debate and engage in debate as, indeed, people of this country want us to do. Today is not the time for that debate. Today is the day for deciding whether or not this body will further regulate the EPA.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I would think the time to create American jobs is anytime, and sooner rather than later.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE), my good friend, the ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. HASTINGS for yielding to me.

I, too, rise in support of H.R. 1031, the Promoting U.S. Jobs Through Exports Act of 2014, which reauthorizes the Export-Import Bank long term. I am so proud to have been able to introduce this legislation, along with our ranking member of the Committee on Financial Services, Ms. WATERS, and Representatives HECK and HOYER.

The bill has 189 Democratic cosponsors. You add that number to the 57 Republicans that are supportive of Representative FINCHER's legislation to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank and just do the math there: 189 and 57, far and above any kind of majority needed to reauthorize this important jobs creation, jobs engine, and I would hope that this body would move forward on reauthorizing this legislation.

My district of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has a very strong manufacturing and industrial base. I believe that we are maybe second in the country that really depends on a strong manufacturing and industrial base for our basic economic activity, and the small manufacturers in Milwaukee utilize the Export-Import Bank to export goods and services to places like China and India.

One of the narratives, the untrue narratives about the Export-Import Bank is that it is a utility for big companies like Boeing, it is the Bank of Boeing. Well, not so much. There is an endless supply chain, like the ones that I have visited recently.

I just recently went to a shop in Milwaukee that employs 30 people—30 people—yet they export U.S. goods to work on the Panama Canal.

□ 1300

The president of that company just flat out stated that he doesn't exist without the Export-Import Bank. Folks, it is just that simple.

I have heard many debates and arguments about the importance of passing stuff like Keystone, which is debatable as a job creator, and where it does create jobs, it is in a very small geographic area—whereas the Export-Import Bank creates hundreds of thousands of jobs in all of our districts.

Folks, it is just really that simple. The Export-Import Bank is a necessary part of our discussion about creating jobs.

Until we get past the political arguments that are being made about hanging the Export-Import Bank out there as low-hanging fruit to demonstrate our willingness to cut off so-called corporate welfare so that we can then get at cutting off entitlement programs to people, until we get past that cynical debate, I don't think that we are going to see very much in the way of improving our job creation performance in the United States.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes for the purpose of a response.

Talking about job creation is well and good, but we should also concern ourselves about job erosion and job loss. I don't know if the EPA is the number one Federal agency involved in job erosion and job loss, but it is right up there.

If you talk to anyone at home in your district about what is the Federal agency that is responsible for more job destruction, the EPA, if not at the top of the list, is right behind some of the others.

What we are about today is to regulate the regulator. It is not even to regulate the regulator, just have the regulator disclose to us what information upon which they are relying to make those regulations.

Why does the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act matter? Because the Science Advisory Board plays a critical role in reviewing the scientific information that forms the foundation of costly EPA regulations. What is the cost of those EPA regulations, Mr. Speaker? The cost is jobs.

The work we are doing today is important. I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of the rule and in favor of the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this time to yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK), my good friend and a member of the Committee on Financial Services.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the previous question in order that I might support Mr. HASTINGS' effort to offer the amendment to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

Here is why. The Export-Import Bank is a job-creating machine. Over the last 5 years, it has created—by good and scientifically-based estimates—about 1.2 million well-paying jobs, good-paying jobs, the kind of jobs that you can have and buy a home and send your kids to college and that touch every congressional district in the State. The Export-Import Bank is a job-creating machine.

The Export-Import Bank is also a deficit-reducing machine. Not one red penny in the last generation has been used to subsidize it. In fact, $7 billion has been transferred to the Treasury to reduce the deficit. It was $1 billion 2 years ago, $675 million last year, and a projected $8 million this year. The Export-Import Bank is a deficit-reducing machine.

In addition to that, it is a superperformer, by any private sector measure. I come from the private sector. How they conduct their business is the envy of the financial services sector.

It has a default rate of less than—you are hearing this correctly—.175 percent and a collection rate over 50 percent. It is a superperformer; yet the Export-Import Bank goes away in exactly 105 days—poof, gone, vanished.

The gentleman from Texas asked a very good question, a fair question: Why now? Well, the answer is: The clock is ticking, tick tock, tick tock. There are 105 days to go; yet the committee of jurisdiction has not had a hearing, has not scheduled a markup, and has issued no notice for either.

In fact, when we had the committee oversight plan before us, what did the committee chair do? He opposed a neutrally worded amendment that said, Let's take up the Export-Import Bank and subject it to regular order. That is all. Let's go through regular order.

There is no intent to take up the Export-Import Bank—no hearing, no markup, a rejection of regular order. That is why now.

It has been said, erroneously, that the Export-Import Bank primarily benefits Big Business—principally, aerospace. That is so wrong on so many levels, I cannot exaggerate it.

To begin with, 90 percent of the transactions of the Export-Import Bank go to small business, but it also fails to understand something, this argument coming from people who are supposed to understand the private sector.

Take a company like Boeing, a pride of America. Please remember, ladies and gentlemen, there are only two companies on the face of the planet that produce large airplanes, and America has but one of them. Do you know what they rely on? 12,000 businesses in their supply chain, many of which are small.

Here is the fact. Last week, I was home in a town called Puyallup, which most people can't even pronounce. It is a beautiful community of 38,000 people. It is not anywhere near Renton or Everett, where the airplanes are manufactured.

Do you know how many small businesses there are in the confines of the city limits of Puyallup that supply the aerospace industry and benefit from the Export-Import Bank? Seventeen, small businesses everywhere, but it is also stand-alone small businesses.

Another in my district is called Pexco. They produce traffic cones and the like that they sell internationally. Ex-Im financed $2.3 million of their product last year.

I had a couple in my office just a few weeks ago from eastern Washington. I don't even represent them. They have agricultural products, mint extract and mint oil. Before they began working with the Export-Import Bank, one-third of their gross revenues were in exports. They began working with them, and their domestic side has grown. Now, it is two-thirds.

I had another agricultural interest in the office. They said that 5 years ago, 5 percent of their business was export. They did not use the Export-Import Bank. They began using it, and it is now 50 percent.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, let us remember that there are 60 developed nations on the face of the Earth, and if we allow our Export-Import Bank to expire, we will be the only one on the face of the planet without an export credit authority.

Let me tell you, China is rubbing their hands in anticipation because, in addition to Airbus—remember, we are 2 to 8 years away from China manufacturing a wide-body airplane. They can't wait for the Export-Import Bank to expire so they can capture market share.

Why in the world would we unilaterally disarm? Remember this: We are only 5 percent of the world's population.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HECK of Washington. If we want to keep and grow our middle class, we need to learn how to sell into the growing middle class of the rest of the world, and that requires the Export-Import Bank.

The Export-Import Bank is a job-creating machine, a deficit-reducing machine, and a superperformer. The votes are here. It is 190, by the way—not 189—and 58 on that side of the aisle.

There is a part of me, a voice in me that wants to shout: Let my people go. The votes are here. It is not scheduled for a hearing. Let Mr. HASTINGS offer his amendment. Let's reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I want to remind Members we are talking about the EPA today, a job-destroying agency.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), a member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I appreciate my friend and colleague from the Rules Committee yielding me time to speak on this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak on the rule for H.R. 1030 and H.R. 1029 because I think, frankly, it fits into what I have just been hearing, but I think it fits in sort of maybe a perverse way, but also a very good way, because it emphasizes exactly what we need to be talking about here, and that is jobs, that is the economy, that is good growth, that is good government, that is the things that we are supposed to be doing and working on that and finding out why certain things don't get done.

Anybody watching over the last little bit would actually have a concern as to what we are doing, and I think it goes back to a simple understanding that there is a very clear understanding of why and who is offering what amendments and what bills up here. The Republican majority is offering a vision in which people are empowered in government, not taking the incentives away.

I think it was summed up very well in a statement just the other day from the administration that actually said that their definition, if you will, of a burdensome regulation was something that burdened the employees of a government agency.

I think it is very clear from our perspective that what is a burdensome regulation is something that burdens American businesses and burdens the scientific communities and burdens those in which government is putting its finger on and stifling. There is a big difference here. All you have to do is watch what is said and watch what is done, and you will begin to see that.

I will not be supporting, as we go back to these bills, all the amendments

made in order under this rule. I am still pleased that we, as a House, are considering them as we come to the floor and also that the House will ultimately work its will.

One of the key differences highlighted is in how we as conservatives and others in this body look at H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle in the committee markup of this legislation argued that ''this marks a radical departure from longstanding practices.''

I hope this is the case, for these acclaimed ''longstanding practices'' have favored interest group agendas over scientific integrity, back rooms over public participation, and sacrificed transparency and openness at the altar of political expediency.

Conservatives in this body believe that Congress should not tolerate an administration who refuses to make public the scientific data behind numerous EPA regulations, regulations that are crippling the ability of businesses to survive in this economic climate created and sustained by the failed policies of this administration.

This administration issued a statement of opposition, as I just talked about a moment ago, saying that underlying measures in these bills would be ''burdensome'' on the government. I think if our Founders were hearing this today, they would stand up and say: That is not what we intended.

Read the document. The document said a limited, structured government that supports the people, that supports our welfare, and supports the cause of the United States of America, not in a form in which government is the problem in finding out these problems and keeping from areas in a scientific community, in the business community.

There is a clear, distinct difference here. What is burdensome on government is what then turns around and becomes burdensome on the American people. You see, conservatives in Congress try to streamline and reform our regulatory system, ensure that cost and benefits of regulations are analyzed before it is implemented, and we are told that that is burdensome.

While the conservatives are being criticized for burdensome reforms, they are also, at the same time, pushing through $181.5 billion in regulations just last year.

Apparently, the administration has redefined burdensome to mean something that most do not. It is just another example of a disconnect.

Now, what is often said at this point is that conservatives and Republicans don't want clean water. They want to destroy the environmental integrity. They want bad air and poor traffic control and maybe everything else in the world that you want to say because there is a belief that government will fix all that.

There is a proper role for government, but in this environment, let's have transparency, let's have openness, let's have public participation. Let's not keep stuff away from the American people. That is what they are asking for. That is what they expect from their government.

Instead of marginalizing the honest debate about science and being about scientific enterprise, instead of saying that they are for something that nobody is for, let's be honest about the legislation.

If you don't really want to talk about the legislation, let's talk about everything else in the world. That is a good way to distract. We don't want to talk about a process that is broken. We will talk about something else.

No, it is not going to happen this time. I agree with the previous speaker. Let my people go. Let my people go. Let the government be open. Let the government be transparent.

Let the government be limited so that the American people are not limited, the American people have all they need, and that is the purpose of these bills.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am always fascinated when our colleagues come to the floor of this great deliberative body and argue against government. The last time I looked, all 435 plus 6 of us and the 100 United States Senators sought public office to be involved in making government better.

□ 1315

The government is the people of the United States. And it is not only the respective agencies; it is also our counties, our parishes, our districts, our cities that are the government. When we say that, it makes it sound as if the government is bad, and defense is the only entity that all of us agree is our responsibility.

But yes, clean water is our responsibility, and, yes, emissions that cause harm to the environment and to individuals are our mission. Those are responsibilities of government.

Yes, air traffic control is a responsibility of government. Yes, the way our roads are undertaken, or the repair of bridges, yes, that is the government.

So I have a lot of trouble with an antigovernment attitude when, in fact, we are just being anti-ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, we know that science is the formation of conclusions upon a foundation of testable observation. Sometimes mistakes are made, and they can be construed as valuable because you learn what not to do the next time.

Government, for example, operated NASA and still has some role in that, and many of the experiments that were failed experiments led to us understanding how to develop the microwave and how to develop scientific heart devices that have benefited the American people. Yes, that was the government.

But this Republican-caused crisis was resolved in the same way it was a few weeks back, the same way it was resolved the last time the Republicans shut down the government. It was resolved on the backs of Democrats.

When the other party decides to work with the Democratic Party, the American people benefit from its government, and we saw evidence of that in the Homeland Security financing measure.

Given how often we find ourselves in similar situations, I can't help but wonder what hypothesis my friends are trying to test. I do not think that seeing how far our security and economic stability can bend before breaking is what is meant by ''the great American experiment.''

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question. I urge a ''no'' vote on the rule that is going nowhere fast, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

First off, I want to bring us back to the issue at hand today; that, is the rule for consideration of H.R. 1029 and H.R. 1030.

H.R. 1029 protects jobs by helping to ensure that important scientific advice is balanced and unbiased. The bill promotes public participation and encourages the Science Advisory Board to draw on State and private sector expertise, fairly simple concepts.

H.R. 1030 is a transparency bill that simply asks the EPA to show its work before implementing regulations that cost billions of dollars and destroy jobs. Transparency and reproducibility are basic tenets of science. Costly environmental regulations should only be based on data that are available to independent scientists and to the public.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, if the EPA has nothing to hide, then there is no good reason to keep this data from the American people.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for the consideration of the two important bills to provide for an open and transparent rulemaking at the Environmental Protection Agency. I certainly thank the authors for their thoughtful legislation. I urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying bills.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 138 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

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

SEC 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R.1031) to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes. General debate shall

be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1031.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of the resolution, if ordered, and suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1191.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 232, nays 181, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 116]

YEAS—232

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

NAYS—181

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky

Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—19

Collins (GA)
Conyers
Graves (MO)
Hinojosa
Hudson
Hurt (VA)
Lewis
Lummis
McKinley
Payne
Roskam
Rush
Sanford
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Wilson (FL)
Young (AK)
Zinke

□ 1348

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mses. DEGETTE, ESTY, and CLARKE of New York changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. ZINKE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 116 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. HURT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall vote No. 116, ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 138. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 180, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 117]

AYES—236

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

NOES—180

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Coffman
Conyers
Graves (MO)
Hinojosa
Hudson
Lummis
McKinley
Payne
Ribble
Roskam
Rush
Sanford
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Young (AK)

□ 1355

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 117, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion 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, 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 will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 415, nays 0, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 118]

YEAS—415

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
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
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
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
DeFazio
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
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins
Hill
Himes
Holding
Honda
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
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
Lipinski
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
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
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (NC)
Price, Tom
Quigley
Rangel
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—17

Conyers
Graves (MO)
Hastings
Hinojosa
Hudson
Lummis
McKinley
Mulvaney
Payne
Roskam
Rush
Sanford
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Vela
Young (AK)

□ 1402

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. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, on the final vote results for rollcall vote No. 118 that took place on March 17, 2015, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 1191.

EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REFORM ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 1029.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 138 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1029.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. YODER) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1404

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1029) to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications, public participation, and for other purposes, with Mr. YODER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to thank Chairman SMITH and former Environment Subcommittee Chairs Harris, Stewart, and Schweikert for their hard work on this important piece of legislation. I also want to thank my friend Representative PETERSON for making this bill a bipartisan effort. I appreciate his willingness to sponsor this bill with me.

This is a good government bill. It reflects the values we should uphold, regardless of which side of the political aisle we are on.

In western Oklahoma, we are no strangers to regulatory overreach from the Environmental Protection Agency. Farmers, ranchers, and small businesses often find themselves the target of burdensome and simply inefficient regulations.

These regulations range from something as specific as farm fuel tank requirements to vastly prohibitive restrictions on electric power plants that power our homes.

Government intrusion into America's energy and agricultural sectors reverberate into our everyday lives in the form of higher food prices or higher monthly energy bills. Stagnant wages and underemployment have only exacerbated the problem for families trying to make ends meet.

The science behind EPA regulations is as important as the money they siphon from our economy. Science and data are invaluable tools in helping us navigate complex policy issues, and when the economic cost of these regulations reaches into tens of millions of dollars, we need to get it right.

H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act, ensures that the best experts are free to undertake a balanced and open review of regulatory science.

The Board was established to provide scientific advice to the EPA, to Congress, and to review the quality and relevance of the science that EPA uses for regulations, but in recent years, shortcomings from the process, unfortunately, have arisen.

Opportunities for public participation are limited, an imbalance of viewpoints has been allowed to grow, potential conflicts of interest have gone unchecked, and the ability of the Board to speak independently seemingly has been curtailed. If the EPA undermines the Board's independence or prevents it from providing advice to Congress, the valuable advice these experts can provide is wasted.

Despite the existing requirement that EPA's advisory panels be ''fairly balanced in terms of point of view represented,'' the Science Committee has identified a number of problems that we fear undermine the panel's credibility and work product.

These include:

A number of advisory members have received money from the EPA. This could create an appearance of a conflict of interest.

Some of the panelists have taken public and even political positions on issues they are advising the Board about. For example, a lead reviewer of

the EPA's hydraulic fracturing study published an antifracking article entitled: ''Regulate, Baby, Regulate.'' Now, clearly, this is not an objective point of view and should be publicly disclosed.

Public participation is limited during most Board meetings; interested parties have almost no ability to comment on the scope of the work, and meeting records are often incomplete and hard to obtain.

The EPA routinely excludes State, local, and tribal experts while stacking the review panels with individuals who will give the EPA the answer it wants.

This bill is both proscience and prosound science. This bill is founded upon recommendations for reform outlined in the National Academy of Sciences and the EPA's Peer Review Handbook. This bill ensures that the Board is balanced, transparent, and independent, all of which will help prevent the SAB from being manipulated by any group.

H.R. 1029 liberates the Board from EPA—some would say tyranny, but I would prefer to think it empowers the Board to listen to outside expertise. This viewpoint is consistent with the basic ideals of our democracy.

Subject areas such as risk and hazardous assessments often involve the examination and evaluation of some of the most complicated scientific and technical information. These assessments are precisely where the Board's expertise is most needed. The decision to review remains in the hands of the Board, and the EPA must respect the independence of the Board's opportunity to review.

Perhaps, most importantly, this bill seeks to increase public participation that benefits all stakeholders. Currently, valuable opportunities for diverse perspectives are limited. The Federal Government does not have a monopoly on the truth.

The public has important expertise that we can't afford to ignore in a democracy. State, local, tribal, and private sectors have a long history of qualified scientific experts. Their contributions should be taken seriously.

Unfortunately, the history of the SAB shows that private sector representation is often lacking or nonexistent; instead, the EPA picks the Board—ignoring the knowledge, expertise, and contributions of these experts.

This bill ensures that qualified experts are not excluded simply due to their affiliation. This will add value and credibility to future Board reviews.

Mr. PETERSON and I recognize the important role that science should play in our policy debates and provides safeguards to give the public confidence in science. It restores the independent Science Advisory Board as a defender of scientific integrity and will help restore credibility and trust in a Federal agency that has lost much of it.

Disagreements on scientific conclusions shouldn't occur on the House floor, and this legislation will help ensure that the best experts are free to undertake an open review of the EPA's regulatory science.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in opposition to H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act.

I want to start by thanking my colleagues, Mr. LUCAS and Chairman SMITH, for their intention to improve the EPA's Science Advisory Board, and I especially want to thank Chairman SMITH for working with me on other legislation that passed the Science Committee and the House on a bipartisan basis.

Members and staff on both sides of the aisle worked tirelessly last week and, in fact, since the last Congress toward a bipartisan bill about the Science Advisory Board that accommodated much, if not all, of the fundamental principles shared by both Democrats and Republicans.

Unfortunately, we were not able to reach agreement on some very critical provisions by this date. Accordingly, I will be urging my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the underlying bill before us today.

This bill has not changed meaningfully since we considered it last year, and I stand here today with the same concerns I raised last Congress. My colleagues who support H.R. 1029 may describe this bill as an attempt to strengthen public participation in EPA's scientific review process, improve the process for selecting expert advisers, expand transparency requirements, and limit nonscientific policy advice within the EPA's Science Advisory Board.

All of these are good government principles that I agree with, and if this bill or the bill we considered last year achieved these goals, I would be here ready to support it, but H.R. 1029 would not achieve these good government goals.

Instead of improving the Science Advisory Board structure or operation, the bill will limit the quality of scientific advice the EPA receives and allow seemingly endless delays in EPA's regulatory process.

H.R. 1029 would make it easier for industry representatives to serve on the Board, even if they have a financial conflict of interest. To be clear, I am not opposed to industry experts participating on the Science Advisory Board or in the peer review process at the EPA. Their insight into processes and industry conduct can provide valuable guidance to an advisory body.

That being said, Congress should not be endorsing legislation that undermines longstanding ethics requirements and practices with the end result being an overrepresentation of industry voices on EPA's Science Advisory Board, and this is likely to be the result of the adoption of this bill.

□ 1415

This bill conflates bias with financial conflicts of interest, and it assumes that a simple disclosure will prevent a material interest in an outcome from coloring the judgment and actions of a Board member. Congress should not be supporting legislation that undermines longstanding ethics requirements and practices that have worked well to ensure fairness and the balance of views on all Federal advisory committees.

Another troubling element of H.R. 1029 is that it would significantly delay the work of the Science Advisory Board. The Board should absolutely seek public comment on the science it is reviewing, and, if necessary, it should extend the duration of the public comment period to ensure that interested parties have ample opportunity to submit their views. With this, we agree.

However, H.R. 1029 takes this process to the extreme by creating unnecessary burdens, including a loophole that could keep the Board from ending the public comment period and that could require that the Board provide written responses to a significant number of comments it receives. H.R. 1029 distorts the important public participation process to create what amounts to an endless appeals process that will provide those who disagree with the EPA an effective tool to halt, derail, or slow the Agency's rulemaking.

Mr. Chairman, I include for the RECORD several letters from organizations that have similar concerns with H.R. 1029, including the Union of Concerned Scientists, the Environmental Defense Fund, the National Center for Health Research, the Center for Medical Consumers, the National Physicians Alliance, and others.

MARCH 16, 2015.

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: We are writing to express our opposition to H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015, and H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015. Our organizations are dedicated to saving lives and improving public health.

Science is the bedrock of sound regulatory decision making. The best science underscores everything our organizations do to improve health. We strongly believe in a transparent and open regulatory process. A vital element of research is patient confidentiality. Physicians and researchers have earned the trust of their patients by steadfastly maintaining patient confidentiality. Patient confidentiality is a clear legal and ethical obligation.

The Secret Science Reform Act of 2015 will compel the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to either ignore the best science by prohibiting the agency from considering peer-reviewed research that is based on confidential patient information or force EPA to publicly release confidential patient information, which would violate federal law. This is an untenable outcome that would completely undermine the ability of the EPA to perform its responsibilities under the Clean Air Act and myriad other federal laws. The legislation will not improve EPA's actions; rather, it will stifle public health protections.

The kind of information disclosure envisioned in this legislation exceeds that required by peer-reviewed journals. We believe much of the intent of this legislation is already achieved through the current peer-review process required by all academic journals. The vast majority of peer-reviewed journals require manuscript authors to register any trial using human subjects with clinicaltrials.gov. This public registry collects key information on the study population, research goals and methods that allow outside reviewers and scientists to either challenge or attempt to reproduce study results. Additionally, the peer-review process and publication of results invites the broader scientific community to debate study findings. Trial registry and manuscript publications are only part of the process by which scientific endeavors operate in a transparent environment.

Private organizations, public charities, research universities, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, corporations and many other entities conduct medical research. Many of these organizations compile large longitudinal data sets that track patients over a period of time. These data serve as the basis of many studies that permit epidemiologists to track disease and risk factor information for large patient populations.

The published peer-reviewed information from such data often inform regulatory decision making at the EPA and other federal agencies as well as future research. Not only do these data inform regulatory action, they help inform efforts to educate the public about the magnitude of a disease, risk factors and steps individuals can take to improve their health. In order for EPA to set the most appropriate standards, it must be informed by the best information.

Understanding the impact of air pollution on human health and the magnitude of harm caused by pollution at specific levels helps the agency meet its obligations under the Clean Air Act. Absent these data, it is unclear upon what basis the agency could make sound decisions.

H.R. 1029, The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 will also undermine the scientific basis for EPA policy, specifically by compromising the integrity of the panel that reviews that science. EPA's Science Advisory Board (SAB) is composed of independent scientific and technical experts who are tasked with evaluating the science and providing advice that EPA uses to inform its decision making. The current law provides for balanced panels and experts with diverse backgrounds.

This legislation would impose a hiring quota on the SAB that would require ten percent of members to be selected for qualifications other than their scientific expertise. This bill will compromise not only the scientific integrity of the SAB, but also its independence, as the quota would open the door for representatives of the regulated industries to serve on the board.

Further, the bill will also, in some cases, prohibit SAB members from participating when their own research is involved—even indirectly. This requirement could block participation of the ''best and the brightest'' researchers in a particular field at the very time their expertise is needed to accurately inform the regulatory process.

Finally, the SAB is currently governed by the Federal Advisory Committee Act and already has a public comment system in place. H.R. 1029 would add on the burdensome requirement that the SAB respond to individual comments in writing, a requirement that could be so time-consuming as to render the board unable to carry out its function.

We urge the U.S. House of Representatives to stand up for sound science and public health protections, and vote NO on both H.R. 1030 and H.R. 1029.

Sincerely,

HAROLD WIMMER,
National President & CEO, American Lung Association,
GEORGES C. BENJAMIN, MD,
Executive Director, American Public Health Association,
JEFFREY LEVI, PHD,
Executive Director, Trust for America's Health,
STEPHEN C. CRANE, PHD, MPH,
Executive Director, American Thoracic Society,
TONYA WINDERS,
President & CEO, Allergy & Asthma Network.

MARCH 16, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE, On behalf of our millions of members and supporters we strongly urge you to oppose the ''Secret Science Reform Act of 2015'' (HR), the ''EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015''. Collectively, these misleadingly named bills would radically diminish EPA's ability to protect public health. Under these bills, EPA would be required to ignore significant science; the Scientific Advisory Board would be required to ignore conflicts of interest; and enforcement officials would be required to ignore pollution emitted in violation of the law. These bills are broadly written and would have damaging impacts far in excess of what their sponsors will admit.

The ''Secret Science Reform Act is based on a faulty premise. Its notion of ''secret science,'' based on claims about studies of fine soot pollution conducted almost two decades ago, is unfounded despite lengthy congressional inquiries. The bill would deny EPA the ability to rely upon peer-reviewed medical studies that involve commitments to patient confidentiality, when the agency carries out its statutory responsibilities to safeguard public health and the environment Further, this bill would effectively amend numerous environmental statutes by forbidding EPA to use certain kinds of studies in setting health standards. It would also make it impossible for EPA to use many kinds of economic models it routinely relies on because those models are proprietary. This marks a radical departure from longstanding practices. Its end result would be to make it much more difficult to protect the public by forcing EPA to ignore key scientific studies.

Science Advisory Board bill would attack EPA's scientific process in a different way. The worst provision would mandate allowing the participation of scientists with financial conflicts of interest, as long as those conflicts are disclosed. This is inconsistent with a set of nearly universally accepted scientific principles to eliminate or limit financial conflicts This bill would significantly weaken the content and credibility of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) reviews—a textbook example of making a government program function poorly to the benefit of polluting industries and at the expense of public health and independent science. The bill will add unnecessary new burdens on the SAB, distorting its mission and altering its process with no benefit to EPA or the public. The bill also significantly broadens the scope of the SAB and creates a comment process that will add needless delay to the Board's work. The result would be further stalling and undermining of important public health, safety, and environmental protections.

This legislation will obstruct the implementation and enforcement of critical environmental statutes, undermine the EPA's ability to consider and use science, and jeopardize public health. For these reasons, we urge you to oppose these bills.

Sincerely,

BlueGreen Alliance; Center for Effective Government; Clean Water Action; Defenders of Wildlife; Earthjustice; Environmental Defense Fund; Friends of the Earth; Greenpeace; League of Conservation Voters; Natural Resources Defense Council; Physicians for Social Responsibility; Sierra Club; Union of Concerned Scientists.

MARCH 2, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The undersigned individuals and organizations working on public health and science-informed regulation strongly oppose the H.R. 1029 the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 and H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015, to be considered by the House of Representatives this week.

Both bills would severely undermine the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use the best available scientific evidence when making decisions regarding the protection of public health and safety and the environment.

When very similar bills were up for a vote in the House last November, the Administration issued veto threats for both bills. The Administration stated that the Secret Science Reform Act would ''greatly impede the EPA's ability to use science to protect public health and the environment,'' and warned that the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act would ''weaken the scientific independence and integrity of the SAB.''

The erroneously named Secret Science Reform Act would tie the EPA's hands by restricting the information it can use to develop protective regulations. The EPA could only regulate based on publicly available scientific data. This restriction would block the agency's use of many different types of public health data, such as those for which public release would violate privacy protections, or data from corporations that are designated as confidential business information. It also would restrict the use of scientific data that is not ''reproducible.'' This provision seems to adopt a very narrow view of scientific information solely based on laboratory experiments. As major scientific societies including the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) have noted, such a restriction would eliminate the use of most epidemiological and public health data, such as those regarding the public health impacts of air pollution, because these data are collected in long-term studies following individuals longitudinally.

Not only do privacy concerns arise, but such studies are not inherently reproduced in the way a laboratory experiment or a clinical trial may be. It would be unethical to deliberately expose adults or children to air pollution merely to determine whether the increased rates of asthma and heart attacks caused by such exposures can be duplicated, or to encourage teenagers to smoke to re-assess the toxic effects of tobacco.

The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act would greatly weaken the EPA's advisory process, making it far more likely that recommendations from its independent Science Advisory Board (SAB) will be dominated by corporate special interests. This bill opens the door to increased corporate influence on the Board, by encouraging the EPA to accept more SAB panelists with corporate ties.

The bill's overly broad restriction on SAB members with subject-matter expertise is

equally counterproductive, and goes far beyond the common-sense limits imposed by the National Academies. Unlike the 2014 bill, the 2015 bill does appear to permit SAB experts with published, peer-reviewed research, to address those topics on which they have credentials, provided that their expertise is publicly disclosed. But the language in the bill is so vague that it raises many questions. Generally, experts have developed their knowledge base over time, and not purely through peer-reviewed publications. How is an expert supposed to make that distinction? What happens if a scientist relies on expertise that is not specifically permitted in the bill? Will there be legal ramifications? Clearly, scientific experts will think twice before joining the SAB if it means they will have to consult their lawyers before they give advice.

Even worse, the bill requires the SAB to remain in an endless loop soliciting public comment about the ''state of the science'' touching on every major advisory activity it undertakes and responding to nearly every comment before moving forward, without being limited by any time constraints. At best, the SAB will be reduced to busy work. At worst, the SAB's assessments will address the concerns of corporations, not the desires of citizens for science-informed regulation that protects public health.

These bills together will greatly impede the ability of EPA, and potentially other agencies, to utilize the best available science, independently reviewed, to inform regulations crucial to public health and the environment.

We strongly urge you to vote No on The Secret Science Reform Act and the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act.

Sincerely,

Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists; Annie Appleseed Project; Breast Cancer Action; Center for Medical Consumers; Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies; Jacobs Institute of Women's Health; National Center for Health Research; National Physicians Alliance; Our Bodies Ourselves; Public Citizen; Woodymatters; John H. Powers, MD, Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine; The George Washington University School of Medicine; University of Maryland School of Medicine.

UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS,
March 2, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The Union of Concerned Scientists strongly opposes H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015, set to be voted on by the House of Representatives this week. This bill would greatly impede the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to protect public health informed by the best available science.

Last November, when a similar bill was up before the House, the Administration threatened a veto. The Administration noted that the 2014 bill ''would negatively affect the appointment of experts and would weaken the scientific independence and integrity of the SAB.'' That observation continues to hold true for the 2015 version.

This proposal would make it nearly impossible for the Board to do the crucial independent evaluations of EPA scientific analyses that enable the agency to protect public health. This bill opens the door for more corporate influence on the Board, because the bill directly stipulates that experts with financial ties to corporations affected by SAB assessments are ''not excluded.'' This signal likely will increase the number of conflicted SAB panelists empowering companies to delay the SAB's work for years, if not decades. It strikes at the heart of the whole concept of independent reviews, and at a time when the ability of corporations to influence policy is already high.

At the same time this bill encourages corporate experts to join the SAB, it creates roadblocks for academic experts to meaningfully participate by banning experts' participation in ''advisory activities that directly or indirectly involve review and evaluation of their own work.'' This effectively turns the idea of conflict of interest on its head, with the bizarre presumption that corporate experts with direct financial interests are not conflicted while academics who work on these issues are.

The notion that a member of the SAB cannot fully participate in a discussion that cites the member's own work is counterproductive and goes far beyond the common-sense limits imposed by the National Academies.

Unlike the 2014 bill, the 2015 bill does appear to permit SAB experts with published, peer-reviewed research, to address those topics on which they have credentials, provided that their expertise is publicly disclosed. But the language in the bill is so vague that it raises many questions. Generally, experts have developed their knowledge base over time, and not purely through peer-reviewed publications. How is an academic scientist supposed to make that distinction? What happens if a scientist relies on expertise that is not specifically permitted in the bill? Will there be legal ramifications? Clearly, scientific experts will think twice before joining the SAB if it means they will have to consult their lawyers before they give advice.

While hamstringing experts, the bill offers almost limitless opportunities for ''public comment,'' opportunities that only benefit moneyed special interests. For example, for each major advisory activity, the Board must convene a public information-gathering session ''to discuss the state of the science'' related to that activity.

It is possible, under this requirement, that the Board may find itself repeatedly reexamining ''the state of the science'' on climate change or the harmful effects of certain toxins—each time it made an assessment that touched on either climate change impacts or reducing air pollution.

In addition, both the EPA, before it asks for the Board's advice, and the Board itself, would be required to ''accept, consider, and address'' public comments on the agency's questions to the Board. As the SAB deliberates, it must also encourage public comments ''that shall not be limited by an insufficient or arbitrary time restriction.'' In effect, these provisions turn a scientific evaluation into a public hearing, even though EPA must already accept public input on all its regulations.

The Board is required to respond in writing to each ''significant'' comment. In practice, it is difficult to see how the Board could impose any deadlines on accepting comment. Nor is it a reasonable expectation on the Board's membership of pro bono experts.

Last year, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that implementing the law's mandates would cost the EPA about $2 million over a four-year period. These are funds that could be put to much better use by a cash-strapped agency.

This bill would not improve the work of the Board, and would make it more difficult for the EPA to receive the independent science advice it needs to do its work. We strongly urge your opposition.

Sincerely,

ANDREW A. ROSENBERG, PH.D.,
Director, Center for Science and Democracy,
Union of Concerned Scientists.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, our government's ability to protect public health is at stake when we consider legislation like the bill before us today. Unfortunately, we do not have to look far to see the impacts of these kinds of delay tactics. Articles published last year by the Center for Public Integrity chronicle efforts to slow down and to undermine the EPA's efforts to keep arsenic out of drinking water and benzene out of American workplaces. When we prevent the EPA from taking timely action to protect the public from known poisons and cancer-causing agents, we are putting lives at risk.

The EPA's science is tied to its mission—to protect public health and the environment through rational regulation. Scientific research, knowledge, and technical expertise are fundamental to the EPA's mission and inform its regulatory functions. The need for that expertise is why Congress created advisory bodies such as the Science Advisory Board in the first place—to provide independent advice on the science underpinning regulation, which, in turn, allows the EPA Administrator to make sound regulatory decisions. Instead of undermining the scientific advice the EPA receives, we should be giving the Agency the tools it needs to strengthen and improve the regulatory process with sound science.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to join me, once again, in opposing this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I include for the RECORD letters from the American Farm Bureau, from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and from other entities that are in support of H.R. 1029.

MARCH 2, 2015.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH, CHAIRMAN,
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: On behalf of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), the nation's largest general farm organization, I am writing in support of H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015. AFBF strongly supports this legislation and is committed to working with you in pressing for its swift consideration.

The Science Advisory Board (SAB) is intended to review the scientific basis for EPA regulatory decisions, but shortcomings have become clear including limited public participation, EPA interference with expert advice, and potential conflicts of interest.

H.R. 1029 reforms the SAB process by strengthening public participation, improving the process of selecting expert advisors, reducing conflicts of interest and enhancing transparency. The legislation draws from EPA's own Peer Review Handbook and recommendations from the Bipartisan Policy Center to urge sensible reforms. H.R. 1029 would make the SAB a more robust tool that in the future would impact the development

of flawed EPA action such as the recent WOWS proposed rule.

American Farm Bureau Federation supports H.R. 1029 because farmers and ranchers deserve good governance and regulations based on meaningful scientific review.

This legislation deserves strong, bipartisan support. We applaud your leadership in this effort and will continue to work with you to ensure passage of H.R. 1029.

Sincerely,

BOB STALLMAN,
President.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2015.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, supports H.R. 1029, the ''EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015,'' and H.R. 1030, the ''Secret Science Reform Act of 2015.''

H.R. 1029 would help ensure that the Science Advisory Board (SAB), which directly counsels the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on scientific and technical issues, is unbiased and transparent in performing its duties. This bill would establish requirements that SAB members are qualified experts, that conflicts of interest and sources of bias are disclosed, that the views of members—including dissenting members—are available to the public, and that the public has the opportunity to participate in the advisory activities of the Board and view EPA's responses. Because EPA relies on SAB reviews and studies to support new regulations, standards, guidance, assessments of risk, and other actions, the actions of the SAB must be transparent and accountable. This is a critical safeguard to assure the public that the data federal agencies rely on is scientifically sound and unbiased.

H.R. 1030 would improve the transparency and reliability of scientific and technical information that federal agencies rely heavily upon by to support new regulatory actions. This bill is designed to ensure that the studies and data federal agencies cite when they write new regulations, standards, guidance, assessments of risk—or take other regulatory action—are clearly identified and made available for public review. Additionally, information must be sufficiently transparent to allow study findings to be reproduced and validated. This is a critical safeguard to assure the public that the data federal agencies rely on is scientifically sound and unbiased.

These bills would improve the transparency and trustworthiness of scientific and technical information agencies rely on to justify regulatory actions that can significantly affect society. The American public must have confidence that the scientific and technical data driving regulatory action can be trusted. Accordingly, the Chamber supports H.R. 1029 and H.R. 1030.

Sincerely,

R. BRUCE JOSTEN,
Executive Vice President Government Affairs.

THE CENTER FOR REGULATORY SOLUTIONS,
Feb. 25, 2015.

[Press Release]

CRS WELCOMES BIPARTISAN EFFORTS TO MAKE EPA SCIENCE MORE TRANSPARENT

WASHINGTON, DC.—Yesterday, Congressional leaders from both parties announced bold steps to rein in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which has been imposing costs and red tape on American small businesses, all while refusing to disclose the science the agency uses to justify their mandates. The Center for Regulatory Solutions (CRS) applauded two bills that were introduced on February 24, which specifically target EPA's long standing failure to be transparent regarding the science behind the agency's ozone regulation. The House Science, Space and Technology Committee has scheduled votes on both bills for this afternoon.

''Today I applaud Republican and Democratic leaders in Congress for introducing legislation designed to ensure EPA is transparent with the American public when it comes to their justification for imposing costly regulations,'' CRS President Karen Kerrigan stated. ''The ozone rule could be EPA's most expensive rule in history. Given the enormity of the costs and impact of this regulation, why shouldn't the EPA be transparent with Congress and the American people about the science used to justify their decisions? Sadly, it appears that small businesses and their workforce may be picking up the tab for the Obama EPA's costly, secret, and political agenda.''

BACKGROUND

The timing of these bills could not be better as EPA is hard at work crafting the most expensive regulation ever promulgated by the agency, the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Ozone, to be issued in late 2015. EPA itself estimated Ozone NAAQS would cost the economy as much as $90 billion annually, but other estimates put the price tag closer to $270 billion annually and as much as $3.4 trillion from 2017 to 2040. The proposed regulation is so far-reaching in its impact that President Obama put the rule on hold in 2011 out of fear it would hurt his reelection chances and the economy.

The Administration contends the health benefits would far outweigh the costs—but here's the catch—EPA calculates the benefits based on hidden science. If enacted, the legislation would stop EPA from relying on secret science to justify new job killing regulations and would allow independent scientists the opportunity to examine EPA's claims.

The first bill, the ''Secret Science Reform Act'' was introduced by Senator John Barrasso (R–Wyo.) and House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Chairman Lamar Smith (R–Texas). The bill is necessary because EPA has repeatedly refused to comply with Congressional requests to publicly disclose the data from two important health studies.These aren't just any studies. They are the taxpayer-funded ''Havard Six Cities Study'' and the ''Cancer Prevention Study'' (including recent updates), which relied on data that remains inaccessible to the public. This means other scientists, independent from the EPA, are unable to verify the studies' conclusions. Accordingly—we are left to simply trust EPA that its benefits claims are based on reality.

In addition, Senator John Boozman (R–Ark.) and Joe Manchin (D–W.V.) introduced bipartisan legislation called the ''Science Advisory Board Reform Act'' to promote fairness, transparency, and independence within EPA's science advisory boards so that EPA relies only on unbiased scientific advice. This is important because as CRS previously pointed out the Clean Air Science Advisory Committee (CASAC) recommended EPA set more burdensome standards for ozone, while ignoring the legal requirement to report on the costs of implementing stricter standards. Ignoring a $90 billion annual price tag is no mere oversight. Rather it clearly demonstrates CASAC's pro regulatory bias.

CRS strongly supports both legislative efforts, which would allow needed insight into the science behind costly regulations that have a real impact on the daily lives of Americans across the country, and the survivability and competitiveness of small businesses. As a survey conducted by CRS found last year, 72 percent of Americans believe that regulations are created ''in a closed, secretive process.'' Moving forward with this important legislation would be a significant step toward addressing that disconnect and promoting transparency.

AMERICAN COMPOSITES MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION,
Arlington, VA, February 27, 2015.

Re Please support H.R. 1029, The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: On behalf of the approximately 3,000 small and medium-sized U.S. companies that manufacture composite products such as wind turbine blades, pollution control equipment, auto and truck components, rebar for highway bridges, and recreational boats, I write in support of H.R. 1029, The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015.

EPA's reviews of the environmental and health effects possibly associated with exposure to industrial chemicals, including the substances used by composites manufacturers, can help manufacturers protect the health of employees and plant communities. But if EPA's chemical health risk assessments are not based on careful and thorough reviews of quality scientific data, the viability of manufacturers can be compromised without providing any public health benefit.

H.R. 1029 will make several changes to improve the effectiveness of the Science Advisory Board (SAB) as it assesses and provides feedback to EPA on the quality of its chemical health reviews. The legislation will increase the ability of informed stakeholders to provide information to the SAB, and allow what may be the minority views of individual SAB members to be considered by EPA as it revises draft chemical assessments.

These and the other reforms required under H.R. 1029 will improve both the scientific quality of EPA reviews and the public's confidence in EPA's chemical assessment process. These improvements will in turn improve the ability of our industry's small business owners and plant managers to rely on EPA assessments to guide the adoption of health-protective measures for workers and plant neighbors.

Thank you for your support of good science and the composites industry.

Sincerely,

TOM DOBBINS,
President,

AMERICAN FUEL & PETROCHEMICAL MANUFACTURERS,
Washington, DC, March 16, 2015.

Re Letter in Support of H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 and H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: The American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers (AFPM), a national trade association representing more than 400 companies, including a majority of all U.S. refiners and petrochemical manufacturers, would like to express its support for the passage of H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory

Board Reform Act of 2015 and H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015. These two measures would provide more clarity on how decisions are reached by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and bring more transparency to the science that supports EPA regulations.

The United States is on the verge of a manufacturing renaissance due to a surge in oil and natural gas production that will strengthen U.S. energy security, create jobs and grow the economy. However, the manufacturing renaissance is being threatened by overly burdensome regulations from the EPA. While AFPM supports commonsense regulations, there is a severe lack of transparency in EPA's science and advisory panels, which serve as the basis for new regulations. This lack of transparency is making it more difficult for manufacturers to capitalize on America's abundance of economical and reliable energy.

EPA's Science Advisory Board (SAB) is charged with reviewing the scientific foundation of EPA regulatory decisions and advising EPA on science and technology related matters. Currently, SAB's practice of determining panels is conducted behind closed doors by EPA SAB staff. This practice has created a conflict of interest, which has resulted in the panel embedding their own policy views in their science recommendations, as well as peer reviewing their own work. The EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act brings much needed reform to the SAB by strengthening public participation and public comment opportunities, improving the make-up of the SAB, requiring opportunities for dissenting panelists to express their opinions, and limiting non-scientific policy advice and recommendations.

Moreover, the research and data used by EPA to support new regulations is currently not available to the public. Congress and outside groups should be able to review health benefit claims by the EPA for new Clean Air Act regulations in order to determine if the science supports the high cost of many of these new regulations. The Secret Science Reform Act looks to bring greater transparency to EPA's research and data. EPA would be prohibited from issuing regulations unless all scientific and technical information relied upon is specifically identified, and would be required to make information publicly available for independent analysis.

We believe it is imperative that EPA use high quality science and provide more clarity and transparency on how decisions are made. This will only strengthen EPA's value and utility for ensuring public safety, and credibility among manufacturers. Improving the scientific quality and sharing of information, as well as the composition of the SAB is critical to fostering a regulatory environment that will allow manufacturers to develop safe and cost-effective products on which Americans depend for everyday life.

Therefore, AFPM supports and urges immediate passage of H.R. 1029 and H.R. 1030. It is critical that Congress pass legislation that brings more transparency to the science and advisory panels that supports EPA regulations.

Sincerely,

CHARLES T. DREVNA,
President.

PORTLAND CEMENT ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 2, 2015.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH, Chairman,
Committee on Science, Space and Technology, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: The Portland Cement Association (PCA) appreciates your leadership in promoting public policies that encourage transparency and the use of sound science in the federal regulatory process. PCA represents 27 U.S. cement companies operating 82 manufacturing plants in 35 states. Collectively, these companies account for approximately 80% of domestic cement-making capacity, with distribution centers in all 50 states.

America's cement manufacturers comply with a broad spectrum of federal and state environmental rules. Policies that promote an open, predictable and credible regulatory process help balance goals that we all share: a clean environment and a healthy economy. To that end, PCA supports the passage of H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015, and H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015.

H.R. 1030 would ensure that EPA bases its rules on publicly available, verifiable information. H.R. 1029 would strengthen the transparency and public participation requirements for the scientific panels that review EPA's regulatory science. These two bills provide a common sense framework for greater transparency, accountability and integrity in the science that supports EPA's rules.

PCA looks forward to working with you and members of the Committee to move these important bills forward. If you have questions or need more information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

JAMES G. TOSCAS,
President and Chief Executive Officer.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), the ranking member of the House Agriculture Committee.

Mr. PETERSON. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 1029, the Science Advisory Board Reform Act, and I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this bill.

The Science Advisory Board's work is important in making sure that the EPA considers all scientific information when writing regulations that will impact American farmers, families, and small businesses. Unfortunately, concerns have been raised about the current review process.

In listening to the debate, people need to understand that this is merely an advisory board, that these folks are not the ones who are making the decisions. I would argue that, if there is one thing that the EPA needs, it is sound advice, and they wouldn't get themselves into all of this trouble that they continue to get themselves into over water in the U.S. and every other thing that you can name. We have got a business in my district that has complied with everything they have asked. It did a 90 percent reduction in emissions from its outside wood furnaces, and now the EPA has come with a regulation that will put them out of business and cost 250 jobs in my district, and it is just on and on.

I think that it would be good for the EPA to get advice from people whom, maybe, they aren't listening to. Under the current process, it is just not working. They are, I think, only hearing from one side of these arguments. I don't know what people are afraid of, as you are going to have advice coming from people who actually know what is going on with some of these issues, and I think that is a good thing.

This legislation addresses those concerns, and it builds on the work that we did in the 2014 farm bill. I think this bill is necessary, as I said, to make sure that there is the right kind of input in the EPA. I don't know if it is going to solve all of the problems, but it will help ensure a more balanced and independent Science Advisory Board, and it will help alleviate some of the unintended consequences that are surrounding current EPA regulations, so I encourage my colleagues' support.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), the ranking member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015, which is the same one we spoke against last year, because it benefits no one but the industry, and it harms public health.

Last year, Dallas-Fort Worth received an ''F'' for air quality from the American Lung Association. Now, more than ever, the American people need a strong EPA to protect their right to clean air and water, and the public supports that. This includes an effective Science Advisory Board, a group whose job it is to provide the EPA with independent scientific analysis and advice.

As written, H.R. 1029 ''reforms'' EPA's Science Advisory Board for the worse. The hypothetical intent of this bill is to improve the balance of the members serving on the Board; but, in reality, the bill would make it easier for industry-affiliated representatives with a conflict of interest to serve on the Board. Experts with industry associations are far more likely to find that the science they are asked to review will have a financial impact on their employers. Academic scientists do not have such financial conflicts of interest with the Board's advice or with the EPA's actions.

However, my Republican colleagues seem to have a fundamental distrust of scientists from our Nation's universities because H.R. 1029 puts in place a number of requirements that will likely dissuade academic scientists from serving on the Board. It is difficult to understand how anyone could object to the most knowledgeable academic scientists offering their advice and expertise to the EPA. Who would know better whether the EPA had mischaracterized the science on an issue than the people who are leaders in their respective fields?

To be clear, I am not arguing that industry should not have representation on the EPA's Science Advisory Board, as their insight is valuable also, but I do not support weakening conflict of interest practices so more industry representatives can serve on the Board.

The bill also favors industry by tying the Board up with procedural burdens so unlimited that it is unlikely any Science Advisory Board panel could ever render an opinion in a useful period of time. I assume that that is really the point of H.R. 1029. Endless delays leave plenty of time to manufacture doubt in the science and to delay the formulation of public health regulations by the EPA. Unfortunately, that also means that the health and safety of our families, friends, and constituents will be needlessly put at risk. I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 1029.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. I want to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma, the vice chairman of the Science Committee, for yielding me time.

Mr. Chairman, Americans expect the review of regulatory science to be balanced and transparent. H.R. 1029, the Science Advisory Board Reform Act, ensures scientists get the opportunity to provide unbiased, independent advice to the Environmental Protection Agency and to Congress.

I thank Congressman LUCAS and the ranking member of the Agriculture Committee, COLLIN PETERSON, for their initiative on this issue.

This bill strengthens the EPA Science Advisory Board's independence so that the administration cannot manipulate science to further its political agenda.

Hardworking American families are hit hard by costly regulations, whether it is through lost jobs or higher electric bills and gasoline prices, and the EPA has been known to twist science to justify its actions. Behind the scenes, however, there is a review process that was intended to provide a critical check on the EPA's conclusions. The EPA Science Advisory Board was created to provide a meaningful, balanced, and independent assessment of the science that supports the EPA's regulations. Unfortunately, this goal is not being realized.

The EPA frequently undermines the SAB's independence and prevents it from being able to provide advice to Congress. As a result, the valuable advice these experts can provide is wasted, and the truth is silenced. The public's right to know must be protected in a democracy. As the EPA now seeks to pursue the most aggressive regulatory agenda in its 44-year history, it is critical that the SAB be able to give unbiased advice. The more regulations the EPA creates, the more we need the involvement of an open and transparent Science Advisory Board. This bill simply gives independent experts an opportunity to review the science and provide advice.

We all know that the Federal Government doesn't have a monopoly on the truth, so it is important to get the public's take on regulations. The bill does not create an unlimited public comment period, but the public does have a right to know what the Federal Government is doing to them. H.R. 1029 expands transparency requirements, improves the process for selecting expert advisers, and strengthens public participation requirements.

This bipartisan legislation restores the independent Board as an important defender of scientific integrity. Its commonsense reforms will help make the EPA's decisions more credible and more balanced.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) for their leadership on this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I mentioned the letters that were entered into the RECORD. Frequently, here in Congress, we talk about government efficiency and getting things to work better, and I just want to read what the Center for Medical Consumers said about H.R. 1029:

> The bill requires the Science Advisory Board to remain in an endless loop of soliciting public comment about the state of the science, touching on every major advisory activity it undertakes and responding to nearly every comment before moving forward, without being limited by any time constraints.

Also, the National Physicians Alliance noted:

> This bill's overly broad restriction on Science Advisory Board members with subject matter expertise is equally counterproductive and goes far beyond the commonsense limits imposed by the National Academies, and the language in the bill is so vague that it raises many questions.

Mr. Chairman, we can do better than this. We need to get back to the table and work together so that we have a bill that actually improves the Science Advisory Board.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to another outstanding gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER).

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak in strong support of H.R. 1029, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015.

The Science Advisory Board was established by Congress to review the science behind the EPA's decisions and to advise Congress and the EPA on scientific and technical matters. Unfortunately, the SAB is no longer functioning as designed as it is without the impartiality and expertise needed to be an effective arbiter of the EPA's use of science and its regulations. For example, the membership of the SAB has excluded individuals from State or local governments. Yet these are the folks who are often the closest to the impacts that the regulations have on job creators across America.

As the EPA continues its regulatory assault on America's economy, it is critically important that Congress act to improve the quality of the EPA's use of science in its decisions. This legislation will do just that. It will improve the quality of the SAB's membership, increase public participation in its scientific reviews, allow for dissenting opinions among members, and it requires that the SAB communicate uncertainties in its findings and conclusions.

□ 1430

Mr. Chair, I am an air-conditioning contractor. As such, we are licensed by the TDLR in Texas. Mr. Chair, I want someone on that board that understands the air-conditioning business, that has business background.

It is sad, Mr. Chair, we are supposed to be a country that has a government, not a government that has a country. Opponents of this bill act like business people cannot be trusted to help their own government. They say they have a conflict of interest. That just gets all over me.

Business folks, whom I call the salt of the earth, they invest money in businesses; they create jobs; they take risks; they build families and communities—and they can't be trusted? They can use their expertise to serve our community and our country. I would even offer that they are a form of a renewable resource.

Mr. Chair, it is high time for this bill to pass and put some common sense and transparency in the process.

I thank Congressman LUCAS and Chairman SMITH for bringing this important legislation to the floor today.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I also want to point out that the National Center for Health Research is concerned. They ask: What happens if a scientist relies on expertise that is not specifically permitted in the bill? Will there be legal ramifications? Clearly, scientific experts will think twice before joining the Science Advisory Board if it means they will have to consult their lawyers before they give advice.

Mr. Chairman, there is some ambiguous language in this. We can do a better job making sure that the Science Advisory Board functions in an efficient way that actually helps inform their decisions. I suggest that we get back to the table, rather than pass this bill today, and find strong legislation that improves the Science Advisory Board.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, might I inquire about the time remaining between the two sides?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Oklahoma has 16½ minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from Oregon has 19½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LUCAS. I would note to the gentlelady, at the present time I do not have any additional speakers, so whenever you are prepared to close, I believe I have the right to close ultimately.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman and colleagues, the bill before us today does undertake the laudable goal of improving transparency at the Environmental Protection Agency; however, as I stated previously, the bill, as written, does not accomplish this goal. I worked on this bill in the last Congress; and there were a lot of recommendations that were made, when we had hearings on this bill in the last Congress, where we could all agree—recommendations that the industry supports, that academia supports, and that scientists support. We should be taking those recommendations and adding them to this bill, working together to find a bill that will improve the Science Advisory Board.

I want to clarify to my colleagues, we have no objection with industry representation on the Science Advisory Board. That is not the point. What happens under this bill, however, is that financial conflict of interest is conflated with bias, and we could have industry representation with a significant financial interest. That is not the direction we should be going in. Of course, industry people have expertise, as do scientists who work in academia.

Again, we can and should work together to improve the EPA's approach to reviewing the science underpinning regulations, but this legislation is not the answer. This bill will only damage and delay the process, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I would apologize to the gentlelady. I was just informed that the majority floor leader would like to speak for 1 minute.

I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority floor leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his work.

Mr. Chair, there is a wise saying that one of the best assets of a good leader is a good adviser. Nobody can know everything, and advisers step in to give opinions and provide different perspectives for those who have to make decisions.

History is filled with people or groups that failed because they never had their assumptions challenged. Unfortunately, the same failure can be seen in our own government.

Back in 1978, Congress created the EPA Science Advisory Board to provide independent scientific advice to the administration. Sadly, the independence has been compromised. Over the years, the Science Advisory Board has silenced voices of dissent, limited public participation in its decisions, and has shown potential conflict of interest. In fact, over half of the Board members have taken grant money from the EPA, the very Agency they are supposed to provide impartial analysis to. This isn't chump change.

Since 2000, Board members have received roughly $140 million in taxpayer money from the EPA grants according to the Congressional Research Service, and the research they are reviewing is often directly related to the money they received. This isn't transparent; this isn't accountable, and this isn't right.

Today we will consider a bill to set things right. We aren't telling the Science Advisory Board what to say; we aren't telling the EPA what to do, but we are demanding that the Board be transparent and independent, as it was originally intended.

True science demands clarity and impartiality. The Science Advisory Board lacks both, and that needs to change.

I thank the gentleman for his work, bringing transparency, accountability, and efficiency back to the Science Advisory Board.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Chairman, we have listened to several points of view on different perspectives today. I think the majority floor leader and the chairman of the committee and a number of my colleagues did an outstanding job of explaining why this bill is necessary, why it is appropriate.

I will acknowledge to my colleague from Oregon that this is a work in progress, that clearly there are still things that need to be examined, addressed, looked at, and perfected over the course of the legislative session before, ultimately, this is signed into law.

But the underlying principles, an entity like the Environmental Protection Agency, which has such tremendous influence and control over our everyday lives—whether you are a farmer, rancher, business person, just a citizen, such tremendous control through their authority and their rulemaking process over our lives—it is important, and it is the very reason that Congress established the Scientific Advisory Board in 1978, it is important to have a knowledgeable group look over their shoulder to verify their facts, to understand the process they are going through in order that, ultimately, that rulemaking process is something that is based on sound science and is something that is appropriate.

Now, in the bill we simply say that, in effect, anyone with knowledge and expertise should be able to participate. We ask for full disclosure. If you have an economic interest, whether it is doing scientific research or in any related business, fully disclose your background. That presently is not going on. So that is an improvement. That is an enhancement.

We explicitly ask that public input be allowed, that it be encouraged. There is nothing wrong with that. There are a lot of really bright people around this country who have great understanding of the issues that affect their day-to-day lives and should be able to share that.

Can the Board stop the Environmental Protection Agency from doing something? It is an advisory board. Their power is not in being able to stop an action of the EPA, but their power is making them justify the action that they are proposing to take, to justify the science that leads to that action. There is nothing wrong with that. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that.

I suppose the bottom line is this: We live in an extremely cynical time. Surprisingly, there is distrust even of the United States Congress and all Federal institutions, I am afraid. This bill is an effort to take a step in the direction of restoring that faith and confidence. Call it enhanced transparency if you want; call it openness if you want; call it just making sure we all know where the money is going and where the money is coming from. Whatever you want to call it, this is a bill that tries to move us in the direction of not only better regulations when we must have regulations, but better science to justify those regulations and the confidence of all of our fellow citizens.

I simply ask, Mr. Chairman, when the opportunity avails—I know we will have several good amendments to discuss shortly—that my colleagues support H.R. 1029, and we move this process forward.

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

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–10. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 1029

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 ''EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) INDEPENDENT ADVICE.—Section 8(a) of the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 4365(a)) is amended by inserting ''independently'' after ''Advisory Board which shall''.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—Section 8(b) of the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 4365(b)) is amended to read as follows:

''(b)(1) The Board shall be composed of at least nine members, one of whom shall be designated Chairman, and shall meet at such times and places as may be designated by the Chairman.

''(2) Each member of the Board shall be qualified by education, training, and experience to evaluate scientific and technical information on

matters referred to the Board under this section. The Administrator shall ensure that—

''(A) the scientific and technical points of view represented on and the functions to be performed by the Board are fairly balanced among the members of the Board;

''(B) at least ten percent of the membership of the Board are from State, local, or tribal governments;

''(C) persons with substantial and relevant expertise are not excluded from the Board due to affiliation with or representation of entities that may have a potential interest in the Board's advisory activities, so long as that interest is fully disclosed to the Administrator and the public and appointment to the Board complies with section 208 of title 18, United States Code;

''(D) in the case of a Board advisory activity on a particular matter involving a specific party, no Board member having an interest in the specific party shall participate in that activity;

''(E) Board members may not participate in advisory activities that directly or indirectly involve review or evaluation of their own work, unless fully disclosed to the public and the work has been externally peer-reviewed;

''(F) Board members shall be designated as special Government employees; and

''(G) no registered lobbyist is appointed to the Board.

''(3) The Administrator shall—

''(A) solicit public nominations for the Board by publishing a notification in the Federal Register;

''(B) solicit nominations from relevant Federal agencies, including the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, the Interior, and Health and Human Services;

''(C) make public the list of nominees, including the identity of the entities that nominated each, and shall accept public comment on the nominees;

''(D) require that, upon their provisional nomination, nominees shall file a written report disclosing financial relationships and interests, including Environmental Protection Agency grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, or other financial assistance, that are relevant to the Board's advisory activities for the three-year period prior to the date of their nomination, and relevant professional activities and public statements for the five-year period prior to the date of their nomination; and

''(E) make such reports public, with the exception of specific dollar amounts, for each member of the Board upon such member's selection.

''(4) Disclosure of relevant professional activities under paragraph (3)(D) shall include all representational work, expert testimony, and contract work as well as identifying the party for which the work was done.

''(5) Except when specifically prohibited by law, the Agency shall make all conflict of interest waivers granted to members of the Board, member committees, or investigative panels publicly available.

''(6) Any recusal agreement made by a member of the Board, a member committee, or an investigative panel, or any recusal known to the Agency that occurs during the course of a meeting or other work of the Board, member committee, or investigative panel shall promptly be made public by the Administrator.

''(7) The terms of the members of the Board shall be three years and shall be staggered so that the terms of no more than one-third of the total membership of the Board shall expire within a single fiscal year. No member shall serve more than two terms over a ten-year period.''.

(c) RECORD.—Section 8(c) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4365(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by inserting ''or draft risk or hazard assessment,'' after ''at the time any proposed'';

(B) by striking ''formal''; and

(C) by inserting ''or draft risk or hazard assessment,'' after ''to the Board such proposed''; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting ''or draft risk or hazard assessment,'' after ''the scientific and technical basis of the proposed''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following: ''The Board's advice and comments, including dissenting views of Board members, and the response of the Administrator shall be included in the record with respect to any proposed risk or hazard assessment, criteria document, standard, limitation, or regulation and published in the Federal Register.''.

(d) MEMBER COMMITTEES AND INVESTIGATIVE PANELS.—Section 8(e)(1)(A) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4365(e)(1)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''These member committees and investigative panels—

''(i) shall be constituted and operate in accordance with the provisions set forth in paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b), in subsection (h), and in subsection (i);

''(ii) do not have authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board; and

''(iii) may not report directly to the Environmental Protection Agency.''.

(e) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—Section 8 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4365) is amended by amending subsection (h) to read as follows:

''(h)(1) To facilitate public participation in the advisory activities of the Board, the Administrator and the Board shall make public all reports and relevant scientific information and shall provide materials to the public at the same time as received by members of the Board.

''(2) Prior to conducting major advisory activities, the Board shall hold a public information-gathering session to discuss the state of the science related to the advisory activity.

''(3) Prior to convening a member committee or investigative panel under subsection (e) or requesting scientific advice from the Board, the Administrator shall accept, consider, and address public comments on questions to be asked of the Board. The Board, member committees, and investigative panels shall accept, consider, and address public comments on such questions and shall not accept a question that unduly narrows the scope of an advisory activity.

''(4) The Administrator and the Board shall encourage public comments, including oral comments and discussion during the proceedings, that shall not be limited by an insufficient or arbitrary time restriction. Public comments shall be provided to the Board when received. The Board's reports shall include written responses to significant comments offered by members of the public to the Board.

''(5) Following Board meetings, the public shall be given 15 calendar days to provide additional comments for consideration by the Board.''.

(f) OPERATIONS.—Section 8 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4365) is further amended by amending subsection (i) to read as follows:

''(i)(1) In carrying out its advisory activities, the Board shall strive to avoid making policy determinations or recommendations, and, in the event the Board feels compelled to offer policy advice, shall explicitly distinguish between scientific determinations and policy advice.

''(2) The Board shall clearly communicate uncertainties associated with the scientific advice provided to the Administrator or Congress.

''(3) The Board shall ensure that advice and comments reflect the views of the members and shall encourage dissenting members to make their views known to the public, the Administrator, and Congress.

''(4) The Board shall conduct periodic reviews to ensure that its advisory activities are addressing the most important scientific issues affecting the Environmental Protection Agency.

''(5) The Board shall be fully and timely responsive to Congress.''.

SEC. 3. RELATION TO THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed as supplanting the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

SEC. 4. RELATION TO THE ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1978.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed as supplanting the requirements of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

The CHAIR. No amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of House Report 114–37. Each such amendment shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. GRAYSON

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 114–37.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 22, insert ", or for which the Board has evidence that it may involve," after "involving".

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 138, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chair, this amendment seeks to enhance some of the good government language that already exists in this bill. Page 2 of this bill, beginning on line 21, details the instances in which a Board member must recuse himself from an EPA Science Advisory Board advisory activity. As currently written, a Board member must recuse himself only when he has an interest in a specific party that is involved in the matter being addressed by the advisory activity. I feel that this language must be broadened. I thank the chairman for working with me toward this end.

Let's say that the Chemical Assessment Advisory Standing Committee wishes to engage in an advisory activity on a specific chemical compound. Now let's say that only one university in the country, perhaps the University of Florida, performs research on this compound and receives a sizable amount of Federal funds to do so. Under the current language, any representative from that university that serves on the committee should recuse himself from participating in the advisory activity.

The amendment that I am offering would broaden the category of persons who must recuse themselves. My amendment would require persons for whom the Board has received evidence that an advisory activity may involve

them to recuse themselves. Under my proposed amendment language, a drug company like Pfizer, seeking to produce drugs utilizing the chemical compound subject to an advisory committee activity, could be excluded from participating as well.

I think it would be highly unfair that an entity such as the University of Florida could be excluded from an advisory activity and not a corporation like Pfizer if there is reason to believe that it would be directly engaged in activities utilizing the science upon which the Board seeks to advise.

Clearly, we should encourage the most qualified persons in various scientific fields to participate on the committees that compose the EPA's Science Advisory Board. What we should not do, however, is to allow persons to participate in advisory actions that may directly impact their own bottom lines.

Existing language in this bill, I believe, partially addresses our goal of preventing conflicts of interest, but accepting this Grayson amendment would go much further toward accomplishing our common joint goal of preventing conflicts of interest. To that end, I urge support for my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida for his amendment that would clarify the bill's safeguards against conflicts of interest. I appreciate his attention to detail, continued engagement with this bill, and look forward to his support.

H.R. 1029 seeks balance and transparency in the makeup and composition of the Science Advisory Board. Financial conflicts of interest are specifically prohibited, and that would clarify the intent.

In addition to language already in the bill preventing conflicted individuals from participating, the bill requires disclosure. Although disclosure itself may not prevent all bias, the consumers of the Science Advisory Board's product—the EPA, and the American people—will be better informed if they have all the facts.

I want to thank my colleague from Florida for his constructive amendment to this bipartisan bill.

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

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Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 114–37.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 7, strike ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (F).

Page 3, line 9, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 3, after line 9, insert the following new subparagraph:

''(H) a Board member shall have no current grants or contracts from the Environmental Protection Agency and shall not apply for a grant or contract for 3 years following the end of that member's service on the Board.''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 138, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is simple. It ensures that members of the Science Advisory Board do not receive grants from the EPA or enter into contracts with the EPA. Additionally, this amendment prohibits Science Advisory Board members from receiving EPA funds for 3 years after the individual is no longer a Board member.

This amendment—and this bill—is about fairness and transparency. Members of the Science Advisory Board should be independent and impartial. They should not be swayed by the possibility of receiving funds from the EPA for their work.

Just as Members of Congress are banned from lobbying for a period of time after leaving office, members of the Science Advisory Board should be barred from receiving grants after they leave the board. Board members should not make a decision based on a promise from the EPA that he or she will benefit financially after they leave the Board.

The role of the Science Advisory Board should be to provide independent scientific advice to the Agency. This amendment will ensure the Board is truly independent. American families who bear the impact of the EPA's regulations deserve to know that the regulations are based on sound science, not on any other agenda.

I encourage all my colleagues to support fairness and transparency by supporting this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Oregon is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment would have a negative effect on the participation of the Nation's best scientists, punishing them for providing invaluable expert advice to the EPA.

This amendment would penalize scientists who have received any grant from the EPA by precluding them from serving on the EPA's Science Advisory Board, a Board that is charged with providing the most sound and reliable scientific advice to the EPA; yet it is those very scientists who have received EPA grants who are often the very best in their field.

Why would we pass an amendment that limits our Nation's most qualified experts from reviewing EPA actions?

By precluding these scientists from serving on the Board, it could greatly diminish the pool of eligible, qualified experts who can serve on the Science Advisory Board and, more importantly, serve the Nation. This amendment essentially guarantees that the EPA will not receive the best advice from the best scientists. I can't fathom why we would do that.

Of additional concern is a draconian provision in the amendment that prohibits a Board member from applying for an EPA grant or contract for 3 years after serving on the Board.

I don't understand how or why we can legislate against someone applying for a grant. Three years without the ability to apply for a grant from one of our Federal research agencies can arrest the careers of our Nation's best and brightest minds.

Furthermore, the amendment isn't even clear on how limited people are from applying and where they can apply. Why would we agree to an amendment that is constraining our Nation's ability to develop and foster scientific knowledge?

This kind of ban is punitive, and it would force researchers to choose between public service and their own research. It makes no sense in any other area of government, and it makes no sense here.

We want and need the best and brightest Americans serving our national interests everywhere, and we should never entertain the idea of punishing experts for providing valuable and needed public service.

I cannot support or recommend support for any amendment that has a punitive effect on the best and brightest scientific minds in the country, and I cannot support an amendment that would limit the Environmental Protection Agency from considering the full and complete spectrum of expertise for membership to their Science Advisory Board.

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

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS. I thank the gentleman from West Virginia.

I, too, want the best and brightest. That is why the core principle of the bill is on disclosure, make sure we know where the money goes. Mr. MCKINLEY is taking this to the next point in this focus on following the

money. I appreciate where he is coming from.

I said earlier to my colleague from Oregon that this is a work in progress. We will see, ultimately, what the final version is; but if you believe that the money should be followed, if you believe we should know where the dollars are and if that impacts the science, then, clearly, Mr. MCKINLEY is on the right path.

I am voting with him. It is a work in progress.

Mr. MCKINLEY. I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, again, this amendment would cause the EPA to be precluded from getting some of the best science. The amendment says that a Board member shall have no current grants or contracts from the Environmental Protection Agency and shall not apply for a grant or a contract for 3 years following the end of that member's service on the Board.

Mr. Chairman, that would cause serious problems. It is a vaguely worded amendment. I would be concerned about inhibiting people from even applying for grants. We need to do everything we can to support our bright scientists. This would preclude them from serving.

We should vote against this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 114–37.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 17, through page 4, line 5, redesignate subparagraphs (C) through (E) as subparagraphs (D) through (F), respectively.

Page 3, after line 16, insert the following new subparagraph:

''(C) solicit nominations from—

''(i) institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))); and

''(ii) scientific and research institutions based in work relevant to that of the Board;

Page 4, line 9, strike ''paragraph (3)(D)'' and insert ''paragraph (3)(E)''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 138, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment that I believe really strikes at the heart of the issues that were raised by the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act, and that is the need for sound, objective, and transparent decisionmaking by our Federal agencies.

I think we all recognize how important it is to bring in outside experts to inform Agency policies and protocols. Not only does this allow the engagement of Americans who are practicing in their fields into a process that will impact their livelihoods, it also ensures that the Federal Government can reach out to access the very best scientific knowledge, including experts with a depth and variety of knowledge that we wouldn't have access to through our own internal resources.

With the EPA's Science Advisory Board in particular, that means an independent review of technical information that is used to ground Agency proposals and regulations. The efforts of this bill to seek relevant expertise outside the Agency, however, without this amendment, are limited by its failure to include academics, science, and research-based institutions in its solicitations for Board membership.

That is what this amendment corrects. Not to specifically solicit Board membership in these fields, as we do in others, would be a huge mistake on our part.

Institutions within my district alone house some leading global experts in public and environmental health. Joe Ryan—a current member of the EPA's Science Advisory Board and a professor of environment, engineering, and applied sciences at CU Boulder—leads his field in the study of ecological, health, economic, and sociologic impacts of natural gas development on surrounding communities.

Professor Ryan's work is data driven, thorough, strongly objective, and would be of great help to policymakers, as is the work of James White, an institution at CU Boulder since he started the INSTAAR Stable Isotope Lab back in 1989.

Since its opening, Professor White and the INSTAAR Stable Isotope Lab have produced groundbreaking evidence regarding the rapidity of shifts in climate change and their origins in internal planetary adjustments.

Without the work of professors like Joe Ryan and James White, we would be decades behind in our understanding of environmental science and public health priorities, and the work of the EPA would suffer as a result.

In April of last year, Colorado State University professor Diana Wall was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a prestigious group of global thinkers. Professor Wall pioneered our understanding of soil biodiversity. As a result, it drew global praise for its unprecedented findings.

Professor George Wittemyer, also at CSU, recently produced the first verifiable estimation of the impacts of the ongoing ivory crisis on Africa's elephant populations. His findings, subsequently distributed and utilized globally, amount to significant breakthroughs in the field.

These professors, like these and many others, are critical to progress not only within the realm of their academic interests, but throughout the daily lives of American families in helping to prevent the eroding of our public health and our global environment. That is what the amendment I offer today is all about.

By soliciting the input of academics and research scientists who base their work on independent and transparent aims, we advance the expertise of the EPA and ensure that a variety of decisionmaking information is available.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment, although I am not opposed to the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the gentleman from Colorado for his amendment that would complement the provisions in the bill ensuring a public nomination process and seeking greater balance. I appreciate the gentleman's efforts to improve this bipartisan bill and look forward to its support as we move forward.

I am proud of our Nation's institutions of higher learning that house some of the greatest minds in the world. Students, professors, and researchers circle the globe to come join our coveted academic community. It is important that the EPA reach out to universities and research institutions to find a balanced and diverse set of experts to serve on the Board.

I want to thank my colleague from Colorado for his constructive amendment to this bipartisan bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the wealth of support that has been shown for this amendment, and I hope that we are able to accomplish this amendment. I am thrilled to have the support of the gentleman from Oklahoma.

To the extent that it is within our power, it is this body's responsibility to ensure our Federal partners are receiving the very best available objective information. My amendment will allow information that has its repository in our institutions of higher education to be able to serve as advisers for the EPA.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on my amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 114–37.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''EPA Science Advisory Board Improvement Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) MEMBERSHIP.—Section 8(b) of the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 4365(b)) is amended to read as follows:

''(b)(1) The Board, as established in subsection (a), shall be composed of at least 9 members, 1 of whom shall be designated Chair, and shall meet at such times and places as may be designated by the Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Administrator.

''(2) Each member of the Board shall be qualified by education, training, and experience to evaluate scientific and technical information on matters referred to the Board under this section. The Administrator shall ensure that—

''(A) the Board is fairly balanced in its membership in terms of the points of view represented and the functions to be performed;

''(B) no Board member shall participate in an advisory activity of the Board involving a particular matter or specific party which the Board member has a direct or predictable financial interest;

''(C) no Board member is a registered lobbyist, or has served as a registered lobbyist within a 4-year period prior to nomination to the Board; and

''(D) Board members shall be designated as special Government employees.

''(3) The Administrator shall—

''(A) solicit public nominations for the Board by publishing a notification in the Federal Register;

''(B) make public the list of nominees, including—

''(i) the identity of the entities that nominated each nominee; and

''(ii) the professional credentials of each nominee, including relevant expertise and experience, as well as the sources of research funding and professional activities such as representational work, expert testimony, and contract work dating back 2 years;

''(C) solicit public comment on the nominees;

''(D) develop, and make publically available, a formal memorandum describing each advisory activity to be undertaken by the Board which shall include—

''(i) the charge to the Board, including an explanation of the scope of issues to be addressed by the Board and the formal statement of questions posed to the Board;

''(ii) the ethics rules, if applicable, that would apply to Board members; and

''(iii) other information relied on to support the selection of panel members; and

''(E) require that, upon their provisional nomination, nominees shall be required to complete a written form disclosing information related to financial relationships and interests that may, or could be predicted to, be relevant to the Board's advisory activities, and relevant professional activities and public statements, for the 2-year period prior to the date of their nomination, in a manner sufficient for the Administrator to assess the independence and points of view of the candidates.''.

(b) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND TRANSPARENCY.—Section 8(h) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4365(h)) is amended to read as follows:

''(h)(1) The Board shall make every effort, consistent with applicable law, including section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the 'Freedom of Information Act') and section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the 'Privacy Act'), to maximize public participation and transparency, including making the scientific and technical advice of the Board and any committees or investigative panels of the Board publicly available in electronic form on the website of the Environmental Protection Agency.

''(2) The Administrator and the Board shall encourage and solicit public comments on the advisory activities of Board, including written and oral comments, especially comments that provide specific scientific or technical information or analysis for the Board to consider, or comments related to the clarity or accuracy of the recommendations being considered by the Board.

''(3) The Administrator shall specify the areas of expertise being sought and make every effort to solicit candidate recommendations from the public, and solicit public comments on candidates selected.''.

(c) OPERATIONS.—Section 8 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 4365) is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(j)(1) In carrying out its advisory activities, the Board shall strive to avoid making policy determinations or recommendations, and, in the event the Board determines that it would be appropriate or useful to offer policy advice, shall explicitly distinguish between scientific determinations and policy advice.

''(2) While recognizing that consensus recommendations and conclusions are the most useful to the Administrator and Congress, the Board shall ensure the views of all Board members, including dissenting views, are adequately incorporated into reports and recommendations from the Board.''.

SEC. 3. RELATION TO THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed as supplanting the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

SEC. 4. RELATION TO THE ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1978.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed as supplanting the requirements of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 138, the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As I mentioned during general debate on H.R. 1029, I am not opposed to—in fact, I support legislation that will improve the EPA's Science Advisory Board. It is something I have been committed to since we had hearings in the last Congress, something we haven't had in this Congress. We didn't even have a markup on this bill.

For the most part, I agree with the goals of H.R. 1029 and recognize the need to increase transparency in the selection of Board members and to promote public participation in the Board's review process.

That being said, not all of the provisions included in H.R. 1029 will actually improve the Science Advisory Board. In fact, some of the provisions in the bill distort common practices for eliminating or limiting financial conflicts of interest.

Another provision turns the valuable and necessary process of soliciting public comments into a tool for the endless delay of public health protections.

Over the past week, my staff has worked tirelessly with majority staff in an attempt to find common ground and move forward with a bill that is worthy of broad bipartisan support.

Unfortunately, a compromise could not be reached on some of the key problem areas of this bill. However, because I agree with the goals of H.R. 1029—but not with the execution of those goals in the text of this bill—I am offering an amendment that will truly improve the Science Advisory Board.

This amendment draws on nonpartisan recommendations from the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Keystone Policy Center, and the Government Accountability Office that will lead to greater transparency in the selection of Board members and restore confidence in the scientific advice offered by the Board.

My substitute amendment would require EPA to release a formal memorandum detailing—among other things—the charge to the Board, including the specific questions the Board is tasked with addressing.

It would require the EPA to make available online the professional credentials of each person nominated to the Board, including any source of research funding dating back 2 years. It also outlines the disclosure requirements for every nominee.

Finally, my amendment requires the EPA to solicit public comment on the nominees, the candidates selected, and the advisory activities of the Board, including specific scientific or technical information for the Board to consider.

□ 1500

These changes encompass the core principles that both Republicans and Democrats have agreed should be followed in EPA's Science Advisory Board.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, based on nonpartisan recommendations of experts, and move forward with a bill that makes positive changes to the EPA's Science Advisory Board. My amendment will improve transparency in membership balance, promote public participation without endlessly delaying EPA action or skewing the membership of the board toward conflicted parties.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I have said it numerous times, and I will repeat once again, this is a work in progress. This is a bill that is so important to the future of the country, so

important to how we address the scientific issues of our day, that this must proceed forward.

In the markup the other day, I think we had something like four amendments. We have had and accepted several amendments today. I would assume that if ultimately our friends in that other body are able to take action, that we will wind up, once again, working on the differences between the two bills. So there are a number of opportunities to refine and improve even this piece of legislation.

But that said, the fundamental principles are still there. We need to pass a bill to continue the process on H.R. 1029 that addresses transparency, that opens the process up to the public, that opens the process up to all individuals who have the scientific knowledge, the ability to contribute to this oversight group.

That is why I prefer the disclosure route. Let us all know who makes what off of what, and then we will base their objectivity on that.

Again, the Science Advisory Board looks over the shoulder of the EPA. They can't stop the EPA from doing anything. But the power of their analysis, which is only as good as the information that EPA shares with them, their ability to review that will determine just how much support there will be across the country, whatever the ultimate rule is.

I know my colleague from Oregon works in good faith, and I respect that greatly. And just as she and her staff have worked with the committee and the committee staff, I suspect we will continue to work together.

Ultimately, can we come up with a document that we can all agree with?

I am a person of great optimism, and I think we should try. But on this day, an amendment that basically, from my perspective, takes away virtually all of the key points that the bill attempts to achieve, on this day, at this moment, I cannot support that, and I have to, respectfully, ask my colleagues to turn down this amendment, to hopefully then advance the bill so that we can ultimately get to that final document.

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I want to first correct a misstatement that I made. I meant to say we did not have a subcommittee markup. We did have a full committee markup. However, we did not have any hearings this Congress on this very important issue.

I want to just add to what my good colleague, Mr. LUCAS, said a couple of times about how this is a work in progress. If it is a work in progress, Mr. Chairman, I submit that we shouldn't be here quite yet today. We should continue to work together on this because there are a lot of goals that we agree on.

If it is a work in progress, why are we on the floor voting today?

Mr. Chairman, I submit that this substitute amendment does more to improve the transparency to get to the goals that everyone agrees we need on the Science Advisory Board. I submit that it is a better approach. However, I would prefer that we continue to work, and then bring the bill up for a vote.

I am an optimist too, Mr. LUCAS, and I could get it done.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER), a very senior and knowledgeable member of the House Science Committee.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman, let me just note that there has been some laudable cooperation in the Science Committee this year, which I deeply appreciate. And the gentlelady and I have actually cosponsored some very needed legislation.

I think this particular bill does demonstrate, however, that as much as we can try to work together, that there are some fundamental differences between the two parties here in Congress dealing with scientific issues.

It is much to the chagrin of many of us to see—I have been a Member of Congress now since 1989—that the integrity of America's, and especially our Federal Government's, science programs has been brought into question by what appears to be a very cynical manipulation of the sciences by various elements in our government and within the political system who would like to manipulate science for their own benefit.

Let me just say that we need to take the steps to ensure to the American people that integrity is being restored to the scientific process, especially those scientific processes in which the Federal Government is involved.

This amendment, the reason why I would be opposed to it, it goes in the opposite direction than what this bill was intended to do. The bill was intended to try to create a higher level of trust, that there is an integrity within the science situation here with the EPA Science Advisory Board.

This amendment would allow individuals to peer-review their own work, for example, and without any disclosure requirements. That means an individual could be paid by the EPA to write a chapter for a science project and then also serve as a reviewer for that project.

The amendment does not require, for example, disclosure of conflict of interest waivers and recusal agreements. So we need to make sure that these types of activities are well documented and that we know exactly what needs to be done so the public can feel confident that when you have an advisory board for the EPA which actually passes regulations and controls over our lives, that the science behind those proclamations and those mandates by the EPA are made on solid science, rather than on people who perhaps have conflicts of interest and other such problems in coming to a scientifically-based decision, rather than a decision and a recommendation that serves special interests or serves someone's own personal interests.

So I would ask my colleagues to join me in opposing this amendment. But like the chairman states, this is a work in progress. Maybe we can come up with some language that both sides will appreciate. Thank you very much.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague from California for working with me on other legislation.

I do want to point out that if there is something that isn't in the amendment, as my colleague noted, we have to keep in mind that the Science Advisory Boards are already covered by the Federal Advisory Committee Act that governs Federal advisory committees just like the Science Advisory Board and helps provide for balanced panels and subcommittees that include experts with diverse backgrounds who represent wide-ranging perspectives. So we need to look at this policy in conjunction with the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

I do want to point out that the underlying bill, H.R. 1029, makes it harder for qualified scientists to serve but makes it easier for industry representatives to serve, even when they have a financial conflict of interest.

My amendment in the nature of a substitute levels the playing field and is a better approach.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, just to mention to the gentlelady, I have no additional speakers, and I believe I have the right to close.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume simply to note that I think we have had a very good discussion today. I think we have raised a lot of relevant points. We have covered a lot of ground and some good amendments. We have worked our way through this process. This is a step in the great legislative effort that ultimately leads to good legislation.

Some of my freshman colleagues might not be aware of this, but recently I was involved in a process that took 2½ years to ultimately come up with a bill. I hope that not every piece of legislation requires 2½ years to accomplish, but I would say this: regular order, respecting the input of all Members, both sides of the aisle, both ends of the Chamber, ultimately leads to a better legislative product to the benefit of everyone.

And I think we are once again embarking on that effort, so I respectfully ask my colleagues to reject this amendment and pass the underlying bill.

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

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 242, noes 175, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 119]

AYES—242

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

NOES—175

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Granger
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Rogers (AL)
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Cartwright
Graves (MO)
Hinojosa
Hudson
Lummis
Payne
Roskam
Rush
Sanford
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Speier
Welch
Young (AK)

□ 1538

Messrs. CAPUANO and ROGERS of Alabama changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. GENE GREEN of Texas and STEWART changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. REED) having assumed the chair, Mr. YODER, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1029) to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications, public participation, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 138, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. PETERS. I am opposed in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Peters moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1029 to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following new section:

SEC. 5. PROTECTING TAXPAYERS FROM SCIENCE PROMOTED BY POLLUTING COMPANIES.

No person shall be a member of the Science Advisory Board if—

(1) such person is the CEO of a corporation convicted of major environmental crimes, including the release of toxic pollutants into safe drinking water, refusal to clean up Superfund waste sites, or violations from the release of air pollutants that endanger human health and safety; or

(2) the primary source of research funds for such person comes from corporations or individuals convicted of major environmental crimes, including the release of toxic pollutants into safe drinking water, refusal to clean up Superfund waste sites, or violations from the release of air pollutants that endanger human health and safety.

Mr. PETERS (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, let's make this simple. The fundamental role of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect our Nation's environment and to ensure that we have healthy communities for children and families across the country. The Science Advisory Board is the body that ensures that EPA uses the best scientific research available to protect the environment and public health. To support this mission, we in Congress should be working together to ensure that the best and brightest scientists are on this Board. Instead, today's bill would muddy the waters when they should be crystal clear.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying bill moves EPA away from scientific integrity and weakens the independence of the Science Advisory Board. First, the bill requires that all scientific and technical points be balanced among members of the Board.

What does the term ''balanced'' mean?

Politicians should not be mandating scientific results. Science should be determined by the experts—scientists and scientific researchers—not by those of us in this Chamber.

Second, the bill imposes a non-science-based hiring quota for Advisory Board members based on employment by a State, local, or tribal government without regard to scientific expertise.

Finally, the open public comment period in the bill would allow regulatory opponents an endless amount of time to halt, derail, discredit, and slow EPA actions that go against their interests.

So instead of limiting review time and providing businesses with more certainty of how EPA regulations will affect their projects, the underlying bill would increase delay and decrease certainty—not what we have been trying to achieve with regulatory reform in this body up until now. Regulatory reform isn't done through obstructing every potential new rule. It is done, in part, by requiring agencies to render their decisions on a schedule so that the market can move forward. This bill would do the opposite.

□ 1545

My amendment will not cure all of these defects in the underlying bill, but it makes two obvious and significant changes to promote scientific integrity. It states simply that anyone working for a corporation that has been convicted of a major environmental crime should be prohibited from serving on the Science Advisory Board.

It secondly states that any person whose primary source of research comes from these criminal corporate actors should be prohibited from serving on the Science Advisory Board.

Mr. Speaker, for too long, we have heard that we have to choose between supporting economic prosperity and a clean environment. The implication is that we can't have both, but that is a false choice and one we can't afford to make. Americans know that we deserve nothing less than both: economic opportunity and clean air and clean water for future generations.

My State of California added 498,000 jobs in the last year while, at the same time, we continue to be a global leader in environmental reforms that have provided cleaner air than at any time in the last 50 years.

I am from San Diego where scientific research, economic growth, and environmental stewardship are not in conflict, but rather are the subject of ongoing, sustained, bipartisan collaboration.

It should be clear to everyone that CEOs from major corporations that are convicted of major environmental crimes have no place serving on the Science Advisory Board and neither should biased scientists.

Vote ''yes'' on the motion, and stand with me to maintain the integrity of the independence of the Science Advisory Board.

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

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation of the point of order is withdrawn.

Mr. LUCAS. I claim the time in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, at one point today, one of the upperclassman walked by and said, ''You again,'' referencing my working on a piece of legislation on this floor.

For the freshmen, you might not understand the relevance of that, but in the last session and the session before, I and Mr. PETERSON—my colleague on this bill—and the members of the Ag Committee worked for 2½ years to pass a piece of legislation that should have taken 6 months.

Now, why is that relevant in our discussion about H.R. 1029? It is relevant because when I give you my word as the primary author of the bill that I will work with both sides of the Chamber, that I will work with all perspectives, that this is a work in progress, you can take that for exactly what it means.

Now, why H.R. 1029 in the very first place? One of the classic problems that we all face in our town meetings, that we face in our interaction with citizens across this country, is a mistrust of the Federal Government, of Congress, of the other body, of the administration, of the institutions.

Now, how do you overcome mistrust when it is engrained as deeply as it is right now? You increase transparency, you open the process up, you make sure that everyone understands every part of the process.

That is what the Science Advisory Board was all about when it was created in 1978—have someone look over the shoulder of the people who are picking the scientists, who put the science together. That is the justification for all these rules.

The majority floor leader noted in recent times $140 million spent on this research, real money. Some might argue it is done in a closed show; some might argue it is done without the input of everyone.

H.R. 1029 is an effort to open that up. H.R. 1029 is an effort to increase the transparency, to restore confidence to the process. The EPA needs that just as badly as this institution does.

Now, to the motion to recommit, in particular, it is pretty good, pretty impressive, pretty crafty, but remember, the director of the EPA appoints the Board members. Surely, the director, especially with the additional disclosure requirements in the bill, will show the kind of judgment and prudence that is necessary—surely, surely.

That said, my friends, this is a work in progress, but it is an effort to turn around a problem that is greater than just one science board, one agency. It is an effort to address a problem that faces the entire Federal Government.

With that, my friends, I ask you turn down this motion to recommit. You pass the underlying bill, you let us continue to work and try and do something for the benefit of everyone.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 179, noes 237, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 120]

AYES—179

Adams	Bonamici	Cárdenas
Aguilar	Boyle, Brendan F.	Carney
Ashford	Brady (PA)	Carson (IN)
Bass	Brown (FL)	Castor (FL)
Beatty	Brownley (CA)	Castro (TX)
Becerra	Bustos	Chu, Judy
Bera	Butterfield	Cicilline
Beyer	Capps	Clark (MA)
Bishop (GA)	Capuano	Clarke (NY)
Blumenauer		Clay

Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—237

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

NOT VOTING—16

Cartwright
Graves (MO)
Hinojosa
Hudson
Lummis
Murphy (FL)
Payne
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Rush
Sanford
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Welch
Young (AK)

□ 1557

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. BOUSTANY was allowed to speak out of order.)

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN MEMORY OF THE LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD CRASH VICTIMS

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart to commemorate the loss of 11 outstanding servicemen, including four members of the Louisiana National Guard, as a result of a helicopter training accident off the coast of Florida.

From the Louisiana National Guard's 1st Assault Helicopter Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment based in Hammond, Louisiana, we lost Chief Warrant Officer George Wayne Griffin, Jr.; Chief Warrant Officer George David Strother; Staff Sergeant Lance Bergeron; and Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich.

From the United States Marines, based at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, we lost Captain Stanford Henry Shaw, III; Master Sergeant Thomas Saunders; Staff Sergeant Marcus S. Bawol; Staff Sergeant Trevor P. Blaylock; Staff Sergeant Liam A. Flynn; Staff Sergeant Kerry Michael Kemp; and Staff Sergeant Andrew C. Seif.

Mr. Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join us in a moment of silence on behalf of these servicemen.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 181, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 121]

AYES—236

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

NOES—181

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Cartwright
Duffy
Graves (MO)
Hinojosa
Hudson
Lummis
Payne
Roskam
Rush
Sanford
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Welch
Young (AK)

□ 1607

Mr. COHEN changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for votes on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, due to the attendance of a funeral for a close friend. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: rollcall No. 116: Previous Question on H. Res. 138—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1029—EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 and consideration of H.R. 1030—Secret Science Reform Act of 2015: ''yea;'' rollcall No. 117: Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1029—EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 and consideration of H.R. 1030—Secret Science Reform Act of 2015: ''yea;'' rollcall No. 118: H.R. 1191—Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act: ''yea;'' rollcall No. 119: McKinley Amendment: ''yea;'' rollcall No. 120: Motion to recommit H.R. 1029 with instructions: ''nay;'' rollcall No. 121: H.R. 1029—EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015: ''yea.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote Nos. 116, 117, 118, 119, and 121, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted 'yes.'' On rollcall vote No. 120, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted ''no.''

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 132, PROVIDING FOR THE EXPENSES OF CERTAIN COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN THE 114TH CONGRESS, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S.J. RES. 8, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

Ms. FOXX, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–45) on the resolution (H. Res. 152) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 132) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (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, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 296

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name from H.R. 296.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HURD of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

BILL BADGER, A HERO

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

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, last week, Arizona and our country lost a hero with the passing of Bill Badger, one of the people responsible for subduing the gunman of the January 8, 2011, shootings in Tucson, Arizona.

Bill served for 37 years in the Army, where he flew helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft. After moving to Arizona in 1985 with his wife, Sallie, Bill established and later served as the first commander of the Western Army National Guard Aviation Training Site in Marana. He retired from the military as a colonel.

After the shooting, Bill was credited with saying, ''Once you're in the military, you never retire. You're always there to help the community and the people who are in danger,'' and that is exactly what he did that day.

Despite being wounded, Bill put himself in the line of fire to take down the gunman, saving many lives through his bravery and his quick actions. Like many others that day, Bill showed us that, even in the darkest of times, courage and compassion can shine forth.

He was a hero in the truest sense of the word—one of southern Arizona's own—and he will be deeply missed by our community.

CYBER ABUSE

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

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, right now, millions of American women and girls are online, navigating their personal and professional lives. Sadly, many will be threatened online or will be subjected to terrifying harassment.

Journalists, academics, and other professionals who dare to express an opinion, especially a feminist one, are routinely attacked with graphic threats of rape and murder. Women are targeted with sexually explicit messages and threats 27 times more than men, and for women of color and LGBT women, the rate is even higher. As a result, young women are deciding not to pursue certain jobs in order to avoid the crosshairs of men who think they don't belong. Others are being driven offline, sacrificing their freedom of expression for personal safety.

A decade ago, Congress made online threats of death or serious injury illegal, but these cases are rarely prosecuted. That is why I am asking my colleagues to join me in calling on the Department of Justice to intensify the investigation and prosecution of the most extreme cases of online threats.

Ensuring the stronger enforcement of laws that protect women from violent online threats is one commonsense thing Congress can do to ensure that the Internet and the 21st century economy is open to everyone.

CELEBRATING BRAIN SCIENCE AWARENESS WEEK AND NATIONAL BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, March is National Brain Injury Awareness Month, and this week also marks Brain Science Awareness Week, and I

am very proud of the amazing advances in neuroscience research that are taking place in my district of south Florida.

The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, working in concert with the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine, is at the forefront of understanding traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries and how they can best be treated. Project investigators are now beginning to experiment with transplanting patients' own nerve cells to enhance recovery following paralysis. This brave work has never been more important, especially for our patriots, our military men and women, as they return home from combat and support missions abroad.

Thanks to the brain research happening in Miami and elsewhere, we have never been closer to a cure.

□ 1615

NANCIE ATWELL IS A TRULY REMARKABLE EDUCATOR

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

Ms. PINGREE. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk today about a truly remarkable educator from my State of Maine. This week in Dubai, Nancie Atwell won the very first Global Teacher Prize. It is called the ''Nobel Prize for Education,'' and over 5,000 teachers worldwide were nominated for the award.

Twenty-five years ago Nancie started the Center for Teaching and Learning in Edgecomb, Maine. Nancy and the staff at the school have educated thousands of students and hundreds of teachers, teachers who come every year to serve as interns at the school and learn about the cutting-edge teaching methods that have been developed there.

Nancie has dedicated her heart and soul to the school, to the teachers, and to the students. Just one example of the selflessness is the $1 million prize that Nancie won with this award. She didn't hesitate for even a moment before announcing she is going to give every penny of it to the school she founded and loves.

Nancie Atwell is a shining example of how teachers make the world a better place. Maine is lucky to have her, and she is an inspiration to us all.

HONORING THE LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARDSMEN TRAGICALLY KILLED LAST WEEK

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

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the lives of the four Louisiana National Guardsmen and seven marines who so tragically died in a helicopter accident off the coast of Florida. My family and I and all of the Louisiana delegation, I am sure, with the rest of the Congress will continue to keep their families in our prayers.

As a helicopter pilot myself, I feel a certain kinship to the two guardsmen in my district, George Griffin, Jr., and George Strother. Both of them served our district, our State, and our country most honorably.

Chief Warrant Officer George Griffin was originally from Delhi, which is only about 10 minutes from my house. He had more than 6,000 flight hours, including 1,000 or more combat hours, and was a very decorated veteran.

Chief Warrant Officer George Strother, of Alexandria, was a seasoned combat veteran who also served distinguishedly and was decorated, and he also served us in our trying times of Katrina.

These men, these two plus the others who died in the Black Hawk accident, served our Nation and our country most honorably, admirably, and stood in harm's way when we didn't have to. We will never forget them; we honor them; and again, our prayers are with their families.

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BLOODY SUNDAY

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I was proud to join many Members of this House in Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery, Alabama, from March 6 to 8 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, which led inexorably to the signing of the Voting Rights Act in August of that same year, 1965.

It was my 10th visit to Selma to mark the anniversary of Bloody Sunday, and each one is more powerful than the last. The visit was organized by The Faith & Politics Institute and was led by JOHN LEWIS, our colleague, such a giant in our history and in this body.

While there, Members heard powerful and moving remarks from President Obama, who made history as the first African American to hold the highest office in our land. We also heard, Mr. Speaker, from the late Governor Wallace's daughter, Peggy Wallace Kennedy, who spoke eloquently and movingly about living in the shadow of her father's actions 50 years ago. Governor Wallace later recanted his support for segregation and asked forgiveness from the African American community, and his daughter has worked hard to build bridges and promote dialogue and understanding.

Mr. Speaker, I include the remarks of the President into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that all Members can read them and be inspired and uplifted, as I was in hearing them delivered.

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT OBAMA AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SELMA TO MONTGOMERY MARCHES EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE—SELMA, ALABAMA

It is a rare honor in this life to follow one of your heroes. And John Lewis is one of my heroes.

Now, I have to imagine that when a younger John Lewis woke up that morning 50 years ago and made his way to Brown Chapel, heroics were not on his mind. A day like this was not on his mind. Young folks with bedrolls and backpacks were milling about. Veterans of the movement trained newcomers in the tactics of nonviolence; the right way to protect yourself when attacked. A doctor described what tear gas does to the body, while marchers scribbled down instructions for contacting their loved ones. The air was thick with doubt, anticipation and fear. And they comforted themselves with the final verse of the final hymn they sung:

''No matter what may be the test, God will take care of you; Lean, weary one, upon His breast, God will take care of you.''

And then, his knapsack stocked with an apple, a toothbrush, and a book on government—all you need for a night behind bars—John Lewis led them out of the church on a mission to change America.

President and Mrs. Bush, Governor Bentley, Mayor Evans, Sewell, Reverend Strong, members of Congress, elected officials, foot soldiers, friends, fellow Americans:

As John noted, there are places and moments in America where this nation's destiny has been decided. Many are sites of war—Concord and Lexington, Appomattox, Gettysburg. Others are sites that symbolize the daring of America's character—Independence Hall and Seneca Falls, Kitty Hawk and Cape Canaveral.

Selma is such a place. In one afternoon 50 years ago, so much of our turbulent history—the stain of slavery and anguish of civil war; the yoke of segregation and tyranny of Jim Crow; the death of four little girls in Birmingham; and the dream of a Baptist preacher—all that history met on this bridge.

It was not a clash of armies, but a clash of wills; a contest to determine the true meaning of America. And because of men and women like John Lewis, Joseph Lowery, Hosea Williams, Amelia Boynton, Diane Nash, Ralph Abernathy, C.T. Vivian, Andrew Young, Fred Shuttlesworth, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and so many others, the idea of a just America and a fair America, an inclusive America, and a generous America—that idea ultimately triumphed.

As is true across the landscape of American history, we cannot examine this moment in isolation. The march on Selma was part of a broader campaign that spanned generations; the leaders that day part of a long line of heroes.

We gather here to celebrate them. We gather here to honor the courage of ordinary Americans willing to endure billy clubs and the chastening rod; tear gas and the trampling hoof; men and women who despite the gush of blood and splintered bone would stay true to their North Star and keep marching towards justice.

They did as Scripture instructed: ''Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.'' And in the days to come, they went back again and again. When the trumpet call sounded for more to join, the people came—black and white, young and old, Christian and Jew, waving the American flag and singing the same anthems full of faith and hope. A white newsman, Bill Plante, who covered the marches then and who is with us here today, quipped that the growing number of white people lowered the

quality of the singing. To those who marched, though, those old gospel songs must have never sounded so sweet.

In time, their chorus would well up and reach President Johnson And he would send them protection, and speak to the nation, echoing their call for America and the world to hear: ''We shall overcome.'' What enormous faith these men and women had. Faith in God, but also faith in America.

The Americans who crossed this bridge, they were not physically imposing. But they gave courage to millions. They held no elected office. But they led a nation. They marched as Americans who had endured hundreds of years of brutal violence, countless daily indignities—but they didn't seek special treatment, just the equal treatment promised to them almost a century before.

What they did here will reverberate through the ages. Not because the change they won was preordained; not because their victory was complete; but because they proved that nonviolent change is possible, that love and hope can conquer hate.

As we commemorate their achievement, we are well-served to remember that at the time of the marches, many in power condemned rather than praised them. Back then, they were called Communists, or half-breeds, or outside agitators, sexual and moral degenerates, and worse—they were called everything but the name their parents gave them. Their faith was questioned. Their lives were threatened. Their patriotism challenged.

And yet, what could be more American than what happened in this place? What could more profoundly vindicate the idea of America than plain and humble people—unsung, the downtrodden, the dreamers not of high station, not born to wealth or privilege, not of one religious tradition but many, coming together to shape their country's course?

What greater expression of faith in the American experiment than this, what greater form of patriotism is there than the belief that America is not yet finished, that we are strong enough to be self-critical, that each successive generation can look upon our imperfections and decide that it is in our power to remake this nation to more closely align with our highest ideals?

That's why Selma is not some outlier in the American experience. That's why it's not a museum or a static monument to behold from a distance. It is instead the manifestation of a creed written into our founding documents: ''We the People . . . in order to form a more perfect union.'' ''We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.''

These are not just words. They're a living thing, a call to action, a roadmap for citizenship and an insistence in the capacity of free men and women to shape our own destiny. For founders like Franklin and Jefferson, for leaders like Lincoln and FDR, the success of our experiment in self-government rested on engaging all of our citizens in this work. And that's what we celebrate here in Selma. That's what this movement was all about, one leg in our long journey toward freedom.

The American instinct that led these young men and women to pick up the torch and cross this bridge, that's the same instinct that moved patriots to choose revolution over tyranny It's the same instinct that drew immigrants from across oceans and the Rio Grande; the same instinct that led women to reach for the ballot, workers to organize against an unjust status quo; the same instinct that led us to plant a flag at Iwo Jima and on the surface of the Moon.

It's the idea held by generations of citizens who believed that America is a constant work in progress; who believed that loving this country requires more than singing its praises or avoiding uncomfortable truths. It requires the occasional disruption, the willingness to speak out for what is right, to shake up the status quo. That's America.

That's what makes us unique. That's what cements our reputation as a beacon of opportunity. Young people behind the Iron Curtain would see Selma and eventually tear down that wall. Young people in Soweto would hear Bobby Kennedy talk about ripples of hope and eventually banish the scourge of apartheid. Young people in Burma went to prison rather than submit to military rule. They saw what John Lewis had done. From the streets of Tunis to the Maidan in Ukraine, this generation of young people can draw strength from this place, where the powerless could change the world's greatest power and push their leaders to expand the boundaries of freedom.

They saw that idea made real right here in Selma, Alabama. They saw that idea manifest itself here in America.

Because of campaigns like this, a Voting Rights Act was passed. Political and economic and social barriers came down. And the change these men and women wrought is visible here today in the presence of African Americans who run boardrooms, who sit on the bench, who serve in elected office from small towns to big cities; from the Congressional Black Caucus all the way to the Oval Office.

Because of what they did, the doors of opportunity swung open not just for black folks, but for every American. Women marched through those doors. Latinos marched through those doors. Asian Americans, gay Americans, Americans with disabilities—they all came through those doors. Their endeavors gave the entire South the chance to rise again, not by reasserting the past, but by transcending the past.

What a glorious thing, Dr. King might say. And what a solemn debt we owe. Which leads us to ask, just how might we repay that debt?

First and foremost, we have to recognize that one day's commemoration, no matter how special, is not enough. If Selma taught us anything, it's that our work is never done. The American experiment in self-government gives work and purpose to each generation.

Selma teaches us, as well, that action requires that we shed our cynicism. For when it comes to the pursuit of justice, we can afford neither complacency nor despair.

Just this week, I was asked whether I thought the Department of Justice's Ferguson report shows that, with respect to race, little has changed in this country. And I understood the question; the report's narrative was sadly familiar. It evoked the kind of abuse and disregard for citizens that spawned the Civil Rights Movement. But I rejected the notion that nothing's changed. What happened in Ferguson may not be unique, but it's no longer endemic. It's no longer sanctioned by law or by custom. And before the Civil Rights Movement, it most surely was.

We do a disservice to the cause of justice by intimating that bias and discrimination are immutable, that racial division is inherent to America. If you think nothing's changed in the past 50 years, ask somebody who lived through the Selma or Chicago or Los Angeles of the 1950s. Ask the female CEO who once might have been assigned to the secretarial pool if nothing's changed. Ask your gay friend if it's easier to be out and proud in America now than it was thirty years ago. To deny this progress, this hard-won progress—our progress—would be to rob us of our own agency, our own capacity, our responsibility to do what we can to make America better.

Of course, a more common mistake is to suggest that Ferguson is an isolated incident; that racism is banished; that the work that drew men and women to Selma is now complete, and that whatever racial tensions remain are a consequence of those seeking to play the 'race card' for their own purposes. We don't need the Ferguson report to know that's not true. We just need to open our eyes, and our ears, and our hearts to know that this nation's racial history still casts its long shadow upon us.

We know the march is not yet over. We know the race is not yet won. We know that reaching that blessed destination where we are judged, all of us, by the content of our character requires admitting as much, facing up to the truth. ''We are capable of bearing a great burden,'' James Baldwin once wrote, ''once we discover that the burden is reality and arrive where reality is.''

There's nothing America can't handle if we actually look squarely at the problem. And this is work for all Americans, not just some. Not just whites. Not just blacks. If we want to honor the courage of those who marched that day, then all of us are called to possess their moral imagination. All of us will need to feel as they did the fierce urgency of now. All of us need to recognize as they did that change depends on our actions, on our attitudes, the things we teach our children. And if we make such an effort, no matter how hard it may sometimes seem, laws can be passed, and consciences can be stirred, and consensus can be built.

With such an effort, we can make sure our criminal justice system serves all and not just some. Together, we can raise the level of mutual trust that policing is built on—the idea that police officers are members of the community they risk their lives to protect, and citizens in Ferguson and New York and Cleveland, they just want the same thing young people here marched for 50 years ago—the protection of the law. Together, we can address unfair sentencing and overcrowded prisons, and the stunted circumstances that rob too many boys of the chance to become men, and rob the nation of too many men who could be good dads, and good workers, and good neighbors.

With effort, we can roll back poverty and the roadblocks to opportunity. Americans don't accept a free ride for anybody, nor do we believe in equality of outcomes. But we do expect equal opportunity. And if we really mean it, if we're not just giving lip service to it, but if we really mean it and are willing to sacrifice for it, then, yes, we can make sure every child gets an education suitable to this new century, one that expands imaginations and lifts sights and gives those children the skills they need. We can make sure every person willing to work has the dignity of a job, and a fair wage, and a real voice, and sturdier rungs on that ladder into the middle class.

And with effort, we can protect the foundation stone of our democracy for which so many marched across this bridge—and that is the right to vote. Right now, in 2015, 50 years after Selma, there are laws across this country designed to make it harder for people to vote. 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.

How can that be? The Voting Rights Act was one of the crowning achievements of our democracy, the result of Republican and Democratic efforts. President Reagan signed its renewal when he was in office. President George W. Bush signed its renewal when he was in office. One hundred members of Congress have come here today to honor people

who were willing to die for the right to protect it. If we want to honor this day, let that hundred go back to Washington and gather four hundred more, and together, pledge to make it their mission to restore that law this year. That's how we honor those on this bridge.

Of course, our democracy is not the task of Congress alone, or the courts alone, or even the President alone. If every new voter-suppression law was struck down today, we would still have, here in America, one of the lowest voting rates among free peoples. Fifty years ago, registering to vote here in Selma and much of the South meant guessing the number of jellybeans in a jar, the number of bubbles on a bar of soap. It meant risking your dignity, and sometimes, your life.

What's our excuse today for not voting? How do we so casually discard the right for which so many fought? How do we so fully give away our power, our voice, in shaping America's future? Why are we pointing to somebody else when we could take the time just to go to the polling places? We give away our power.

Fellow marchers, so much has changed in 50 years. We have endured war and we've fashioned peace. We've seen technological wonders that touch every aspect of our lives. We take for granted conveniences that our parents could have scarcely imagined. But what has not changed is the imperative of citizenship; that willingness of a 26–year-old deacon, or a Unitarian minister, or a young mother of five to decide they loved this country so much that they'd risk everything to realize its promise.

That's what it means to love America. That's what it means to believe in America. That's what it means when we say America is exceptional.

For we were born of change. We broke the old aristocracies, declaring ourselves entitled not by bloodline, but endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. We secure our rights and responsibilities through a system of self-government, of and by and for the people. That's why we argue and fight with so much passion and conviction—because we know our efforts matter. We know America is what we make of it.

Look at our history. We are Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea, pioneers who braved the unfamiliar, followed by a stampede of farmers and miners, and entrepreneurs and hucksters. That's our spirit. That's who we are.

We are Sojourner Truth and Fannie Lou Hamer, women who could do as much as any man and then some. And we're Susan B. Anthony, who shook the system until the law reflected that truth. That is our character.

We're the immigrants who stowed away on ships to reach these shores, the huddled masses yearning to breathe free—Holocaust survivors, Soviet defectors, the Lost Boys of Sudan. We're the hopeful strivers who cross the Rio Grande because we want our kids to know a better life. That's how we came to be.

We're the slaves who built the White House and the economy of the South. We're the ranch hands and cowboys who opened up the West, and countless laborers who laid rail, and raised skyscrapers, and organized for workers' rights.

We're the fresh-faced GIs who fought to liberate a continent. And we're the Tuskeegee Airmen, and the Navajo code-talkers, and the Japanese Americans who fought for this country even as their own liberty had been denied.

We're the firefighters who rushed into those buildings on 9/11, the volunteers who signed up to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq. We're the gay Americans whose blood ran in the streets of San Francisco and New York, just as blood ran down this bridge.

We are storytellers, writers, poets, artists who abhor unfairness, and despise hypocrisy, and give voice to the voiceless, and tell truths that need to be told.

We're the inventors of gospel and jazz and blues, bluegrass and country, and hip-hop and rock and roll, and our very own sound with all the sweet sorrow and reckless joy of freedom.

We are Jackie Robinson, enduring scorn and spiked cleats and pitches coming straight to his head, and stealing home in the World Series anyway.

We are the people Langston Hughes wrote of who ''build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know how.'' We are the people Emerson wrote of, ''who for truth and honor's sake stand fast and suffer long;'' who are ''never tired, so long as we can see far enough.''

That's what America is. Not stock photos or airbrushed history, or feeble attempts to define some of us as more American than others. We respect the past, but we don't pine for the past. We don't fear the future; we grab for it. America is not some fragile thing. We are large, in the words of Whitman, containing multitudes. We are boisterous and diverse and full of energy, perpetually young in spirit. That's why someone like John Lewis at the ripe old age of 25 could lead a mighty march.

And that's what the young people here today and listening all across the country must take away from this day. You are America. Unconstrained by habit and convention. Unencumbered by what is, because you're ready to seize what ought to be.

For everywhere in this country, there are first steps to be taken, there's new ground to cover, there are more bridges to be crossed. And it is you, the young and fearless at heart, the most diverse and educated generation in our history, who the nation is waiting to follow.

Because Selma shows us that America is not the project of any one person. Because the single-most powerful word in our democracy is the word ''We.'' ''We The People.'' ''We Shall Overcome.'' ''Yes We Can.'' That word is owned by no one. It belongs to everyone. Oh, what a glorious task we are given, to continually try to improve this great nation of ours.

Fifty years from Bloody Sunday, our march is not yet finished, but we're getting closer. Two hundred and thirty-nine years after this nation's founding our union is not yet perfect, but we are getting closer. Our job's easier because somebody already got us through that first mile. Somebody already got us over that bridge. When it feels the road is too hard, when the torch we've been passed feels too heavy, we will remember these early travelers, and draw strength from their example, and hold firmly the words of the prophet Isaiah: ''Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on [the] wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not be faint.''

We honor those who walked so we could run. We must run so our children soar. And we will not grow weary. For we believe in the power of an awesome God, and we believe in this country's sacred promise.

May He bless those warriors of justice no longer with us, and bless the United States of America. Thank you, everybody.

THE GOP BUDGET

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, America has always been the country of opportunity. For those struggling, our country works to prevent families from becoming destitute and provides critical supports to help them out of difficult circumstances so they can earn a living and support their families. This support serves as a statement of our values, that you don't have to be born lucky to overcome hardship and succeed.

But the budget released today by my colleagues in the majority does not reflect these values. Instead of strengthening vital services like food assistance or investing in K–12 education, it slashes them. It reinforces the idea that your circumstances are your destiny.

We should be investing in American workers and creating an economy that will help everyone get ahead. Unfortunately, the priorities expressed today do not reflect this vision, and I hope we can work together toward a budget that does.

A BALANCED BUDGET FOR A STRONGER AMERICA

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

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, we are here today to talk about the Republican budget that was just announced today, and I do that with a great amount of pride and excitement as vice chairman of that committee.

I also look forward to working with the gentlelady who just spoke during the 1-minute speeches, not only to create a sustainable budget and priorities for America, but to debunk many of the things that she just said.

I am pleased to be joined by several members of the Committee on the Budget to help me do this.

Before we get into the details, I feel it appropriate, Mr. Speaker, and absolutely necessary to yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the majority whip of the House of Representatives, a friend of mine, to discuss some of the things that have happened to the great citizens in Louisiana.

HONORING THE LOUISIANA GUARDSMEN WHO PERISHED LAST WEEK

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Indiana for yielding.

As we observed a moment of silence on the House floor just a little while ago, I rise today in honor of the 11 brave American servicemen involved in last week's tragic helicopter crash off the coast of Florida. It is heartbreaking events like this, Mr. Speaker, which remind us that freedom is not free.

Four of those heroes were members of the Louisiana National Guard stationed within the 1st of the 244th Assault Helicopter Battalion out of Hammond, Louisiana, which is located in my district.

Our hearts are heavy, Mr. Speaker, as our Nation joins the battalion in mourning the loss of Chief Warrant Officer George Wayne Griffin, Jr., Chief Warrant Officer George David Strother, Staff Sergeant Lance Bergeron, and Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich. Their names will forever be engraved in our hearts and in our minds. They were described by their fellow soldiers as extraordinary and amazing aviators.

Colonel Patrick Bossetta, the commander of the State Aviation Command, who I spoke with over the weekend, said this, Mr. Speaker:

''This crew was made up of the larger-than-life men who have had a passion for Army aviation that was so evident in the dedication that they had towards their profession. I know this, as I have personally flown with each one of them. They were driven by their intense desire to selflessly serve their country, fellow soldiers, and marines.''

I want to talk about what some of their other colleagues said about them.

Lieutenant Colonel John L. Bonnette II, who is the commander of the 244th said:

''When I say they were heroes, I mean it many times over. They risked their lives under difficult conditions, flying in combat and during national emergencies, to ensure our security and help save thousands of people. I don't have the words to sum up their lives in a few sentences. You just can't. Our whole aviation family is reeling from this loss. The hole that is left is enormous. They were part of the fabric of this unit. The difference they made with everyone they served with will be a lasting legacy. Personally, flying with all of them was a privilege and an honor. I am a better person for having known them.''

These heroes, Mr. Speaker, were husbands, fathers, and sons. We reflect upon the countless sacrifices they made for our great Nation, the selfless call they answered to defend our freedoms. They died doing what they loved.

I want to take a few moments now to let the American people know about these four members of the Louisiana National Guard who died in this tragic accident.

First is Chief Warrant Officer 4 George Wayne Griffin, Jr., who was 37 years old. Chief Warrant Officer Griffin was from Delhi, Louisiana, and joined the Louisiana National Guard in 1994 and was commissioned as a warrant officer in 1999 before going on to become the battalion standardization pilot with over 6,000 flight hours, including more than 1,000 combat hours. He later deployed to Iraq in 2004 to 2005 and again was redeployed in 2008 and 2009. He also served during State deployments in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Isaac, as well as in support of Operations River Guardian and Deepwater Horizon.

''G. Wayne Griffin was born to be an Army Aviator,'' said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Reggie Lane, commander of Detachment 38, Operational Support Airlift Command. ''As one of the most talented and respected warrant officers in the Louisiana National Guard, he had a tremendous passion for flying and a God-given natural ability to fly both helicopters and airplanes and to teach others to be the best aviators and crewmembers they could be. He was a great friend and brother to all. With his loss, there will be a void that may never be filled.''

Griffin is survived by his wife, Becky, four children, and his father.

Now, Chief Warrant Officer 4 George David Strother was 44 years old. Chief Warrant Officer Strother was from Alexandria and served in the Louisiana National Guard from 1988 to 2007 and again from 2009 until his death last week. He deployed to Iraq in 2004 and 2005, to Afghanistan in 2011, and Kosovo in 2014. He also served during State deployments for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Isaac. Strother commissioned as a warrant officer in 1994 before going on to become an instructor pilot, with over 2,400 flight hours, including more than 700 combat hours.

''To describe Dave Strother as a big personality would not be accurate. He was more like a force of nature that could best be observed and marveled at, never opposed or altered,'' said Major Andre Jeansonne, commander, F Company, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment. ''His huge heart touched the lives of all men he met.''

Strother is survived by his wife, Melissa, his son and a stepdaughter, and his mother.

Staff Sergeant Lance Bergeron, 40 years old. Staff Sergeant Lance Bergeron of Thibodaux, Louisiana, enlisted into the U.S. Marine Corps in 1998 before joining the Louisiana National Guard in 2001 as a Black Hawk repairman. His extensive experience as a qualified enlisted flight instructor, graduate of the aircraft crewmember standardization instructor course, aircraft maintainer force, and warrior leader course made Bergeron a crew chief others aspired to be, according to members of his own unit. The combat veteran deployed to Iraq twice, in 2004 to 2005, and again in 2008 to 2009. Bergeron also served during State deployments for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Isaac, and Operation River Guardian. Bergeron is survived by his wife, Monique, two children, and his mother and father.

Finally, Staff Sergeant Thomas Florich, 26 years old. Staff Sergeant Florich, of Fairfax County, Virginia, enlisted in the Louisiana National Guard in 2007 as a Black Hawk repairer. He was posthumously promoted from sergeant to staff sergeant. Staff Sergeant Florich served during State deployment for Operation Deepwater Horizon and Hurricane Isaac. He earned more than 125 flight hours and was a graduate of the warrior leader course.

''Tom was full of life, and his personality could light the room,'' said Marquez. ''He was family with this unit and felt at home working with his brothers in Alpha Company. His dedication to duty and loyalty was without equal, always ready to accept any mission and extra duty in order to help the unit meet the mission. He will be greatly missed by the unit and the flight facility.''

Florich is survived by his wife, Meghan, who is expecting their first child, as well as his father and stepmother.

□ 1630

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, these four men served their country and the people of Louisiana with great honor. They deployed to war zones and served during times of great emergency for our State. They represent the very best of what our military stands for.

On behalf of my family, the Louisiana congressional delegation, and the entire House of Representatives, I want to say thank you to these four men and their families for the sacrifices they have made and for their service to our country. Their service and sacrifice will not be forgotten. They will remain in our prayers.

God bless these heroes, and God bless America.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana for those eulogies and for being all too appropriate in the honor that we should give these fallen Americans, as great as they have been.

Today, after votes for the day, Mr. Speaker, I want to recap some of the things that happened earlier in the day.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to say that at about 10:45 this morning, the Republican members of the Budget Committee held a press conference where we explained to the American people our vision for our priorities and for the priorities of America to get us back on track. ''A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America,'' is our theme.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased and proud to say that this theme isn't altogether new for the United States House of Representatives Republicans. In fact, in large part, this is the fifth year in a row that we have proposed these kinds of ideas so that we can live responsibly in the here and now to produce and afford a better tomorrow for our children and grandchildren.

Isn't that, Mr. Speaker, what we are here to be about? Hasn't it always been the history of these great United States that we would leave the next generation better off than the current generation has had it?

As you know, Mr. Speaker, and as my colleagues will help me point out here over the next hour, we stand here as actually the first generation in American history that is poised to leave the next one worse off by any objective measure.

That is why the budgets that we produce, the spending that we promulgate here in the United States Congress really needs to be scrutinized, really needs to be prioritized.

It is going to take people with a great degree of personal responsibility

and leadership, Mr. Speaker, to have a great, truthful conversation with the American people to, number one, tell them what the situation really is, but just as important, number two, to let them know that there are solutions, that we can fix it if we just show them what they are.

Let me quickly go through some of the points of our budget that we will mark up in committee tomorrow and expect to be on the floor next week for a vote.

Again, the first point, this plan will balance the budget in less than 10 years. That is faster than any of the recent House Republican budgets. Mr. Speaker, it is in stark contrast to the President's budget, which never balances, ever.

How can we pay off this $18 trillion-plus in debt that we have right now, plus the hundred trillion that is on the way over the next several decades, if we never first get it to balance? This Republican budget does that. We do it in less than 10 years.

Now, many American families are saying, 10 years? I wish I had 10 years to balance our budget. I have to balance it immediately in our households, some might say. For a government that spends over $3 trillion a year, it takes a while to turn that big aircraft carrier, so to speak, around.

That is why I use the word ''responsible,'' Mr. Speaker. We are being responsible in these reforms, in these priority changes, so that people have time to adapt, so that we can get the economy going again to produce more revenue to make perhaps that 10 years even go by quicker, but this is a responsible way to do it.

All we have to do is show the rest of the world that we have a pathway to prosperity and we will continue to be the best place in the world to invest, to grow a business, to grow a family for the next several decades, as we have been for the last several hundred years.

The other thing our budget does, Mr. Speaker, is it repeals ObamaCare, saving nearly $2 trillion in the process. This is government-controlled health care. It has never worked in the past. It is not going to work now.

We get rid of it, encouraging us to start over with health care reforms in a way that Americans feel comfortable in keeping their doctor, for example, in ways that respect free market principles of supply and demand, in ways that naturally stop us from overconsuming. That is the baseline from which we should have a health care reform debate and policy, not from a government-controlled perspective.

Our budget also proudly relies on a fairer and simpler Tax Code. It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that the Congressional Budget Office, those that are tasked with keeping track of our economic indicators and scoring the different bills that come through Congress, has indicated that our GDP—our gross domestic product in this country—will be assumed to be about 2.3 percent over the next several years.

Now, that is new information, Mr. Speaker. Never before has our GDP growth been calculated to be that low; yet it is because of our current policies over the last several years that they must calculate our GDP growth to be that low. We call for changing that formula.

A fairer, simpler Tax Code allows for job creators to create those jobs, to create more investment, and to invest more in their people and businesses. That creates a net economic positive effect that creates economic value that ultimately, Mr. Speaker, will allow more tax revenue into the government's coffers to help balance the budget and then begin to pay off our debt.

Mr. Speaker, our budget also proudly provides for a strong national defense. As we have heard now for the last several weeks, months, and years, the global war on terror is very much alive, very much real, very much a serious threat, and it would be irresponsible of us to continue cutting our military at a time when these threats exist. Our budget recognizes that.

Our budget calls for more spending in our military than President Obama, the Commander in Chief, has said he needs; and I think it reflects the reality of the situation around the world today, Mr. Speaker. You will see the Republicans stand strong for our military men and women and the defense budget that they need.

This budget also, Mr. Speaker, gives power back to the States. In legislative parlance and philosophical parlance, that is called federalism. Really what this budget is and recognizes is that those individuals and the States are much better at governing the affairs of their respective lives and their respective people than a prescriptive, one-size-fits-all recipe from Washington.

Our budget calls for flexibility, giving the property of individuals and States, i.e., their tax dollars, back to them so they can run social programs that they think are important, that fit the needs of their constituencies and their communities, and that gets Washington out of the way.

Our Medicaid reform proposals, for example, are a great example of this concept, where we send the States' and the individuals' property back to them—their tax dollars, in terms of Medicaid—and say: You know what, you are better at determining who is really poor in your communities and your States and what kind and what amounts of health care those people need.

Then, finally, the third leg to that is what the delivery system for those services would look like.

Who says that we have the answers to all this? It is no one-size-fits-all, prescriptive policy. The States are where it is at. The individuals and their communities know better than we do how to serve those most in need.

That gets right to the heart of Ms. BONAMICI's allegations during her 1-minute speech. Throwing money at something—into a system that is broken, that doesn't work—is no way to fix a problem. It only grows our debt and makes people more dependent on broken programs.

Let's trust our fellow citizens. Let's trust our local elected officials to know their communities and their constituencies best. That is how you get people out of dependency.

Our goal with the Republican budget is to get people off these programs, not to make them lifetime dependents. There is no freedom, there is no liberty, there is no personal responsibility in that.

The Republican budget also recognizes and focuses on the dignity that comes with a job, the dignity that comes with work. That is altogether important and, Mr. Speaker, altogether lost in so many ways in so many places in this city and in this Congress—the dignity of work, earning the success, the happiness that comes with that. This Republican budget reflects all of that.

I am pleased at this time to yield the floor to several members of the Budget Committee, all of whom have helped put this document together, all of whom have worked diligently and seriously on behalf of the American people—and especially their constituents—to make this document not only bold, but accurate, in terms of its numbers and philosophically correct.

First, I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia, a new Member to this body, Congressman ALEX MOONEY. He lives in Charles Town in Jefferson County in West Virginia and has three children. He is the son of a Cuban refugee and Vietnam veteran.

Alex grew up with a deep sense of appreciation for the American ideals of individual freedom and personal responsibility. That, Mr. Speaker, is what makes him a great member of the House Budget Committee.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, thank you to Congressman TODD ROKITA for arranging this Special Order to talk about the House budget released today titled: ''A Balanced Budget for a Stronger America.''

As a freshman member of the House Budget Committee and the Representative of West Virginia on the committee, I worked to deliver on West Virginia priorities in the House budget.

The first of these priorities is to balance the Federal budget. It is totally unacceptable for West Virginia—and all Americans—to live within their means while the Federal Government allows spending and debt to run rampant. While the House budget released today is not perfect, it balances, unlike the President's budget.

As you can see right here, it is a 10-year budget cycle. Our budget balances in year nine. Not only does the President's budget not balance, it creates more debt and deficit each and every year as you go along. We don't have a

partner to work with at the administrative level in the President's office to balance the budget.

We had to do this on our own because the American people demand and deserve a balanced budget. It is the right thing to do, and that is a bipartisan statement. As I traveled my State and my district last year, I heard from everybody, Republican and Democrat, that they wanted a balanced budget. This puts us on the path to do so.

I also successfully led three budget proposals through the committee process, and each are now included in the final House budget released today. The first two will stop the President's war on coal in its tracks, and the third cuts unnecessary Federal spending.

The first proposal stops the administration's efforts to close coal-fired power plants. We simply did this by eliminating any funding for the development and implementation of new ozone standard regulations by the Environmental Protection Agency, or the EPA.

The coal industry has already spent billions of dollars over the last few years coming into compliance with previous ozone standard rules, but the President's EPA is expected to release new ozone standards anyway, designed intentionally to shutter coal plants.

The President and his radical environmentalist allies fail to recognize that many States still rely on coal to provide energy at affordable household prices.

Over 90 percent of West Virginia households rely on coal for affordable, reliable energy. Recent estimates say implementation of the President's new rule would cost over 10,000 jobs in West Virginia.

The second proposal I secured in the House budget to stop the President's war on coal was to prevent funding for a new stream buffer rule from the Department of the Interior.

The administration has already spent over $7 million writing this rule, which is designed to allow the administration to claim regulatory jurisdiction within 100 feet of anything they deem to be a stream.

□ 1645

That dubious proposition would allow Federal regulators to shut down surface mining operations in almost every region of West Virginia with the stroke of a pen. That is not how we make laws.

Some studies estimate that Federal and State governments will lose $4 billion to $5 billion in tax revenue if it is enacted, and the coal industry would lose $14 billion to $20 billion in revenue and as many as 85,000 jobs in our region.

Stopping the War on Coal is good policy for hardworking West Virginia taxpayers and good policy for our Nation. We must continue to pursue an all-of-the-above energy approach to secure energy independence and grow our economy.

I am proud of this budget's rejection of discrimination against certain forms of energy production, such as coal, which the President deems to not be politically correct.

To cut Federal waste, my third proposal defunds the Legal Services Corporation, an agency which operates far outside its original mandate after decades absent of any congressional oversight.

Defunding the Legal Services Corporation is a proposal supported by both the Congressional Budget Office and The Heritage Foundation. Instead of providing legal services to the poor, as is its mandate, the organization has been used to advance pro-abortion and politically ideological policies, as well as increase spending on welfare.

Defunding this organization would remove a Federal agency operating outside of its mandate and would also save taxpayers millions of dollars.

I am proud these proposals were included in the House budget to stop the President's assault on energy jobs and cut waste from the Federal Government. I look forward to continuing to fight for West Virginia priorities as the budget process continues. With real solutions, we can restore fiscal conservatism to Washington and foster economic prosperity for our Nation.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman. If the gentleman would stay, I would like to engage him in a question if he could.

I am very interested in what you are saying. You come from an area of this country, like so many areas of this country, that understand the meaning of the fact that when you pull something out of the ground and you process it, you have just created wealth. You have just created jobs for people.

That is not a dirty thing. And, in fact, the coal industry and the fossil fuel industry today, they are the cleanest they have ever been and have done so much good work. They have been chided and bullied for so many years now.

But I want you to tell us about how the electricity that comes from coal eventually not just is less dirty than it was before, but that it produces the electricity that gives people clean water, and not just in West Virginia or in Indiana, but in Africa. It raises people altogether out of poverty.

Could you talk more about what happens in West Virginia and the good it brings to people there and around the world?

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Sure. We burn clean coal and we see the use of coal. As I mentioned, 90 percent of our State uses coal for their energy. It is the cheapest, most affordable type of energy, electricity, that can be created, so it is a blessing to have that in our State and other States that have it as well.

We already burn it clean. The coal industry has dealt with regulations under previous administrations for many years. We are burning it clean.

It is not an accident. It is an intention of this administration because they stated it when they said they want a war on coal. They stated they are going to make it—the President himself said he is going to make it so expensive that it would bankrupt the coal production companies and shut down coal that way. So it is their goal to make standards that aren't just reasonable, but that are intended to stop an agency from producing.

I would like to also point out, we ship coal to other countries. We ship coal to China, for example. Well, guess what?

There is no EPA in China. They burn the coal there much, much dirtier than we do in this country. So it is cleaner to burn it here anyway than to ship it to other countries and have them burn it. So it makes no sense.

In fact, they are harming the environment. These very policies that are intended to help the environment are actually harming the environment. It makes no sense. It is harming every taxpayer, every family who wants this affordable form of energy.

Mr. ROKITA. Right. Reclaiming my time, I would say that every person we employ in West Virginia, in Indiana, and anywhere else in the country, gets a paycheck for sure. That is a great thing.

The government, both at the State and Federal levels and maybe even the local level, gets a cut of that, right? And that eventually gets here to Washington, D.C.

Sir, does it not make sense then that that would help pay down—excuse me, let's look at your chart—pay down the deficits, eventually getting us to balance, as we stated, in less than 10 years, and then allowing us to begin to work on our surplus over the next several decades?

So we certainly have to cut spending, and that is the main driver of our debt, and reform the social entitlement programs that are driving the debt. But every little bit of economic growth, economic activity that comes with a job, that comes with a paycheck, allows us, if we wanted to, like we do in this budget, to pay down those deficits in the debt.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Yes. Thank you for yielding.

I would say tens and really hundreds of thousands of jobs are on the line with these coal policies that prevent people from having good-paying jobs and feeding their families. And both parties can agree—it is a bipartisan proposal—the best way to help the poor or to help anybody not get on government assistance is to get a good-paying job, and that is what we are trying to provide here, good-paying jobs, the dignity that you mentioned, Congressman, in your earlier remarks about the dignity of having a good-paying job.

Folks in my State and, I am sure, others, want those good-paying jobs because they want that dignity. They

want to work. They don't want to have to be relying on government programs.

So the assault on the coal industry and the energy industry in general is something that is particularly harmful to our State. And anyone listening across this country, I would be careful, because if they can discriminate against one form of energy, which is coal, what is next?

There is an agenda here that exists to discriminate against various types of energy production. Look, we just want to be fair. We want an all-of-the-above energy policy. We want these jobs here at home that are going to happen anyway because they are doing it in other countries, so we want these jobs here at home. They are good-paying jobs.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman.

Reclaiming my time, I thank Congressman MOONEY for his expertise in this area, coming from the State of West Virginia.

Again, I would say he is an excellent member of the Budget Committee and takes his job seriously, and I welcome him to continue with our discussion here.

Mr. Speaker, if I can inquire how much time we have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 28 minutes remaining.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn our attention now to another hard-charging member of the Budget Committee, someone else who is new to Congress and who is bringing that energy, along with great ideas, to the discussion. A lot of his ideas are found in this budget.

Congressman JOHN MOOLENAAR of Michigan was a chemist, or perhaps is still a chemist. He worked in the private sector prior to joining us here. He is an example of a team that created the jobs that better our economy, that allow us to crawl out of this deficit and debt that we are facing because of our overspending, and his experience will allow us to be part—allow the conversation to illustrate the solutions that come with raising our GDP level back to where it used to be not just a few years ago so that we can have a better economy now and a better future for our children.

Before serving in Congress, JOHN MOOLENAAR served on the Midland City Council and in the State legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MOOLENAAR).

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Thank you very much. I want to thank my colleague from Indiana for his leadership organizing this presentation today.

Mr. Speaker, as it is clear from the charts and the discussion we have already had today, Washington has a spending problem.

In January, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that the Federal Government would collect $3.4 trillion in revenue in fiscal year 2016.

The week after that, the Obama administration released a $4 trillion spending plan that raises taxes and never balances, a refusal to live within the government's means.

Out-of-control Federal spending has exploded the national debt. In 2014, revenue to the Federal Government was 49 percent higher than in 2000. Yet, spending for 2014 was 95 percent higher than 2000.

As part of the economy, the debt is at its highest point since the 1950s. Much of the problem is spending required by unsustainable government programs. This spending has increased dramatically and crowded out funding for national security and other priorities.

Mandatory spending alone in 2014 cost $2.3 trillion, more than was spent funding the entire government in 2004.

As a member of the House Budget Committee, I have worked with our colleagues to craft a budget that addresses our country's fiscal challenges. The House Republican budget balances within 10 years and does not raise taxes.

It reforms unsustainable government programs while keeping the promises that have been made to our seniors. It grants flexibility to the States on Medicaid, allowing them to craft their own health care programs for those in need. This change brings Medicaid closer to the American people it was meant to serve.

I hope that Members of both parties, in both the Senate and the House, will be able to come together and address the budget in a responsible way, without raising taxes on hardworking families who have seen their wages stagnate during this historically slow economic recovery.

The House Republican budget puts our country on a path toward a more stable and responsible fiscal future.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, Mr. MOOLENAAR points out some of the obvious and perhaps maybe not so obvious problems the budget faces and what we face as a Congress.

Really quickly, before introducing a veteran member of the committee, I want to illustrate a little bit what, Mr. Speaker, Mr. MOOLENAAR was discussing.

Here you see, in a pie graph form, what our Federal Government, what your Federal Government spends its money on. I have taken the liberty of dissecting or pushing out two pieces of that pie to show you, really, from a year-to-year perspective situation, what we get to vote on as Members of Congress.

It is defense discretionary, as we call it, and there is nondefense discretionary. In terms of the fund centers and the lines in the budget, we can dial those up or dial those amounts down year to year, Budget Control Act deals and all that notwithstanding.

But it is the rest of this pie that Mr. MOOLENAAR indicates that is so alarming, because the rest of this pie, I can't, Mr. Speaker, you can't, Mr. MOOLENAAR can't dial up the spending or dial it down year to year by our vote on the budget or our vote on appropriations bills because the funding formula for those programs is found in the underlying law.

So Congressman ROKITA doesn't get to decide how much Social Security an eligible citizen receives year to year, or what the Medicare services are going to be, or what the costs or payouts for them are going to be, or determine right now what the one-size-fits-all Medicaid program looks like. That is all determined by the underlying law.

This spending, until we reform these programs, is on autopilot. It just goes on and on and on and on, and that is why these programs too need to be reformed.

So we have taken the extra step in our House Republican budget and outlined solutions for the other committees, for Members of Congress, for the American people, that would work to not only pay down the deficits but then our debt over time after we come into balance, recognizing, being honest with the American people about what is causing our debt.

If you see from this pie graph, it is only about 40 percent of our budget year to year that we can dial up or down simply by a vote on the budget.

□ 1700

Over 60 percent is on autopilot.

So you can't possibly pay off our deficits and our debt until you address the underlying cause—what is driving our debt—and that is these entitlement programs of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, the interest we owe ourselves and other countries for this debt we are racking up, and a smorgasbord of other mandatory spending, mostly welfare programs.

The Republican budget not only recognizes that, not only tells the American people the truth, but then offers solutions of what could solve the situation over a reasonable amount of time.

A fellow who has been integral to making sure that these good ideas have stayed in our budget now for the fifth time in the last several years is a gentleman I have come to know as a good friend, a trusted confidant, a fellow whom I have said from this microphone before represents the people in his district in Georgia so very, very well, and not only that but represents America so well because of his excellent oratory, his good ideas, and his intense work ethic, which we need more of, frankly, around here, Mr. Speaker.

I yield to the gentleman from the great State of Georgia, Mr. ROBERT WOODALL.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend, the vice chairman for yielding.

I know the vice chairman won't brag about himself, Mr. Speaker. So let me brag about him just for a second.

He got elected when I got elected 4 years ago. But when you think about what the American people have asked for from this Congress in terms of solving the problems that affect their lives,

in terms of dealing with the issues that threaten economic prosperity, in terms of doing the heavy lifting that is required, they have cleared out more than half of this institution.

Well, if you got elected in the class that the vice chairman and I were elected in 4 years ago, you are already in the top 50 percent of seniority in this institution.

We talk about how folks come to Congress and stay forever. America has been turning people out on their ear left and right over these last 4 years, which has allowed folks like the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA) to rise to these levels where they can lead on these issues.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the vice chairman didn't come from a legislative background. He came from a background as a shot-caller. He was the secretary of State in Indiana. He didn't have somebody else to blame when things went wrong. The buck stopped on his desk. Every single day, the buck stopped on his desk, exactly like it does for every father and every mother and every employer anywhere across this country. And when you now have filled this institution with folks who were shot-callers yesterday and now have been asked to find agreement among 435 of their colleagues, you get exciting results, exciting results.

I am going to keep the chart that the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) had up here, Mr. Speaker.

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MOOLENAAR) is a freshman. He sold himself short when he talked about the hard work to get this budget done, and you need look no further than this chart to see it.

Mr. Speaker, I don't fault the President's work ethic. I think the President works hard to do what he thinks is best for this country. But there is not one family in America that believes you can borrow as much as you want to borrow, spend as much as you want to spend, and your family's economic future will be secure. They all know that is a path to disaster.

This blue line represents the budget deficits in the President's budget, the budget that he just sent to Congress. It is his legal responsibility to do it. He did it. This is the plan that he laid out for America—deficits as far as the eye can see, borrowing not just for the next year or the next 10 years or the next 20 years or the next 30 years, but forever.

The work that Mr. MOOLENAAR and Mr. ROKITA have done isn't easy. It is unpleasant work. I don't know why you took the job, I will say to my friend from Indiana. It is an awful job to be vice chairman of the Budget Committee because your job is to do the things that haven't gotten done before. Your job is to do the things that were too hard for everybody else to do, and you have stepped into the breach to do it.

This red line, Mr. Speaker, represents deficits under the budget that Mr. ROKITA and Chairman TOM PRICE of Georgia are bringing to a markup in the Budget Committee tomorrow. They couldn't balance the budget in day one. There is a lot of sweat equity in this chart. They could not balance the budget in day one because the red ink is just too thick. You have got to do it in a responsible way. They made the tough decisions to cut deficits in half by year two, in half by year two and on out to budget surpluses by the time you get to the end of the 10-year window, a balanced budget for America.

You can't see the sweat stains on this chart, Mr. Speaker. But there is sweat equity in this chart. We are not talking about, are you going to spend an extra million dollars here, an extra million dollars there. We are not talking about, are you going to prioritize environmental spending or national park spending. We are not talking about, are you going to prioritize transportation spending via roads or transportation spending via air.

We are talking about, are you going to balance the budget ever. Or are you going to borrow from your children and your grandchildren as far as the eye can see?

And I have news, Mr. Speaker. Every single one of these dollars and deficits you see in the President's budget represents a dollar of future tax increases or future benefit cuts. I want you to think about that.

What Mr. ROKITA and the Budget Committee have done is to put together a courageous package that says, We should pay for the bills today that we are incurring today. We should not sacrifice tomorrow's prosperity for today's indulgence. We should do the tough things when we can so that our children don't have to labor under those burdens.

Every single one of these dollars that the President borrows and spends—and, I should add, this is with a $1 trillion tax increase; even with $1 trillion in new taxes, the President still is running these kinds of deficits—represents either a tax increase for your children and your grandchildren or a benefit cut for your children and your grandchildren. Those are the only two ways to get a dollar in this country.

We should have the courage, if we want to spend money, to go find the money to spend. We should have the courage that if we want to cut benefits, to cut those benefits today, not 100 years from today. We should have the courage to do the difficult things that need to be done. And I am just grateful to the gentleman from Indiana and his leadership on the committee. What we are going to mark up—it will probably be a 12-hour markup tomorrow. I am so excited about it. I am so excited about it. What we are going to mark up is a budget that every Member of this Chamber can be proud of.

And I will tell you a secret, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to let the cat out of the bag. I don't think it is too soon to break the news. But I have seen some patterns in the 4 years I have been here. My expectation is that, as hard as the Budget Committee has worked on this document, as much sweat equity has gone into doing the difficult things that need to be done, my guess is that they are going to allow any Member of this Chamber who wants to write a budget to offer their ideas and get a vote on those ideas too. We have seen it year after year after year. I suspect we are going to see it again.

This isn't about trying to shut folks out of the process, Mr. Speaker. This is about trying to bring folks into the process. The kind of collaborative process the vice chairman of the committee has driven, along with Chairman TOM PRICE, is the difference between taking the responsibility on our shoulders, as parents, grandparents, legislators, citizens, or kicking that can down the road to the next generation.

I just couldn't be more proud of the effort and the work product that my friend from Indiana has created.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman from Georgia. As much as I appreciate his comments about the work we have all done on the Budget Committee, they are certainly undeserved with regards to me. It was a team effort from the beginning. It continues to be a team effort.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Georgia is exactly right, though, that every Member of this Chamber—and that is Republican or Democrat—can be proud of this budget. This honestly and accurately solves this country's Federal Government fiscal problems. And they should also be proud of the fact that, as the gentleman mentions, other ideas are going to be accepted in regular order and be voted on. And it really doesn't get more American than that. That will be an honor that has continued to be our tradition, and I see no reason that that won't continue.

If the gentleman would, I would like to hear his thoughts on the Medicare part of our budget.

The gentleman heard me reference the fact that the autopilot spending, these social programs need to be reformed. And I want to be very clear not only with my colleagues, with the gentleman from Georgia, but also with the American people, Mr. Speaker, that we are not cutting, we are not slashing, we are not ending Medicare or these other programs, as I know perhaps there will be some scare tactic language presented. I hope that is not the case. I continue to hope. But the fact of the matter is, we save and we strengthen Medicare.

I yield to the gentleman for his comments in that regard.

Mr. WOODALL. Well, I appreciate my friend for yielding.

I know my friend is well known in this body for his work on Medicaid and the effort to save that important health care program as well, and I thank him for that.

Medicare is a great example. It is a great example. There is not a Member

in this institution, Mr. Speaker, who believes that we have the money or could even find the money to pay for Medicare as it is structured today.

It is not a question of, is it going to go bankrupt; it is a question of when is it going to go bankrupt. And that is not a Budget Committee member from the State of Georgia talking. Those are the Medicare trustees talking. The folks who are in charge of looking after the program year after year after year tell us that it is going to go under.

What people in my district ask for, I will say to my friend from Indiana, is not a leg up, not something for nothing, not a free lunch. They just want to know what the rules are. And if you tell them what the rules are, they will rise to the occasion.

I am in my forties. I know Medicare is not going to be there for me the way it is for my parents. I worry it won't be there at all for folks in my age bracket.

What the Budget Committee has done in this budget is absolutely to protect Medicare. It has gone from something that might not be there for me—and certainly wouldn't be there for me in the way that my parents have known it—to a commitment that I can count on. Not I, the United States Congressman; I, as a 45-year-old citizen in America for whom payroll taxes—those taxes that pay for Medicare—have been the largest tax burden that 80 percent of American families have paid all of their lives.

These dollars that you see here represent dollars that the President, in many cases, is frittering away on today's consumption but that we are reinvesting in Medicare to ensure that it survives for another day.

And what it does, Mr. Speaker—I don't know how deeply you have dug into the Budget Committee Medicare proposal—it anticipates providing choice in the Medicare system the likes of which Medicare has never seen.

I mean, America has seen that wildly successful Medicare Advantage program. Have you seen that, Mr. Speaker? I mean, it has been the source of attempts to slash over and over and over again by this administration for reasons that I cannot imagine because it is the most popular Medicare program in America, Medicare Advantage, which for the first time allowed taxpayers to make choices about how they were going to receive their Medicare benefits.

What the gentleman from Indiana and our entire committee has put together in this budget is a pathway through that premium support program to let every Medicare beneficiary going forward, folks—even young people like me at 45, folks at 18—know that when they get to Medicare, not only will it still be there for them, but they will have a choice of plans to choose the one that works best for them.

Mr. ROKITA. If the gentleman will yield, that is so very important and critical to understanding our reform efforts because of the fact that our proposed changes don't even have to affect anyone who is on these programs or near to being on them.

Our modeling, our reform, our ideas would start in 2024. So the younger guys—men and women, of course—in America, those of the age group that the gentleman from Georgia referenced, would have time to prepare.

And it is not like these changes would be draconian. They would just reflect how we live now and how long we live in the 21st century. Again, the main part of our reform is giving people choice.

We believe and we know from data and from experiences in the States—those laboratories of democracy that I referenced earlier, the notion of Federalism, where the best government comes from those that govern closest to the people—that if you give people a choice, no matter their socioeconomic background, now matter how old or young they are or how smart or simple some may think they are, they can make the best choices for themselves in all facets of their lives. And that includes health care. Once we do that, once we have folks invested in the decision-making process, you will see costs naturally go down.

□ 1715

That is a large part of our plan. Let people choose what works best for them, what works best for that time in their lives, and you will see them take an ownership interest just like they would an ownership interest in any other thing that they have a vested interest in, whether it is repairing their automobile, buying an automobile, or even their health care. It will work the same way. That is a good portion of our plan.

Again, anyone who is on these programs or near to be on them can take the promises that were offered, the deal that was given, and can continue on with their lives and planning for their future.

The gentleman from Georgia, I, members of the Budget Committee, and previous Congresses now for 4 years in a row have talked to the American people about this idea of down the road let's change the system, not so it goes away, but so that it can be strengthened and saved so that it can be around for those in the future. I think what every parent and every grandparent ultimately wants is a better life for their children and grandchildren.

Now, if we contrast that for a minute with the President's idea, you see a much different picture. First of all, in order to fund his government-controlled health care plan, Mr. Speaker, he basically takes from Medicare. The President's health care law makes drastic cuts to the Medicare program without improving the long-term solvency of that program. In addition to the reductions already proposed in the law, ObamaCare created the Independent Payment Advisory Board, a Board of 15 unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats who will cut Medicare in ways that would deny care to current seniors. That is not the way forward. That doesn't save and strengthen these popular programs. That is what will end up destroying them for future generations.

Some may ask—I know the gentleman from Georgia has heard this question—well, didn't the President's health care law improve Medicare's solvency? No. It absolutely did not. The President's health care law raided Medicare to fund ObamaCare. Advocates of the President's health care law claimed that the law both improved Medicare solvency and paid for the new entitlement at the same time, but this claim is contradictory. Medicare's chief actuary testified before the House Budget Committee that the Medicare savings had been double counted.

The House Republican budget stops the raid on Medicare and ensures that any current law Medicare savings are devoted to saving Medicare. So that is what I mean when I say and when the gentleman from Georgia says that this is an honest budget. It is truth telling to and for the American people, but it also offers the solutions that can honestly and responsibly get us out of this situation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WOODALL. What my friend says about people being able to rely on this budget, about the honesty and integrity in the budget, it really is contrasted with these deficit numbers that you see coming out of the White House, because there is not an honest broker in this room who would not tell you that if you continue to run these deficits, eventually you are going to hit the wall. You are going to have to pull the rug out from under current beneficiaries. That is what bankruptcy means.

Mr. Speaker, that is what we mean when we say ''bankruptcy.'' We don't mean that Social Security goes away and Medicare goes away and you get zero. We mean you are still stuck on the program, but we are slashing your benefits in half overnight. That is immoral. It is immoral to make promises to people and not keep them.

I don't want the gentleman from Indiana's job, Mr. Speaker. I don't want it. Being vice chairman of the Budget Committee is hard because you have to make tough decisions. And the decision that the Budget Committee made was we can be honest with folks who have not yet attained Medicare age that the program will not be there for them as it was for their parents if we make no changes. We can keep our commitment to older seniors—those folks on the program—to say, if we promise it to you, you are going to get it. Then we can bring in this new element of choice, again, for folks in my age bracket, to say, when you get to Medicare, we will have protected it, and you

will have some personal decision-making in terms of how do you get the benefit package that best serves you, best serves your spouse, and best serves your family.

I am so appreciative in a town where people dodge responsibility like it is the plague that the Budget Committee has said that we are either going to break promises tomorrow when we run out of money or we are going to be honest with people today about the state of the affairs that we are in: $400 billion deficits, $600 billion deficits, trillion-dollar deficits in the President's budget. And if you saw the chart that the vice chairman held up earlier, that pie chart of where America spends its money, interest that we are paying today dwarfs education spending, transportation spending, environmental spending, and the like.

I thank the gentleman for his leadership.

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman from Georgia again. He is not only a blessing to his State, he is a blessing to this Congress and to this country for his integrity, his hard work, and for his oratory. Thank you, sir, very, very much.

Mr. Speaker and Members of this body, please pay attention to the House Budget Committee tomorrow as we mark up this bill, hopefully not for 12 hours, but maybe so. We will be there for as long as it takes. And be ready—be ready and be proud—to vote on the floor of this House next week for a budget that offers honesty, real solutions, a balanced budget for a stronger America.

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

MIDDLE CLASS ECONOMICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak. I hadn't intended to talk on Medicare, although I think that the ultimate reaction to what we just heard is that the Medicare guarantee that has been the bedrock, foundation, for seniors really will terminate if this budget proposal that we just heard discussed for so long continues because it will basically give seniors an option not to have Medicare. I don't think we want to do that. This has been an extremely important program for more than 40 years now, and I want to look really, really hard at the proposal that is being put forth by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle.

What I came to talk about today is something that the President actually spoke to us about here in the Chamber in January, and it was middle class economics—middle class economics. How is it that we can grow the middle class which has been stagnant in its economic growth for the last almost 25 years now, not seen a pay increase, husband and wife or a single parent struggling to make ends meet here in America? The President came here and he brought to us this middle class economics.

Why is it important? Well, basically, if the middle class is healthy, if the middle class paycheck is growing, the economy grows. It is an economy that is based upon the consumer, and the consumer really is the middle class. So it becomes absolutely important that we look at how we are going to grow the middle class in America.

There are many different ways to do that. Obviously, we need to strengthen the wages that the middle class have. We have seen very little wage growth in the last two decades. We need to really make sure that the men and women that are out there working day in and day out have the increase in their paycheck. We have seen little tiny bumps now as we look across the Nation, and as more and more people become employed and the labor market becomes somewhat tighter, we would hope to see this. But an important element of this paycheck is the minimum wage. So we advocate for $10.10 minimum wage all across this Nation. We hope to get it.

But what we really want to spend time on today is the infrastructure and how to really see the infrastructure—the foundation for economic growth—really be put in place in America. We now have until mid-May, May 15, to put in place a new version of the highway bill. Can we do it? We have to do it. If we don't put in place and extend the Surface Transportation Act, we are going to see contractors all across America shut down their work, new contracts for highways and bridges not go into effect but, rather, be delayed. So Congress has an enormous task at its hand, and that is to reauthorize the Surface Transportation Act.

The current one? We kicked it down the road last fall. Well, the stop sign is right in front of us, so we need to get with it. We are going to talk about some of the elements in that. We know that if we put in a robust, full Surface Transportation Act, we are going to see the American middle class go back to work.

Let me just show you some of the elements that are in that Surface Transportation Act. Here they are. Last year, the President proposed the GROW AMERICA Act. I am going to call this the GROW AMERICA Act II. So we are looking now at how we can do that. The President came out with a full, 6-year program, a very robust increase in the amount of money available for surface transportation—fully paid for without increasing the excise tax on gasoline and diesel. No, you are not going to see an increase in the pump because of this program. Now, the oil companies may stick you, but not the government.

And so the President's plan, which we call the GROW AMERICA Act 2, has all of these elements in it: rail, a full rail program that is a freight program; how you connect the rail system, the highway system, and the port system; buses; light rail and the intercity transportation systems that are so important for our urbanization. We are seeing a major need for these buses, for the light rail, the metro systems across the Nation. Ports: 90 percent of the commerce comes through our ports, and so the ports—Los Angeles, Long Beach, in California, Oakland, San Francisco, and Sacramento in my district—are critically important. So there are all of these elements.

We know we need to repair the bridges. We have a nice picture of the Golden Gate Bridge here. We probably should put the new Bay Bridge, or maybe we could actually put up this bridge. This actually happened about 3 years ago. This is Interstate 5 from the Canadian border to the Mexican border down the west coast, Interstate 5. Well, for about a month and a half you weren't going to get very far on Interstate 5 because this bridge is right near the Canadian border, and it collapsed. So bridges across the United States are in desperate need of rebuilding. Many of them are decades old, some more than 100 years old; and, finally, highways.

So this is the GROW AMERICA Act Surface Transportation Program that the President has proposed, about $160-some billion over a 6-year period of time. It is a large program. It provides a lot of money for all of the things we need to do: freight, intercity travel, buses, light rail, metro systems, ports, bridges, and highways. It is all there. There is a separate bill dealing with our airports. This is our program. This is what we need to do. When we do this, we are going to put America back to work.

Now, one of my colleagues from California, the former speaker of the California Assembly, is here to talk about an element in this program. I welcome KAREN BASS to this 1-hour discussion.

Ms. BASS, if you would like to tell us what is going on in California.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS).

Ms. BASS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, last year, Congress took an important first step. The CR/Omnibus allowed transit agencies to pursue local hiring. It didn't require them to adopt local hire policies, but it put hiring decisions in the hands of local government officials. I think my good friend and colleague from California is making the point that transportation is the backbone of this country, and certainly we have been the world's leader in infrastructure, in projects like has been described by my colleague, but we need to do more of that.

Every now and then, Congress does something in a bipartisan manner, and because of this action, the Department of Transportation established pilot programs that will permit L.A. Metro to

prioritize local hiring on over $2 billion in transit and highway projects. Not just L.A. Metro, but around the country, local hire is now a policy. This investment will translate into tens of thousands of well-paying jobs for Angelenos putting these tax dollars back into the communities that paid for the projects.

□ 1730

Los Angeles is in the midst of a multibillion dollar investment in transit projects that will reduce congestion on our streets and reduce air pollution. Two major projects, I am fortunate to say, are in my district.

One is the Crenshaw line, which is an 8½ mile light rail line between the Expo line on Exposition Boulevard and the green line. It will serve the Crenshaw District, Inglewood, Westchester, Los Angeles International Airport, and surrounding communities.

Another project is the purple line that will provide a high-capacity, high-speed, dependable alternative for those traveling between communities, such as Miracle Mile, Beverly Hills, Century City, and Westwood. Angelenos have repeatedly voted to raise local taxes to help build these local transportation projects, but LA metro had not been allowed to prioritize hiring local workers.

In LA, it is crucial that we adopt local hiring policies. Los Angeles unemployment remains higher than the national average, and people living in south Los Angeles, who are directly impacted by the transit projects I mention, are facing some of the highest unemployment rates in the State.

Their tax dollars are paying a vast majority of these projects. Their businesses and homes are being the most impacted by the construction, but they don't benefit from the thousands of jobs that these transit projects will create.

While I was back in my district last week, I heard numerous commercials on how Crenshaw Boulevard, a major thoroughfare through south Los Angeles, will be closed for several days because of the light rail construction. This closure is directly impacting businesses trying every day to provide goods and services to the people who live there, as well as the residents who call south Los Angeles home.

This closure is difficult, but ensuring that these transit dollars will bring well-paying jobs is one way to alleviate the temporary pain from construction. We have done the right thing and allowed transit agencies to have control over local hiring practices. This will bring high-quality jobs to the areas most impacted by the disruption of transit construction.

Democrats and Republicans can often disagree, but on this area, we are on the same page. More local control to transit agencies will mean they can build light rail and subway projects that will last for generations while ensuring that people who need jobs today will be the first in line for the jobs these projects create today.

This is an example of bipartisanship. My colleagues that are here today talking about the Grow America Act, this is a first step; it is positive, but we obviously need to do so much more. The example of the projects that you have given is where we need to go next.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much, Ms. BASS. I really appreciate your support. You have been a leader in California for many years, despite your youth. We look forward to this.

I am very familiar with the extensions that you are talking about in southern California. As Lieutenant Governor, we were working on many of those projects, and I really like that local hire. That is so critically important.

We have this issue not just on big transit programs like yours, but we also have it on our military bases, two of which I represent. All too often, people are imported from other States to do work in our local communities, and I am going: No, no, no, hire local, hire local, buy local.

Let me put one more thing up here, and then I am going to yield to my friend from New York because this is really his turf. Make It In America, Buy America. So when you are going to build these projects, let's do it with American-made products.

I think this one, Ms. BASS, this is, I don't know, a problem that occurred in San Francisco. When they decided to rebuild the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, they decided to use Chinese steel.

Some 6,000 jobs went off to China. The steel came back. It turns out that the steel had all kinds of problems: welding problems, structural problems. They are still dealing with this. This is really the ''San Francisco Made in China Bay Bridge''

On the other hand, my good friend here from New York, PAUL TONKO, the Tappan Zee Bridge, across the Hudson River, both of them about $6 billion to $7 billion. This bridge made in America, with American workers, and American steel—and it is coming in on budget—not Chinese steel.

I don't know, Ms. BASS, but when you talk about making it local, hire local, we ought to have Buy America, Make It In America, and then we can really see the jobs, not just the local jobs in the construction, but all of the other parts that go with it.

Where is that train being made? It could be made in Sacramento by Siemens with American workers, made in America, our tax dollars hiring local workers and American-made products. It can be exciting. We can really build this economy. We can grow America, and we can rebuild the American middle class in the process.

Mr. TONKO, congratulations on your Tappan Zee Bridge made in America with, as Ms. BASS would say, locally hired workers.

Mr. TONKO. We are proud of any Make It In America provisions.

Let me thank you, first and foremost, for bringing together Representatives like Congresswoman BASS and you always at the helm to lead us into discussions at the soundness of investment, in infrastructure, that is required for a modern-day society, for commerce to function, for economic recovery sake. We need to include infrastructure as a bit of the formula that takes us to the maximum outcome for producing jobs.

I think any of us comprehends how investment and infrastructure equates to job creation. It is an easy exercise to relate to the skilled set of labor that is required to build these bits of infrastructure, but it is in the millions that we can strike in terms of added jobs and certainly a bolstering of our regional economies and certainly our national economy.

This one is a no-brainer. It makes sense across the board to invest in what is crumbling infrastructure, improving those deficit-rated bridges, deficient bridges, and to be able to provide for the sort of vision that we as a nation require, this Nation requires, in order to move forward on a path of soundness.

The siloing that needs to take place—or can take place, perhaps better said—is a frightening thing. We need to look at this infrastructure improvement through that silo, through certainly the opportunities for economic recovery, the environmental policies, the energy policies.

If we can move forward with these investments, encourage American-made manufactured goods and products for these projects, and then also see the soundness of putting together multimodal concepts where we bring together, through a sense of planning, all of the modes of transportation so that they are put into a hub concept where we are putting together the best energy outcome and that constantly working in that silo mentality that doesn't produce the results that will be most beneficial to all of us and for generations that will follow.

I think that we need to understand that we improve our bridges, we structure new where it is required; we don't continue to build to capacity without the element of rail opportunity that can remove some of those cars from the highway.

Energy efficiency is a common factor with rail transportation. It is the most energy-efficient mode of travel. If we can invest in rail and then incorporate that with soundness of transportation and infrastructure so that we are not building where it is not essential, where it can be avoided by multimodal concepts, we will then have the best product.

All of this is focused on the needs of a modern-day society. When we have seen the crumbling of infrastructure, where we have put on the back burner maintenance and repair and improvements, it begins to catch up with the

budgetary thinking here, and we develop crises that require huge outlays of money.

It is important for us to move now as urgent as we can, as quickly as we can, to invest in our infrastructure, in our roads, and our bridges.

I have looked at the needs within my district. They are there; they are very heavy. The impact on consumers with faulty roads, with less than acceptable infrastructure, is costly to the individual motorists.

That is in terms of repair and maintenance of your vehicle; it is in terms of idle time where there are traffic jams related to, again, a need for infrastructure that is soundly developed through a sense of planning where we look at all modes of transportation.

We have seen other nations begin to leapfrog past where we are at. We have instructed developing nations on how best to build their infrastructure, not just transportation roads and bridges and the traditional transportation infrastructure, but with utilities, with communications wiring, with all sorts of opportunities in water and sewer.

We can advise, but we need to take our own advice as a nation and begin the investment in what is soundly a strengthener of commerce, public safety, and quality of life issue for all of us, individuals and families in this country.

This is a golden opportunity. This is a way to put people to work. It is a way to purchase American-made goods that are, again, producing jobs in their manufacturing centers. It is a way to embrace sound planning. It is a way to be a better steward of the environment. It is a way to be energy smart in the outcome.

All of this can be taken care of if we do this incorporated sense of thinking, a collaborative model that doesn't silo us to the tomorrows of our society, but builds on a pathway to soundest investment, to most efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars.

People want safe roads. They want safe bridges. They want the modern convenience of utility infrastructure and communication infrastructure. They want the soundness of thinking that a company's water, drinking water, and water and sewer infrastructure are sound.

Representative GARAMENDI, you are on the west coast. I am the country span away on the east coast.

Mr. GARAMENDI. 2,800 miles.

Mr. TONKO. We are sitting on very aged infrastructure, and it is important for us to recognize that fact. There is a life expectancy that, when met, begins a huge crumbling of the infrastructure.

We need to acknowledge that fact. We need to acknowledge the fact that the soundness of workers skilled, trained, prepared, ready to do this work can be put into meaningful work opportunities, and we can get, again, the pathway to soundness of commerce and quality of life addressed in a very reasonable fashion.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, thank you so very much. You are always passionate about growing the American economy, making the jobs. Often, you talk about research and the important role of research and, today, the important role of infrastructure of all kinds.

Earlier, as I was going through some numbers about the GROW AMERICA Act II—this is this year's version of the President's infrastructure bill—I misstated. I said it was about a $167 billion program. Actually, it is a $478 billion program over 6 years.

It happens to be $176 billion more than we are currently spending at the same rate, so it is really a terrific boost in the infrastructure. It does cover all of these things: rails, buses, ports, bridges, highways.

That is not all that we need to do. The American Society of Civil Engineers laid it out. If you look at our airports, they are getting a D; bridges, a C-plus—you go down through the list—drinking water, a D; energy, a D—just all through the list, all of the infrastructure—sanitation systems, D; water systems, D.

Many of our communities, New York City and others in your area, are communities that are two centuries old, and some of the infrastructure is also two centuries old. We have this enormous need to rebuild our economy. If we do so, we are going to create a lot of jobs.

One of my favorite publications that came across my desk recently is this one: ''Infrastructure Investment Creates American Jobs,'' Duke University. This isn't something put out by the Democratic Party; it is put out by Duke University.

They say for every billion dollars that we invest, we not only get the infrastructure—the roads, the ports, the airports—but we also get 21,671 jobs. The economic impact is not just $1 billion or $1; it is actually $3.54.

You are getting this boost in the economy. You are getting that thrust growing the American economy and, as the President said, ''growing the middle class'' because these are middle class jobs.

I am sure you see this in your area.

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely.

Again, the aged infrastructure is one factor; the new development, innovation, cutting-edge, high-tech opportunities that are not embraced, not incorporated into the infrastructure that we currently require—these are two major driving factors as to why we should be aggressive in our pursuit of infrastructure resources.

□ 1745

There are those, ourselves included, who embrace an infrastructure bank bill, making certain that we can get more for the dollar, that we can leverage and stretch the commitments that we make to reach more projects.

You talked about water infrastructure. I am seated on the Energy and Commerce Committee and am ranker on the Environment and the Economy Subcommittee, so it is an appropriate place to review and to further inspect the state of our drinking water infrastructure.

In the last district work period just completed, I began with my crew at home the initial steps, with tours, of reviewing the water infrastructure that serves the communities that I represent. In Schenectady, New York, which is a town of about 60,000 individuals, we have some 240 miles of pipe in one community. That pipe may be as old as 100-plus years. The main feeds are 36-inch and 24-inch pipes.

When you look at all of this infrastructure, knowing that the replacement factor is going to come, isn't it a better thing to plan how we are going to share those resources with communities?

This is understanding that when we have a water main break—and we witnessed many of those during the very harsh winter that the Northeast of the country faced this year, and a number of the frost heaves are now busting this infrastructure. When we have some of these major breaks and when you see the water flowing from that location, it is not just water that is flowing by; it is dollars and it is electrons, because it took immense amounts of electricity, energy supplies, to treat that water. It took tons of taxpayer dollars to make certain that it is acceptable in its form for consumption, drinking water, and, of course, it is the water wasted.

So we need to see this as a way to save water, to save dollars, to save energy, and why not incorporate into this discussion all of those elements that speak to drinking water needs in this country?

You have seen too many opportunities or impacts on communities where they have had this ''boil water'' provision for days, if not weeks. You see it around the country. People are getting impacted, again, with this infrastructure that is so old, and it is in need of repair. We are sitting on not only pipes in the ground but well systems, the infrastructure, the computers, the workforce that is required.

Are we training the appropriate workforce to pick up in these areas who have high levels of certification? The know-how is immense, and the responsibility is awesome. There is the human infrastructure. There is the training. There is the planning that is required and, certainly, the outstanding need for the soundness of all of the system that brings you from that aquifer, that water source, into the business place or the home place.

This is something that we are going to further explore because we know there is an inordinate need, and we want to put together a sound plan that is thoughtful and reaches to the expected—the projected—needs and offers the assistance to local governments, which is so essential.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, you are talking about water. In just looking through the report card from the American Society of Civil Engineers, they have down here ''water systems,'' with drinking water, D; energy, D-plus; sanitation is another D; and wastewater, D.

Just across the Nation, in terms of a modern water infrastructure, both drinking water—potable water—as well as the sanitation systems, we rank them a D. In other words, we are polluting. We have contaminated water to drink, and we have contaminated water going out the other end of the sewer plant.

Let me just take a second to talk to you about a place where there is not enough water—California. We are in the fourth year of a major drought in California, Mr. TONKO, and you are talking about all of those water problems you have in New York. Perhaps you could put it on one of those tank cars and send it out to California, because we are in desperate need of water in California. Fortunately, last November, the people of California took note of this problem, and they passed a $7.5 billion bond to build the water systems of California.

There are many parts to this—rebuilding the community water systems for small communities like you described. We have problems in California because communities are out of water. They don't have any water at all. That is part of it. There is another part in dealing with conservation so that we would conserve our water. There is another piece of it that deals with recycling. In fact, the fifth-biggest river on the west coast of the Western Hemisphere—from Alaska all the way to Chile—is the sanitation plants in southern California.

You take, for example, water coming from northern California—500 miles, 5,000 feet in the air. You take it into southern California. You bring it in from the Colorado River—200 miles, 2,000 feet. You bring it into southern California. You clean it. You use it once. Then you clean the water to a higher standard than the day it arrives in southern California, and you dump it in the ocean. Hello. Anybody thinking? So the people of California said, Let's recycle, so recycling programs are going to be part of California's future.

We need to build reservoirs. We need to take care of the underground aquifers, which are rapidly being depleted. Unlike in New York, we are depleting them in California, not only in California, but in Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Georgia, Florida, and Oregon. All of these States are seeing a depletion in their aquifers. In California, we need to get with this.

In doing so, what I would like to see us do here in Washington is to take our Federal water programs, which are several. We have a recycling program and a conservation program—title VI is the Central Valley Improvement Act—available to the entire Nation. We have the EPA with its water programs, the Department of Agriculture, obviously the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Corps of Engineers.

For those programs that are California's, we ought to put them right underneath that water bond and augment, supplement, and drive forward that water bond that the people of California already voted for. We have our task in major infrastructure, in putting people to work, and in guaranteeing the future for California water supplies.

Mr. TONKO. I couldn't agree more. I think what we can do to supplement efforts in individual States is so critical right now because the need is so in demand.

When I talk about this, I hear from your counterparts in California about the huge loss of water they had with some of the water main breaks. Again, it is the water; it is the dollars; it is the electrons that are flowing right by us. I have heard from Representatives from Texas, from those in Maryland, from those in the Northeast—New England and the Northeast—all saying it is about time. We need to do something here. My gosh. We have wooden pipes serving some communities. It is out of sight, out of mind. It is beneath that surface, and we are just believing that the water supply will be there and that the pipes will last forever. We know that the acidic quality of soils will wear the pipes from the outside and that the velocity will wear the pipes from the inside. They will not last forever.

It is important for us to make certain that we communicate well, establish that dialogue with the water maintenance crews at all levels in our home States and have them instruct us as the first line of that service delivery system and say, Hey, this is the situation. These are the conditions. These are the needs. And let us go forward with this infrastructure discussion that fully incorporates all of the elements of infrastructure—from the safety of our roads and bridges to the advanced investment in ports and rail, to communications to utilities. We have monopoly designed settings now wheeling electrons from region to region, State to State, nation to nation, nations to the U.S. All of this needs to be broadened in terms of the dialogue that we share and develop.

We need to understand that we are at a cutting edge where, in this century now, we need to upgrade because of new opportunities or upgrade because of aged infrastructure. It begins with the soundness of planning, and it is why I enjoy these discussions with you where we can ignite, so to speak, that thinking at home and, certainly, amongst our colleagues here in the House and down the hall in the Senate to make certain that we are just avidly supportive of going forward with a progressive order of policies that will speak to these infrastructure needs and where we allocate the resources that are going to respond effectively to the given situation at hand.

It is within our grasp. The bottom line is it produces jobs—millions of jobs—all while addressing safety and quality of life and commerce opportunity.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, thank you so very much. You keep bringing these issues so clearly to all of us.

There are some among the 435 Members of this House who believe that the Federal Government should not have a role in these kinds of projects, and I think they are doing two things as they advocate that the Federal Government ought to get out of this business.

First of all, they are ignoring the Constitution, which specifically says Congress is supposed to take care of postal roads. They are also ignoring the Founding Fathers. Washington asked his Treasury Secretary, Hamilton, to develop a program on advancing the American economy, and he came back with a program to build ports, postal roads, and canals. So this has been a long history of America from the beginning—that the Federal Government has a role in all of these.

This morning, we had a hearing in the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee about the highway bill, about the surface transportation bill. We note that the President put forward what I call the GROW AMERICA Act II—this is this year's version of last year's bill—that is for $478 billion, a 6-year program, $176 billion more than proposed last year, and fully paid for.

I notice that the ranking member of the Highways and Transit Subcommittee of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has joined us. Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON of Washington, D.C., is with us now. This is her turf as ranking member of that committee.

Thank you so very much for joining us, Ms. NORTON. Share with us your thoughts on how we can grow America—grow the middle class, increase the paychecks for Americans, and build our infrastructure.

Ms. NORTON. I thank both of my good friends.

I certainly thank you, my good friend from California, Mr. GARAMENDI, for the consistency with which you have taken on these Special Orders. You don't need my support, but I thought I would come down and offer my support, not only because of how comprehensive have been your comments to remind the American people of how important our bill is, the surface transportation bill; but I would like to just take a few minutes to relate to what I have heard both of you say. Indeed, I have heard you mention jobs and the economy in one form or fashion, but I want to take this moment to indicate the link between jobs and the surface transportation bill. What makes me want to do this is the Gallup Poll.

We have always known that the surface transportation bill and, indeed,

that infrastructure has been an engine of the economy, and one reason is that it throws off jobs. It starts, of course, in construction, but then, more than any other sector, it stimulates jobs all the way up, jobs that support all the way up. That is what the GROW AMERICA Act will do. Of course, if you want to do that, you need stable funding. When I looked at what the American people want, I saw immediately the link between that and this Special Order hour today. If you look at the most important problems in American life, it is amazing what they are. The Gallup Poll asked, What is the most important issue for the American people?

□ 1800

There were eight issues. Of those eight issues, seven out of eight have to do with the economy.

Number one was economic problems, divided into the economy and unemployment and jobs. Federal deficit and Federal debt were there, but everything else was about jobs and the economy.

There are gaps between the rich and the poor, lack of money—that is how the American people put—wage issues, and the high cost of living. There you have it. What is the best way to do what Americans want.

I agree with my good friend from California, we had a good hearing this morning, but I wonder if both of you weren't surprised that there was not more talk in this very bipartisan hearing that we had about jobs and the relationship to the surface transportation bill. I think there is a reason for that. That is that we can't yet pass the first hurdle: How are we going to pay for it? It costs money.

Your chart there—rail, buses, ports, bridges, highways—are not free. We are so hung up on trying to do the impossible, fund all of those without money, that we can't get to what the money will do. We are approaching the absolute deadline, May 31. The construction season is already here. It is 65 degrees in Washington, D.C., today.

I wonder, Congress knows that that very first bill, that Eisenhower bill in 1956, had a 13-year authorization because the Republicans in the 1950s were attuned to how long it takes to do exactly the kinds of things, Mr. GARAMENDI, that your chart points to, and you need an authorization more than a few months or even a few years to get that done—a 13-year authorization. No wonder that those post-World War II years were the very best years for the American economy.

The States simply cannot make capital improvements. That is what your chart speaks to. Every last one of those is a capital improvement. You can't do it without capital funds that come in bulk. The States, of course, have thrown up their hands. How many of them have just said, ''We have got to do it if Congress won't do anything; we just can't go on like this''? Of course, they are forgoing the projects they most need because no State has that kind of funds. Eleven States don't even have the option of putting up their own funds, they depend so heavily on Federal funds.

But to show the link that I came to the floor to make to jobs, the occupations with the largest growth today would make the American people cry. Number one is personal care aides. Heaven knows we need them. We are having a big rally here in the District tomorrow because of the low pay of these workers. But at the bottom is construction laborers. The personal care aides make median $19,000, almost $20,000. The construction laborers make almost $30,000. That is a difference between a higher-wage job and those are the kind of jobs you are talking about, Mr. GARAMENDI—and a low-wage job. We are making only low-wage jobs because we are not, in fact, funding bills that would not only deal with rail, buses, ports, bridges, and highways, but the other parts of our transportation and infrastructure that my good friend has also mentioned.

Of the fastest growing occupations, the top 10, only two have to do with what would grow America—insulation workers and brick and stone masons, Those are only two of the top 10.

In my own district, the District of Columbia, I would hate to ask you to guess what is the occupation with the largest job growth—security guards. We need security guards and we welcome security guards, but I want my two friends at the podiums to know that not one job, not one truly high-paid job, except registered nurses and lawyers—God forgive us—is on this list.

So I come to the floor to thank both of my good friends for the conversation you have been having, to join it, and to link it to what worries the American people. They can think about nothing these days. They don't even think about ISIL. They hardly even thought about the Department of Homeland Security bill that we just passed here only last week. They can't think about anything except that as we say, rightly, there is a growth in jobs, and yet their wages stagnate because the growth is not where the wages would grow.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Ms. NORTON, you hit right on with your closing sentence. It is about the middle class; it is about middle class jobs; it is about growing the economy and laying the foundation for present and future economic growth. We could do that. The President's plan last year, which he called the GROW AMERICA Act—and I am saying this year we call it the GROW AMERICA Act II—is $478 billion. That is a lot of money, and we put that into the surface transportation.

I was thinking about as you were talking about the surface transportation, Mr. TONKO, over there, and about the new Amtrak bill that just passed out of our committee. It will be on the floor pretty soon. It calls for a lot of investment for Amtrak on the Northeast corridor so that you can go from Washington, D.C., to your home up on the Hudson River. I think there is a rail line that goes up there.

Mr. TONKO. There certainly is.

Mr. GARAMENDI. They call for a big investment there. One of the things we think ought to be in this bill—in fact, it is in the bill—is a very strong Buy America provision. This is a locomotive, electric locomotive for the Amtrak line here on the Northeast corridor from Washington, D.C., to Boston, and this locomotive is 100 percent American made. It is made in Sacramento, California, of all places, by a German company, Siemens, who looked at the American Recovery Act, and there was $700 million in there to build these locomotives, and they said 100 percent American made. And Siemens looked at that and goes: $700 million, make it in America, we can do that, and they are doing it. These are now being deployed on the east coast line.

But the next phase is a high-speed line between Washington and Boston, and that high-speed line calls for a new kind of train, high-speed train, and out of our committee we said that it is going to be built in America.

Now, Mr. TONKO, here is where I turn this over to you. It turns out that one of the foreign companies, Alstom, which is a French company, has a manufacturing plant in upstate New York, maybe near your district. If so, you are going to have those middle class manufacturing jobs when this bill passes with a 100 percent Buy America provision.

Mr. TONKO. Well, interestingly, when I was on a recent trip south of D.C., into the southeast of the U.S., I got to tour a brand-new car that is a luggage car, storage car, includes racks for bikes, all sorts of storage done on that car itself, and proudly they wanted to share with me it is made in Elmira, New York, in upstate New York, state-of-the-art design, brand new vehicle, just put on, I believe, that week that I was on the train. So, you are right, this translates into jobs of all orders, from manufacturing of these cars, these train cars, to innovation and research that is required, for instance, in our electric utility infrastructure.

But, you know, I think Delegate HOLMES NORTON struck something that should speak to our senses, and that is history dictating to us when we were at our best. When we had this dip in our economy, when we were in post-Depression, when we needed to recover, we invested in jobs; we invested in infrastructure. My gosh, you look at the buildings that came through those late 1920s and 1930s that are still standing, not only solid as a rock, but tremendously designed and great bits of architecture that speak to a great bit of cityscape in our communities that really added to the look of the community.

And we can take it back even before that in the history of our time when, as

we have talked on this floor before, the Erie Canal, barge canal, was constructed. It was done at a time when Governor DeWitt Clinton had this goal—and the economy was in tough shape, too—and so he drove this idea through tough times when people said we can't afford it. And elements in history, chapters in history repeatedly remind us, you know, we are replete with these anecdotal bits of evidence that tell us, when things were really tough, when the economy was really, really weak, we went and pulled ourselves out of those pits, those financial downfalls, and did it through investment in infrastructure.

Here we not only have an opportunity to pull us up and have a stronger economic response, but it is also enabling us to utilize the intellectual capacity of this great country that grows innovation, grows ideas, new concepts, research on lighter weight materials that can make our renewable energy supplies all the greater, where the bang for the buck is all the stronger.

So there are elements galore that speak to an effective bit of planning that can take us through these tough economic times, respond to this crumbling nature of infrastructure or the need to build the new state-of-the-art elements into our Nation, be it communication, utility, transportation-wise or water and sewer-wise. There are golden opportunities to add to the workforce and then utilize the best opportunities out there, technologically, that have been developed through the soundness of American know-how, American ingenuity. So this gives birth. This gives—it coaxes from us the strength that we have as a nation to rely on that creative pioneer spirit that builds America in the truest form and fashion.

So coaxing that kind of activity, America needs to be coaxed by that, pushed to embrace the pioneer spirit. Go forward with these opportunities to make us a strong, strong voice that will resonate with all communities across this country because they know that need for infrastructure is strong. It is really beckoning our leadership to go forward and commit to the soundness of that infrastructure investment, and we see it in so many aspects of the work done here.

Mr. GARAMENDI. We know that one of the key opportunities that presents itself to Congress in the next 3 months is the surface transportation bill. We know that we have to have it out of here, renew it by the end of May. We know that if we do that, the construction season—while being a little bit rocky because we are late in getting this done—will be able to move forward through the summer and then on into the fall.

One of the tasks that our Delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON has is to push that out, and if in that piece of legislation we maintain the Buy America provisions, it is not just the construction jobs, it is going to be the manufacturing jobs, and men and women that will build the light rail, that will build the buses, that will build the Metro systems, will put together the pieces of the port, the bridges, wherever they may be, and of course the highways.

Ms. NORTON, you have got a task out ahead of you. I know you are up to it. If you would like to share some additional thoughts, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Ms. NORTON. Well, my additional thoughts are really stimulated by the comments that both of you have made. You spoke about manufacturing. One of the reasons, one of the first things that occurred that got out of this recession was that manufacturing began to come back in America; and now, of course, corporations are finding good reasons to manufacture in America, and particularly at this time.

Mr. TONKO, in essence, you were talking about stimulating the economy, and the best way to do it is to build something. You mentioned the buildings in Washington. If you look at the cornerstone of virtually all the public buildings downtown, the buildings that people come to see, the Federal buildings, they all have a 1930s cornerstone, because that is when we stimulated ourselves out of the Depression.

Mr. GARAMENDI mentioned Amtrak. Well, this is the hub of Amtrak, my own district. I must tell you, when I think about high-speed rail, speaking of Amtrak—and we haven't put the first high-speed rail on line, not the first, which puts us behind not only all of our allies, but even some developing countries.

□ 1815

It makes me almost ashamed to be on this committee, we are so behind. If we really wanted to get the economy going, we would give ourselves a deadline for high-speed rail. We would understand that if you want to move your economy quickly, you do not do something like cut taxes. You build things. You build America.

I don't know how much time you have left, but I just want to thank you for the leadership, Mr. GARAMENDI, that you have taken and to say to you that I am with you as we continue to remind this Congress that this should be one of its foremost tasks this year: our surface transportation bill.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Your leadership on the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit is exceedingly important. All of us look forward to your success and the success of all of us in building America's infrastructure.

We have about a little less than 5 minutes left. If you would like to take a few minutes, then I can, and we will call it an evening in which we have come, once again, to talk about building America, rebuilding the American middle class.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you. Certainly, it is an honor to join with you and our colleagues this evening, as so many have come to the floor to speak to the soundness of infrastructure.

We have talked about the present moment. We have talked about being inspired by the past, but let's look to the future. Not only do we owe it to the present moment to embark upon some of the newest options, alternatives, and innovative concepts, but what about the impact on future generations?

If we don't do what is required of us in this present moment, we are saying that we are willing to survive on that fat of the land, that we take all of that thoughtfulness and all of the sense of progress and the pioneer attitude of generations before us who said: We are going to leave a sound bit of infrastructure, and we are going to know that we did the most we could in our moment so that generations to follow will be able to live—and live strongly—and be able to prosper from that and perhaps further stretch the thinking of America.

Well, we haven't done that. We have taken that opportunity and utilized it in a way that serves our present-moment needs. The neglect here, I think the sinfulness of this outcome, the moral compass that should guide us is that you leave a better world for those to come.

The payment mechanism isn't going to get cheaper. We know that. The need is inordinately high. The sense of vision that we need to share as leaders of a nation that is so great as the U.S. needs to provide for a soundness of planning and cutting-edge opportunities and an infrastructure that is strong and vibrant that allows for job creation, for commerce and its needs, for public safety, for individuals and families across this country.

Representative GARAMENDI, this has been a very sound way to share with people across the country what the thinking is of the Democrats in the House. The Democrats believe in the soundness of infrastructure. They believe in investing in jobs. They believe in investing in a better tomorrow, investing where you rightly anticipate lucrative dividends—lucrative dividends.

It is not spending foolishly. It is investing soundly in a way that speaks to documented need and then encourages and inspires us to speak in bold terms that will take us to cutting-edge opportunities that we will leverage in the present moment so that generations to follow will say: They got it, they tackled the problem, they responded to the challenge, they were bold in their attempt.

Let's leave that as our message. Let's leave that as our legacy.

I thank you for the opportunity here this evening.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. TONKO, thank you so very much for joining us tonight and your leadership on this whole range of issues.

It is about tomorrow. Tomorrow will be solid for America if we build a solid foundation, and that foundation is the

infrastructure. It is the research facilities, the sanitation, the water facilities, the highway and rail facilities.

The President has made a proposal. It is up to us to respond to that. Six years, fully paid for, no increase in the gasoline and diesel tax, it is all there. All we need to do is grab it and grab the future in the process. I am happy for the opportunity to share this evening on building tomorrow's future.

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

IRAN NEGOTIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting these days to hear our current Secretary of State, someone who as a Congressman went to Central America and basically was negotiating a deal with a communist leader—corrupt—at the same time the Reagan administration was conducting negotiations.

I am very proud of my Senate friends down at the other end of the Capitol who sent a letter to Iran, since the former constitutional law instructor—not professor, but instructor—from Chicago doesn't seem to realize he needs the Senate advice and consent in order to create a binding treaty with another country, especially one that actually has a major impact on the ability to continue to exist for Israel and the United States.

If this President and Secretary of State get the deal that includes everything that we would want that this administration has not already taken off the table overtly, then it means nuclear proliferation in the Middle East.

Our allies in the Middle East, so-called Saudi Arabia; Qatar; UAE; Egypt; and, in fact, most of the nations in the Middle East—Jordan, perhaps—are all going to need nuclear weapons to protect themselves.

If this administration continues to persist with anything that does not require dismantling and stoppage of the spinning of the centrifuges in Iran that continue to develop nuclear material for bombs, then the whole world is going to be in trouble.

In fact, the negotiations have become so desperate on the part of our own administration that then-Congressman John Kerry would try to sit down and negotiate with a communist criminal leader in Central America and undermine the efforts of the Reagan administration.

Our friends down the hall—47 Senators—were completely aboveboard. They said nothing inappropriate. There was no crime, no treason. They were just advising people to the negotiations that here is what the U.S. Constitution says.

Apparently, they had not been so advised by our constitutional law instructor Commander in Chief, so it is important that somebody did, and I am pleased that my colleague and friend TOM COTTON did just that.

But here we are. I think this article from townhall.com by Katie Pavlich illustrates very clearly just how desperate this administration has gotten to get any kind of deal, just any kind of deal so they can say they got a deal.

Yes, okay, Iran has an agreement that will allow Iran to continue to cheat, as they have been found to have done a number of times, so it doesn't actually allow them to have not just a nuke in 10 years, they could covertly develop a nuke within the year if they so wished.

My friends DANA ROHRABACHER and STEVE KING met with IAEA representatives who had been inspecting Iran, and it left me extremely concerned about how quickly, easily, and covertly Iran could go ahead and move to the next step, even beyond 5 or 20 percent enrichment, as Iran has gotten.

Here is this article from Katie Pavlich from March 16. In part, she says:

According to a report in The Times of Israel, the National Intelligence Agency delivered a report to Congress that scraps Iran and Hezbollah from the terrorism list, citing the country's work against ISIS as one of the reasons why.

Mr. Speaker, if this administration is scrapping—taking—Iran and Hezbollah off the terrorist list, then the last thing we need this administration doing is negotiating with these terrorists—this terrorist regime—trying to work out a deal because anybody that would say Iran and Hezbollah are not a terrorist country and terrorist organization should not be negotiating anything for the United States of America, where the vast bulk—thank God—of the American people do not want to support, lend credence to, or in any way help terrorist countries or a terrorist organization like Hezbollah.

It goes ahead and quotes from the National Intelligence Agency report from The Times of Israel and then has Ms. Pavlich's question:

Is ISIS a threat? Absolutely. Should we align ourselves with or appease Iran because of their work against ISIS? Absolutely not.

As a reminder, Hezbollah, funded by Iran, is the largest terror organization in the world. Before 9/11, Hezbollah, not al Qaeda, was responsible for the majority of U.S. terrorism deaths, including the 1983 bombings of U.S. Marine barracks and U.S. Embassy in Beirut, in addition to a series of attacks in the 1980s.

Hezbollah is also responsible for countless attacks on Israel. In 1992, Hezbollah, with help from Iran, bombed the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires. In 1994, they bombed the Jewish community center in the same South American city.

Those are just a handful of examples that don't even account for the thousands of rockets Hezbollah has launched into Israel throughout the years.

So what's going on here? Why strip Hezbollah and its funding parent Iran from the terrorism label? Especially now? It all points back to getting President Obama his deal with Iran at all costs.

This reclassification of Iran and Hezbollah without the terrorism label is a certain warning sign the deal the White House is working on to appease the rogue regime does not have the best interests of the United States as a top priority.

Since, apparently, this administration is not aware, I would hope, Mr. Speaker, our colleagues here in Congress would want to be aware of what the administration isn't. Maybe that comes from not reading the intelligence reports, but you don't even have to get an intelligence report from an intelligence agency.

This, for example, comes from the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, and it is a timeline for Hezbollah violence.

1982, Israel invades Lebanon to drive out the PLO's terrorist army, which had frequently attacked Israel from its informal ''state within a state'' in southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah, a Shiite group inspired by the teachings and revolution of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini, is created with the assistance of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.

The group is called Hezbollah, or ''party of God'' after initially taking responsibility for attacks under the name ''Islamic jihad.''

Some thought that was the Republican Party, but actually it is Hezbollah that is the party of God.

□ 1830

In July of 1982, the president of American University in Beirut, Davis S. Dodge, is kidnapped. Hezbollah is believed to be behind this and most of the other 30 Westerners kidnapped over the next 10 years.

April 18, 1983, Hezbollah attacks the U.S. Embassy in Beirut with a car bomb, killing 63 people, 17 of whom were American citizens.

October 23, 1983, the group attacks a U.S. Marine barracks with a truck bomb, killing 241 American military personnel stationed in Beirut as part of the peacekeeping force. A separate attack against the French military compound in Beirut kills 58.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I understand that, to the Obama administration, the killing of all these marines, the killing of all these American citizens in Beirut, and the kidnapping of Americans and other diplomats by Hezbollah would be considered workplace violence. I get that. But to most people in America, they understand these are acts of sheer terrorism, and they need to be called what they are.

September of 1984, the group attacks the U.S. Embassy annex in Beirut with a car bomb, killing two Americans and 22 others.

More workplace violence.

March of 1984, William F. Buckley, a CIA operative working at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, is kidnapped and later murdered.

April of 1984, Hezbollah attacks a restaurant near the U.S. Air Force Base in Spain. The bombing kills 18 U.S. servicemen, injuries 83.

December of '84, Hezbollah terrorists hijack a Kuwait Airlines plane. Four passengers are murdered, including two Americans.

I don't see how this administration would be able to classify that hijacking and murders as workplace violence, but you never know.

February 1985, Hezbollah publicizes its manifesto. It notes that the group's struggle

will continue until Israel is destroyed and rejects any cease-fire or peace treaty with Israel. The document also attacks the U.S. and France.

June 1985, Hezbollah terrorists attack TWA Flight 847. The hijackers severely beat passenger Robert Stethem, a U.S. Navy diver, before killing him and dumping his body onto the tarmac at the Beirut airport. Other passengers are held hostage before being released on June 30.

I am hoping, Mr. Speaker, that many Americans will remember these events and know how strongly we felt about the terrorism being carried out by Hezbollah, that this administration would like to call a peace-seeking organization. Yeah, it is a peace-seeking organization, just like a heat-seeking missile is a peacekeeping missile. They will blow up anything that they can get ahold of that is American.

December '86, under the alias of Organization of Oppressed on Earth, Hezbollah announces it had kidnapped and murdered three Lebanese Jews. The organization previously had taken responsibility for killing four other Jews since 1984.

February of '88, Hezbollah kidnaps Colonel William Higgins, a U.S. Marine serving with a U.N. truce-monitoring group in Lebanon, and murders him.

October of '89, members of the dissolved Lebanese Parliament ratify the Taif Agreement. Although the agreement calls for the disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, Hezbollah remains active.

February '92, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah takes over Hezbollah after Israel kills the group's leader, Abbas Musawi.

March of '92, with the help of Iranian intelligence, Hezbollah bombs the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, killing 29, injuring over 200.

July 1994, Hezbollah bombs the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, again with Iranian help, killing 86 and injuring over 200.

November 1995, Hezbollah bombards towns in northern Israel with volleys of Katyusha rockets in one of the group's numerous attacks on Israeli civilians.

March '96, Hezbollah fires 28 Katyusha rockets into northern Israeli towns. A week later, the group fires 16 rockets, injuring 36 Israelis. Israel responds with a major offensive known as the ''Grapes of Wrath'' operation to stop Hezbollah rocket fire.

August 1997, Hezbollah opened fire on northern Israel with dozens of rockets in one of the group's numerous attacks on Israeli civilians.

October of '97, the United States lists Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

And parenthetically, we might insert, this is October of 1997. This is the Clinton administration. This is the Clinton administration that heard cries of Muslims in other parts of the world, and it seemed that, despite the fact that the Clinton administration rushed, sent military to assist Muslims in other parts of the world, all the while, Islamic terrorists were plotting to blow up the World Trade Centers by sending planes crashing into them.

Now, it would seem, if these were peace-seeking organizations, like Hezbollah, like the Nation of Iran, the administration of that nation, at least they would take note that, gee, the Clinton administration is reaching out every way they can to help Muslims in the world, and we should take note of that and ease up.

But that was not happening, not by a terrorist group like Hezbollah. In fact, in May of 1999, Hezbollah opens fire on northern Israel with dozens of rockets in one of the group's numerous attacks on Israeli civilians.

June of '99, Hezbollah opens fire on northern Israel, killing two.

May of 2000, Israel withdraws troops from Lebanon after 18 years of patrolling the ''security zone,'' a strip of land in the south of the country. The security zone was set up to prevent attacks on northern Israel.

June of 2000, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan certifies Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. Shortly thereafter, the U.N. Security Council endorses Annan's report. Hezbollah, nonetheless, alleges Israel occupies Lebanon, claiming the small Shebaa Farms area Israel captured from Syria during the 1967 war as Lebanese territory.

It seems Hezbollah was so intent on being a terrorist organization, even when Israel handed over land that it was claiming, they still were not content. They wanted terrorism; and, actually, they want Israel and the United States eliminated.

October of 2000, Hezbollah attacks Israel military posts and raids Israel, kidnapping three Israeli soldiers.

March 2001, the British Government adds Hezbollah's ''military wing'' to its list of outlawed terrorist organizations.

April 2002, Hezbollah launches Katyushas into northern Israeli town, and the assault comes amidst almost daily Hezbollah attacks against Israeli troops in Shebaa Farms.

December 2002, Canada lists Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

August 2003, Hezbollah shells and kills 16-year-old Israeli boy, wounds others.

June 2003, Australia lists Hezbollah's ''military wing'' as a terrorist organization.

September 2004, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559 calls for the ''disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias,'' a reference to Hezbollah.

December 2004, both the United States and France bans Hezbollah's satellite television network, Al-Manar. A U.S. State Department spokesman notes the channel ''preaches violence and hatred.''

March 2005, the European Parliament overwhelmingly passes a resolution stating: ''Parliament considers that clear evidence exists of terrorist activities by Hezbollah. The European Union Council should take all necessary steps to curtail them.'' The European Union, nonetheless, refrains from placing the group on its list of terrorist organizations.

July of 2006, Hezbollah attacks Israel with Katyushas, crosses the border, kidnaps two Israeli soldiers. Three Israeli soldiers are killed in the initial attack. Five more soldiers are killed as Israel launches an operation to rescue the soldiers and push Hezbollah from its border. And during the ensuing war, Hezbollah launches rockets at civilian targets.

August 2006, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1701, which calls for a cessation of hostilities, the deployment of Lebanese and U.N. forces into southern Lebanon, and the disarmament of armed groups in Lebanon.

So anybody in this administration here in the U.S. or elsewhere who thinks that Hezbollah is not a terrorist organization then clearly thinks that every place that Hezbollah has killed innocent people is just another workplace where violence occurred, a random act of violence or violence in the workplace, because it is insane to think that Iran is not a sponsor of terrorism, that Iran has not killed more Americans than any other country in the last 15 years. It is incredible. That is outside of 9/11, the killing of approximately 3,000 Americans on 9/11 between the Pentagon and New York City.

But as far as American servicemembers fighting in Iraq, it was Iran who was behind the killing of most of those American servicemembers. Iran has fought vehemently to eliminate the United States' presence from Iraq.

I think if we could get to the bottom of why there was not a status of forces agreement, you would find that it is because the Ayatollah Khomeini, Ahmadinejad, President at the time, said they believed that the twelfth imam, the Mahdi, would come, would arise back to power, would come to power amidst chaos.

As I understand their beliefs and their beliefs in prophecy, he would first come to reign from the town of Kufa, which the way the lines were drawn in the 20th century put Kufa in Iraq.

Unfortunately, the State Department, the Justice Department, the intelligence agencies under the Obama administration have had their training materials regarding the beliefs of radical Islamists purged, so they are not allowed to learn exactly what our enemy believes and what they have believed, and so it is hard for them to anticipate what our enemies want to do. And perhaps all the purging has helped lead this administration to the idea that if we purge all the educational material about what radical Islamists believe, then maybe it won't be actual and factual.

□ 1845

Yet the New York Post says: ''ISIS Accepts Boko Haram's Pledge of Allegiance.''

We had an article in the last recent weeks where a Catholic bishop from Nigeria had indicated that the Obama administration basically was indicating that if Nigeria did not amend their marriage laws to go against the laws of nature and nature's god, as Christians believe and as the Bible teaches, then the Obama administration would not help them at all against the terrorist activities of Boko Haram.

I don't know what kind of blindness it takes or prejudice it takes to see the suffering in Africa, in a place like Nigeria, and hold the hands and weep with the parents of daughters who were kidnapped by Boko Haram, and understand the suffering being brought against Christians for their beliefs, these Christian girls that Boko Haram has kidnapped, forced into sexual slavery—what kind of callousness does it take to see that suffering and say, Oh, no, if you don't go against your religious beliefs in marriage between a

man and a woman, we are not going to help you, and we are going to let Boko Haram continue to terrorize you and rape your women.

You talk about a war against women.

When I asked these mothers of the girls that were kidnapped there, Did they initially attack your daughters' school because it was a girls' school? they said, No, no. They hate girls. They consider them nothing. But they attacked the school because it is Christian.

There is a report from Investor's Business Daily, March 13, that says Islamic State recruits could enter the United States via the Caribbean. Well, that is not really a news flash.

Another story, written by Thomas D. Williams, Ph.D., March 17: ''ISIS Kidnaps 20 Doctors and Nurses in Libya.''

A story from Charles Spiering, 17 March: ''President Obama Blames Bush for Rise of ISIS.''

Well, actually, if you want to talk about class, despite my disagreement with some of George W. Bush's policies and despite what some have said, he had enough class that after 9/11 he never pointed the finger at the Clinton administration. He knew that even though 9/11 was being plotted and planned during the Clinton administration and there was an opportunity in the Clinton administration to take out Osama bin Laden that was not seized upon, that there were so many things that might have been stopped along the way, he didn't blame President Clinton because he had enough class to know that it was an attack by terrorists, and they should be made to pay.

If you really want to point the finger, it would go clear back to the late seventies during the days I was in the United States Army and we had what was considered, under most everybody's version of international law, an act of war against the United States in Iran when our Embassy was attacked and our people were taken hostage. And we didn't help.

You go back before that, to the Carter administration turning its back upon the shah of Iran—not a great guy, not a good man, from what we understand, but he was able to keep radical Islam contained. But after the Carter administration turned its back on the shah and encouraged his overthrow, you had the coming from exile of Ayatollah Khomeini, and President Carter welcomed him as a man of peace. As a result, radical Islam, once again, raised its ugly head, as it does from time to time.

And it is only all-out war against radical Islam that puts it in a box—sometimes for 50 years, sometimes for 100 years. It depends on how staunch the fight is against them.

But President Bush did not blame President Carter. There were mistakes all along the way.

When the marine barracks in Beirut was hit, the Democrat-controlled Congress made clear that they were not going to fund any more U.S. peacekeeping troops in Beirut. Reagan brought them home. He should have taken them out and done whatever it took, but he didn't.

Now this administration, in order to get any deal that is a terrible deal, is willing to turn its back on the fact that Iran and Hezbollah have terrorists in their lead, and they should not be recognized as anything but terrorists.

I yield back the balance of my time.

FAST-TRACKING THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for 30 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, we are going to use these 30 minutes to speak to fast track and a process on trade agreements that are developed. I believe it is so important for the American public to understand exactly what fast track is all about.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TONKO. I also ask unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker, that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. TONKO. Tonight we are here to discuss, as I indicated, Trade Promotion Authority, most commonly known as fast track. Free trade agreements that would be accompanied by a fast-track process are a way to bring about devastating outcomes, if not done correctly, to the American economy and, most importantly, to the American worker.

Of late, most notably, the free trade agreement of which there is much concern expressed is the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the TPP, which, by the way, would speak to a great number of nations which encompass about 40 percent of the international GDP. So it is no small compact here of which we speak.

Fast track, as a concept, would constrain Congress' ability to conduct oversight, restrain oversight that Congress should provide so as to be the voice of the people who elect them, to place their given concerns in the discussions here in the House.

It would delegate Congress' constitutional authority over trade policy in a way that would provide for no solid debate, no sharply restricting debate, and it would prohibit amendments. Basically, Congress would be limited to a simple up-or-down vote—thumbs up, thumbs down—on what could be a devastating outcome for the American economy and, most importantly, the American worker.

These so-called free trade agreements have far-reaching impacts on American life. They may address dynamics like food safety or affordable medicine or financial regulations. So we cannot be reckless in our attempt, and we must make certain that we move forward deliberately to make certain that it is a good outcome for trade.

We are not against trade. Free trade, as it has been described in the past and agreed to in the past, has hurt the economy, but we want fair trade.

In exchange for fast-tracking bills, Congress is supposed to set these negotiating objectives. But let's face it: sadly, these objectives are nonbinding, so they could be rendered meaningless. And in the case of the TPP, which is nearly completed, setting them at this point is somewhat late in the process.

We know also that the TPP is going to model itself after NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement that dealt with Canada and Mexico, and also the Korean agreement. And the bottom line is, those deals have not been good for the American middle class, for working families.

Certainly we would be giving up a golden opportunity to exercise our responsibilities here in Congress to make certain it is the best outcome for America.

Promises of new jobs here in the U.S. are one of those promises for which we take great concern.

Decreased trade deficits—it can be said that trade deficits have provided the greatest dent in the American economy. There are huge deficits that have staggered the efforts to grow American jobs and improve labor and environmental standards. These are promises that have failed: jobs to be produced, environmental standards and labor standards never really come to be. Even if they are written on paper with the enforcement requirements, they have not reached their potential. And certainly the job count is not what it should be.

As we lost manufacturing jobs, millions of manufacturing jobs, one in every four manufacturing jobs, it was a devastating outcome. Three of every five American workers who lost those manufacturing jobs ended up with pay cuts, and one of three of those in the three-out-of-five category ended up with more than 20 percent of a paycheck reduction.

This is not what we want in the order of progressive policies that will speak to a stronger economy. So I have grave concern for the fast-track process.

Those joining us tonight and those like the gentlewoman from New York, Representative SLAUGHTER, who will share her thoughts in writing, which will be incorporated in the annals of these proceedings, for this Special Order, these are Members who are very concerned.

And chief amongst them, the one who has led us in this effort to draw public awareness and political attention to this issue, is none other than Representative ROSA DELAURO, our colleague from Connecticut, who has done a solid job in bringing to everyone's

awareness, attention, that the fast-track process is the first step in a process that could be devastating, as we authorize this Trans-Pacific Partnership, with the potential for job loss that we can ill afford, with the potential for abuse of children in the labor force, and beckoning us to bring about a situation that finds Vietnamese workers, for instance, working for 50 to 55 cents, 56 cents, perhaps, an hour. It is dumbing down, it is weakening the workforce across the world as we lose these American jobs.

So Representative DELAURO, it is great to have you on the floor. It is great to have you join us in this Special Order. Please share with us your passion, your concern for what could happen here to the American worker.

Ms. DELAURO. Thank you so much. I want to thank my colleague from New York for leading this effort tonight and for being shoulder-to-shoulder with so many of us, both inside the House of Representatives and in the large, vast coalition that is outside of the House of Representatives that says ''no'' to fast track; we are not going to do this.

So I applaud you and all of your efforts, and for standing up here on the floor most nights and talking about this issue so that the American public knows what is going on here because it is our responsibility to let them know.

They are not following fast-track Trade Promotion Authority or the Trans-Pacific Partnership every single day the way we are. But it is our responsibility to know how, in fact, it is going to affect their lives.

I would also say to you that I know you and I know so many of our other colleagues, we are not opposed to trade. We are not. We are in favor of fair trade. That is what we are about.

I believe you are—and I am—a strong proponent of the Export-Import Bank. It helped American business to compete around the world for 70 years. That is the kind of trade policy that we need. Reauthorize the Ex-Im Bank for another 7 years before its charter expires in June.

What we must not do is to sign up to yet another bad free trade agreement, a deal that subjects American workers to competition that is neither free nor fair. And far too many of these trade agreements—particularly, as you pointed out, in the last 20 years—have done nothing but deepen our trade deficit, lower our wages, and send American jobs overseas.

An example: 3 years ago, we signed the U.S.-Korea free trade agreement with the bells and ruffles, the ruffle of drums and all of this effort that we are going to create jobs, increase wages. Yes, we are going to have more exports.

□ 1900

Well, you have got to know how to add and you have to know how to subtract. We have got exports, but look at the flow of imports which is hurting American workers.

Since this trade agreement 3 years ago, our trade deficit with South Korea has gone up 71 percent; and given the administration and the way they calculate the job loss, using their metrics, we are talking about 74,000 American jobs. The Trans-Pacific Partnership is built on that template of the U.S.-Korea free trade agreement, so it follows the same failed model, but it is on a much, much larger scale. It forces our manufacturing and technology base into unfair and unequal competition with other nations throughout the Asia Pacific region.

There are 11 countries. So as you pointed out, it pits good-paying American jobs against Vietnamese workers who make 56 cents an hour. It asks American exporters to compete against Japanese producers who are propped up by currency manipulation, an abuse that has cost our economy almost 6 million jobs in 2013 alone.

What happened? These countries—Japan, Singapore, and China—devaluate their currency. Their goods become cheaper; ours are more expensive. It puts us at a serious disadvantage. As you know, my colleague, this trade agreement contains nothing that would disallow currency manipulation. We have been told by the administration that there will not be a currency chapter in this bill. So we are going to go down the road where these countries can continue to put our workers and our products at a disadvantage.

You have a predictable pattern here: cheap, foreign products flow in, American jobs flow out, and our wages are on a downward spiral. The ill effects don't stop there. Most of the TPP's 29 chapters are not about trade at all. They are about rolling back laws in a way that plays directly into the hands of Big Business.

The former director of the National Economic Council, Larry Summers, has highlighted corporate efforts to use the Trans-Pacific Partnership to ''change health and safety regulations, extend and strengthen patent protections, and deregulate financial services.'' We know that Larry Summers, former Secretary of the Treasury, National Economic Council, is no leftwing radical. That is the way they would like to portray those of us who oppose TPP. He is a thoughtful individual. That is the conclusion he comes to: it changes health and safety regulations, extends and strengthens patent protections, and deregulates financial services.

A Nobel-Prize winning economist, Joseph Stiglitz, points out:

> The overall thrust of the intellectual property section of the TPP is for less competition and higher drug prices.

TPP can weaken our environmental protection. It opens the door to unsafe food. It could raise the cost of medicines. It can make it harder to defend against financial risks.

The truth is proponents of the TPP know that their economic case has failed, and lately we have heard them try another tack. They tell us that TPP is going to help America counter the rise of Chinese power in the Asia Pacific region, and if we pass TPP, we will be able to set the rules. It is absurd. It really is absurd. Quite frankly, if you want to do something about China, do something about currency manipulation and what China has been doing as regular policy in buying up our reserves. Currency manipulation is their policy.

Rules that encourage offshoring, gut our manufacturing and our technology base, and compromise the health and safety of our consumers are not American rules, but rules that favor big corporations at the expense of everyone else.

You know as well as I do, Congressman TONKO, who is in the room and who is out of the room, who is in the negotiations and who is out of the negotiations. There is room at the table for a long list of multinational corporations: Walmart, Verizon, Halliburton, Dow, General Electric, Caterpillar, Hershey, Boeing, AdvaMed, DuPont, Intel, Lockheed Martin, and many others. But do you know who is not at the table? The American workers are not at the table who are going to be forced to pay the price in lost jobs and low wages. And there is no room for Members of Congress. We have been systematically frozen out of the process.

For months, I pressed to get a copy of the negotiating draft, and I was told it was classified, but now I have seen pieces of the text. When I got into the room with a small part of the text, I discovered that it was not classified at all, that they said it was classified, but it is classified as a confidential document. It is not secret. It doesn't have a top-secret classification. They just don't want us to see it. They have placed every single restriction on our ability to read this agreement front to back, to ask questions, to know who said what, what country said what, and what the U.S. position is about all of this.

They have been working at this for 4½ years, and now they have come because they know that fast track is in jeopardy. They know that this treaty is in jeopardy, and they say: Oh, we would like to have you read the text but it is classified, and you can't have any staff there except for someone who has a security clearance. They are holding us to a standard that the treaty does not impose.

Let's stop playing the games. Jobs are at stake. Workers have a right to know what is being done in their name. We Representatives in Congress are their representatives. We have that responsibility to ensure that TPP either protects jobs or does not happen at all.

Now, you talked about Trade Promotion Authority fast track. What is it? It is a rubber stamp. It says: Okay, trust us. You can't see the document. You can only see bits and pieces of it. It is classified, but give us fast track

where there is no public scrutiny of the document, limited congressional debate, and no ability to amend the document at all. Just vote for us, and we will take care of your interests.

President Reagan said trust, but verify. We are trying to verify. To give them that fast track authority, in my view, your view, this coalition's view, would be a big mistake. The potential consequences of the TPP are simply too great. We cannot surrender our constitutional authority, our ability to scrutinize this agreement and to amend it.

Working Americans are in trouble today. Their paychecks have been stagnant or in decline for over 30 years. They are struggling to put food on the table and to heat their homes, let alone take a vacation or send their kids to college. Bad trade deals have played a leading role in creating this situation, bad public policy, and these trade agreements have been bad public policy.

Good, stable manufacturing jobs used to be a bridge to the middle class until they were sent overseas to places where labor is cheap, only to be replaced with poorly paid service sector jobs. Workers who are laid off face an uphill battle to get rehired. If they find new jobs, three out of five are forced to work for lower wages. That is the reality of what happens when we sign these ill-considered free trade agreements.

Why would we volunteer America and American workers for yet more punishment? Why would we do that? If we want to help the middle class, if we are for middle class economics, why would we do this? Why would we make it easier for Big Business to send their jobs overseas?

The time has come. Enough is enough. No more low wages. No more lost jobs. No more bad trade deals. And that is where we are now. The Congress, the House of Representatives, has woken up. They are stirred up. They believe this is a bad deal. They haven't been allowed to investigate it, to read it, to read the bill as the public asked us to do with the Affordable Care Act those years ago, and then they want us to put our imprimatur on this effort. That is why there is so much consternation. That is why the Members of Congress, the Members of the House of Representatives, are saying no.

I believe we will defeat fast track because the American public doesn't want this treaty. The American public doesn't want to see their representatives unable to talk to them about it, and the Members of Congress are reasserting their responsibility and saying, unless we see it, unless we read it, unless we ask the questions, unless we know who the negotiating partners are, and unless we say yes, then our answer to the administration is no.

I thank you for organizing this.

Mr. TONKO. Well, Representative DELAURO, let me just state that the people of Connecticut are so fortunate to have you bring your voice to this Chamber to speak so effectively and so nobly for the workers of this country. People of this country beyond Connecticut prosper from your advocacy and your passion. We respect that. All people who are tuned into this discussion, those who have heard about it in other dialogue, need to call their Representatives: Where are you on fast track?

Ms. DELAURO. Bingo.

Mr. TONKO. A great number of us Democrats in this House have come together saying we are for growing paychecks and we want to strengthen that paycheck. We have stood for increasing the minimum wage, but we talk about the median wage. Let's strengthen that. Let's make certain there is an opportunity to say: Here is how it could be better; here is what you are skipping. You are walking past the currency manipulation issue, which is one of the biggest concerns right now.

Ms. DELAURO. Amen.

Mr. TONKO. As you pointed out, trade deficits have put the biggest dent into the American economy, and if we continue this, those who don't learn from history are bound to repeat it. And what we have here is an opportunity to learn from history that there have been all these negative outcomes. We have flattened if not gone south with the middle class income all because we have sent out of our country's borders these sound manufacturing jobs.

You talked about all these impacts, and I know where your heart is on social and economic justice. What are we doing to people with the four TPP negotiating partners in Vietnam, Malaysia, Mexico, and Peru? We are using forced labor or child labor in violation of international standards as reported by the United States Department of Labor in their report of List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor. We have situations where there are not unions allowed in Vietnam, a communist country. If it is allowed, they can't speak outside of these given standards. If they do, they are persecuted or jailed.

Ms. DELAURO. Or killed.

Mr. TONKO. Or killed. We have got documentation of how many union activists have been murdered and how many of those issues have been resolved, how many of those reviews by the judicial process or whatever system in their country would prosecute. None of these—very few have been resolved.

So it is not just the economic consequences. It is the social injustice that we can allow with these contracts.

So I thank you. I know we have been joined by Ms. KAPTUR.

Ms. DELAURO. Let me make one more point. Ms. KAPTUR is here, and she has really been in the forefront of these debates and these issues for so many years, because the other side tries to portray us as, well, if you don't want this fast track authority, what would you want? Over the years, and particularly over the last several months, the last year and a half, Democratic Members of the House of Representatives have written to the administration, to the USTR, that is the U.S. Trade Representative, and we have made suggestions of how we could increase congressional input into this process by looking at who the negotiating partners are, what the objectives are, the enforcement of those objectives, and how we have a chance to certify that the objectives have been met and say yes, and then we move forward, the administration moves forward.

We have been said no to over and over and over again. So, in fact, there has been no congressional input, though we have tried for a very, very long time to do that. The public needs to know that, because we just cannot have our head in the sand and just say no.

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely. You use that technical term, I have used it, ''currency manipulation,'' over and over. Let's just throw an example out there. It is a $6,000 edge for a competing automobile imported into this Nation against what is produced by our home-driven auto industry.

□ 1915

Well, that is going to upset the whole economy. It is going to impact consumers.

So currency manipulation is given a $6,000 edge. It is like giving them a check saying: Put more conditions or more opportunities into the consumer's pocket to buy more features on a car.

Of course, $6,000 is going to speak to their senses, so we need currency manipulation to provide for fair trade. As you indicated, we are all for trade but not this manipulation that has hurt the American working families.

We have Representative KAPTUR here, and I believe we have about 5 minutes remaining.

Representative KAPTUR, I yield to you to share your thoughts because this is so important an issue.

Again, I thank both of my colleagues for joining us here this evening and Representative SLAUGHTER for sending in written comment that can be incorporated. Thank you, Representative DELAURO.

Representative KAPTUR, please share with us your thoughts.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you very much, Congressman TONKO. Thank you for your leadership and bringing us to the floor. As Congresswoman DELAURO completes her remarks, I just want to thank her for leading all of us in this great quest to move toward trade agreements that create jobs in our country and trade balances rather than trade deficits.

I thought that if I could contribute anything to the conversation when this administration or any administration says, Well, what do you want, I can tell you what we don't want.

We don't want agreements like this. This was the agreement with Korea

where they said that the United States would be getting the ability to ship all these cars over to Korea.

What actually happened was the reverse. We get a trickle in there; they get a deluge in here. Our trade deficit with Korea has gone up 84 percent since the agreement was signed.

We say to the administration: Give us a trade agreement that gives America not just a trade balance, which would mean we wouldn't lose any jobs, but a trade surplus, not a trade deficit, which costs us 5,000 jobs for every billion dollars of trade deficit.

We want balanced agreements; we want agreements in surplus, not in deficit. Every American knows what I am talking about. They have experienced it in their own communities.

The other thing we want is we, as a Congress, want the ability, when an agreement deals with so many different aspects, to treat trade like a treaty, not an agreement that is sent up here and we are told, You can't amend it, you can't read it actually, everything is in secret, the administration is coming up here this week, and everything is in secret, but we don't get to see the whole agreement.

I guess we look through a keyhole, and we can see 10 words or something. That isn't the way this country should conduct business. My own feeling is: Until we fix what is wrong with past agreements like the Korea agreement, why should we sign any more?

I have many stories I am going to put in the RECORD tonight, Congressman TONKO, about people in Ohio who have lost their jobs due to these backward trade agreements that ship our jobs out, not our products.

I want to thank you for helping to be here tonight, long after hours—you don't have to be here, but you are—trying to say to the American people this is really important. We understand what the American people are saying to us; we are trying to fight for them here in Washington.

How fortunate are the people of New York who have sent you here and that you are nobly carrying their cause against very, very powerful forces on the face of the globe that really don't care what happens to the people of the United States. They have a much narrower agenda. They really don't care about liberty when it comes right down to it.

Thank you for holding to a higher standard and for trying to heal our country and to create jobs in America and opportunity in America and respect for liberty on the face of this Earth first because that is what America is supposed to be about.

I don't want to take up the remaining time. I want to make sure you have opportunity to conclude.

Mr. TONKO. You are fine, Representative KAPTUR. I thank you for contributing, as you always do in such meaningful measure.

I think you agree with me—I am certain you do—that Congress and the American workers deserve a meaningful role in these debates to make sure that our trade policy reflects our values as a country, as a people; and those include middle class prosperity, workers' rights, consumer safety, and environmental sustainability.

When we have those rights guaranteed, when we have those ideals protected and advanced and enhanced, we are a great, great nation that comes out of trade negotiations even more powerful.

We are a great nation; we need to stay great. We can't give away all of these golden opportunities simply by trade agreements that are unfair that provide an unlevel playing field for the American worker.

It is about those values that we are meeting tonight, speaking tonight, advocating tonight, and encouraging that hope be brought to each and every worker and working family out there across this great Nation in a way that reflects a sound bit of dialogue on this House floor.

Ms. KAPTUR. This is one of the most important elements of America's economic policy, and we are at a critical moment to change what was wrong in the past.

We have an opportunity to fix these trade agreements and to reshape the way we handle trade with the world, beginning with those partners who share our value of liberty and then inviting in other nations of the world that want opportunity for their people and they want a chance for rising living standards, not to be turned into worse sweatshops with no environmental standards, with no worker standards, with no hope for a better way of life, just moving from one exploitative country to another exploitative country.

I compliment you for standing up for the highest values of this Republic. I know the American people are going to win this fight because they have suffered far too long the job devastation from coast to coast. For the sake of workers in other places in the world, we are standing up for their opportunities and their rights as well.

I am so privileged to join you this evening. Thank you for setting aside time for this Special Order tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to join my colleagues in showing why Members of Congress must have an opportunity to weigh in on provisions included in the free trade deals currently under negotiation.

SECRECY OF TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiations of the Trans Pacific Partnership and the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership have been notoriously secretive. Despite the calls from hundreds of Members of Congress to the US Trade Representative to protest the needless secrecy of TPP, we continue to be denied basic access to the deal. And those few who have been granted access have been restricted from sharing any part of the agreement with their constituents or expert staff

Tomorrow, the Administration will come to Capitol Hill to brief Members, but the conversation remains closed. Staffers without a security clearance are excluded and, again, disclosure of the terms of this deal to our constituents is prohibited under threat of federal prosecution. All this while foreign nations have the text of the provisions and know exactly what is included and what is excluded.

The American people are being left in the dark with these negotiations. They are the very same people who have suffered the most as a result of past free trade deals negotiated in the same way: in secret.

PERSONAL STORIES

Tonight, I want to share a few personal stories of people from my district, people whose lives were uprooted and thrown into turmoil as a result of past free trade deals. These deals lacked sufficient worker and labor protections and ushered in a wave of offshoring of American jobs.

MR. CHUCK HAMAIDE'S STORY

I'll begin with Mr. Chuck Hamaide, a resident of Vermilion, Ohio. In December 2000, at 50 years old, Mr. Hamaide was laid off from his job at a software company in Cleveland. He found another job at a Columbus company, which had recently outsourced a first wave of production to Mexico. Three years later, it outsourced the remainder of its domestic production to China.

Mr. Hamaide was lucky. He saw the writing on the wall and began the search for a new job before he was laid off. Many of his coworkers were not as lucky. Many who were late in their careers were laid off, losing their paychecks and their livelihoods. Many were in their fifties and faced the stigma of elder discrimination as they sought new employment.

Many did not find jobs to replace the ones that were shipped overseas, where labor is cheap and conditions are appalling. This is the legacy of free trade deals in America. And there are many more stories like it.

GLORIA'S PERSONAL STORY

Gloria, a bright 17 year old from Huron, Ohio, wrote to tell me her family's story, a story that is not unique. Gloria's father worked for General Motor, then Delphi, and Kyklos Bearing International for 41 years. He clocked 12 hour shifts, seven days a week. Despite years of dedication, his pay was recently cut and the factory where he works is under threat of closure.

His company may be able to offer him a replacement job—but it will be at another factory, 100 miles away from his home and his family. Whether or not Gloria's father takes the job, he and his family will suffer.

Gloria shared with me her concern about her own future: she will soon go to college and fears she will not be able to find a job once she graduates. She worries that she will not be able to support herself and that she will have to live on welfare, despite ample motivation and capability on her part. This is the legacy of free trade deals in America.

MIDDLE AMERICA HURT THE HARDEST BY FREE TRADE

These fears are the repercussions emanating throughout Middle America. A new generation of younger Americans, many of whom witnessed their parents being downsized and outsourced, is now entering the workforce with little hope of stability and opportunity. The American dream is looks more and more like a pipe dream to them.

These free trade deals lead to outsourced jobs and fewer opportunities for young people

like Gloria who are about to enter the labor market. And they contribute to lower wages for hardworking people like Gloria's father, who dedicated their lives to their jobs and the industries in which they worked.

From the little we know from past trade deals and the shroud of secrecy being kept around the TPP and TTIP, we have to assume that these deals will be equally devastating for American workers like Chuck and future workers like Gloria.

The fact that these deals are so veiled in secrecy is unsettling, but the real economic danger comes in the form of trade promotion authority. This so-called "fast track" authority would compel Congress to vote on these massive trade deals within just a few weeks of being allowed to read them, without any opportunity to push for important changes including improvements to environmental and labor standards. I can imagine reasons why trade supporters would want to fast track a secret trade deal, but none of them involve the benevolent treatment of American workers or increasing the market value of their labor.

KORUS ANNIVERSARY

This week the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement passed its third year in effect. I would like to remind everyone that it was sold to us on a promise of "more exports, more jobs." In truth, we have seen exactly the opposite since the deal went into effect. U.S. exports to Korea have fallen and imports have surged.

Our overall trade deficit with Korea is 84 percent higher than it was the year before the agreement was signed, an increase of 12.7 billion dollars. A large portion of that increase comes from manufacturing imports, especially passenger vehicles.

Yes, auto exports to Korea are up an estimated 23,000 cars from a pre-KORUS number of around 15,000. The bad news is that the U.S. imported 450,000 more passenger cars over the same period. This works out to another 5.7 billion dollars or 36 percent alone for our auto trade deficit with Korea. That means more than lost profits for U.S. companies; it also means lost wages and lost jobs for thousands of U.S. workers.

Let me also remind everyone that the Korean trade agreement is the model for the much larger Trans Pacific Partnership that remains shrouded in secrecy.

Gloria put it perfectly in her letter: "America has seemingly given up." Is this what we want our young people to think? That we no longer care, that we are no longer committed to offering them a better future?

Lost jobs and downward pressure on wages are the legacy of trade in America, and we owe it to these young people to do better. We owe it to them to protect the American economy, to protect American jobs and to protect the middle class. We have a chance to show them that we haven't given up, and that we've learned from past mistakes, like NAFTA and KORUS. We can do this by putting an end to unfair free trade deals, and negotiating fair trade deals that work for everyone, including American workers.

We owe it to the next generation to build a new legacy for American trade. There are mutual gains to be had if the free people of the world can work together, maintaining real labor and environmental standards and showing the world a better, and freer, way to live and work. We have seen glimpses of what this can look like, but for decades, when push comes to shove, our leaders have decided to balk and cave, letting false promises and voodoo economics drive the selling out of American workers time and again. We need to demand more of this administration and the massive global trade deals it strives to enact. We need real transparency and real standards or we need to say no more to terrible trade!

Mr. TONKO. Thank you so much, Representative KAPTUR.

Let's move forward with socio-economic environmental justice, where we can grow this Nation and job opportunities and undo those trade deficits.

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Mr. TONKO for the time to discuss the troubling issue of "fast track" trade authority.

President Obama and some of our Republican colleagues want to use this process to ensure that the massive Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, trade deal is passed quickly and without input from Congress. Under this authority, we would have to vote on this far-reaching trade agreement that has been negotiated in secret without the ability to offer amendments or engage in meaningful debate.

Considering the TPP under fast track authority is simply another symptom of this closed Congress, where we have been deprived of our authority and responsibility to protect our constituents. And if past trade deals are any indication, American workers and manufacturers need our help now more than ever before. For as long as the United States has been signing free trade agreements, we have watched helplessly as quality, middle class jobs have flowed overseas. Quite frankly, over my career, I have never seen a trade agreement that benefited the American worker or the American manufacturer.

I come from a district that has been devastated by short-sighted trade agreements like NAFTA, CAFTA, and recent agreements with Korea and Colombia. It is estimated that since NAFTA went into effect, the United States has lost 5 million manufacturing jobs. In the Rochester area alone, we have only half the manufacturing jobs that we did then.

Our economy simply cannot afford another NAFTA-style, job-killing trade agreement, which is exactly what the Trans-Pacific Partnership is.

I have great confidence in the American worker and American businesses to compete and succeed in the global marketplace if given a fair and level playing field. For generations, our country has shown that hard work and ingenuity are the engines of progress and economic prosperity. Innovations that shaped the 21st century economy were conceived and produced here in the United States, many in Rochester I might add.

In return for allowing other countries to benefit from our hard work and innovation, America was rewarded with a strong middle class.

But other countries have taken advantage of us, and we have to stand strong against them. American workers should not be forced to compete against workers in countries like Vietnam where wages are as low as 50 cents per hour.

We need to level the economic playing field and stop jobs from being shipped overseas. We're not going to do that by enacting fast track and allowing more poorly conceived trade agreements like the TPP to decimate our economy.

Congress cannot afford to give this administration—or any future one—the benefit of the doubt by passing fast track authority. By now, it should be clear that a closed legislative process isn't good for Congress or the American people. I firmly oppose fast track authority and I urge my colleagues to stand up for our constituents before it's too late.

RESIGNATIONS AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET, AND COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignations as a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on the Budget, and the Committee on House Administration:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 17, 2015.

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

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER, Effective today I hereby resign from my assignments to the House Committee on Ways & Means, House Committee on the Budget and the Committee on House Administration.

Respectfully,

AARON SCHOCK,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignations are accepted.

There was no objection.

PUBLICATION OF BUDGETARY MATERIAL

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC.

MR. TOM PRICE OF GEORGIA. Mr. Speaker, section 3(h) of House Resolution 5 requires the concurrent resolution on the budget to include a section related to means-tested and non-means-tested direct spending programs. Section 3(h) of House Resolution 5 also requires the Chair of the Committee on the Budget to submit a statement in the Congressional Record defining those terms prior to the consideration of such concurrent resolution on the budget.

Enclosed please find two tables prepared in order to fulfill this requirement. I have also included a communication and associated tables from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office, with whom I have consulted in the preparation of this material. While the non-means-tested list is not exhaustive, all programs not considered means-tested can be considered non-means-tested direct spending.

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2015.

Re Spending for Means-Tested Programs.

Hon. TOM PRICE, M.D.,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: As you requested, enclosed are two tables that show federal spending for each of the government's major mandatory spending programs and tax credits that are primarily means-tested (that is, spending programs and tax credits that provide cash payments or other forms of assistance to people with relatively low income or

few assets). Table 1 shows the Congressional Budget Office's January 2015 baseline projections for the 2015–2025 period; Table 2 shows historical spending data from 2005 through 2014, along with CBO's estimates for 2015.

The tables also include a line showing total spending for mandatory programs that are primarily not means-tested. Some of those programs have means-tested components (for example, student loans), but the tables do not show separate entries for such programs. They also do not include means-tested programs that are discretionary (for example, the Section 8 housing assistance programs and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program). However, the tables show discretionary spending for the Pell Grant program as a memorandum item because that program has both discretionary and mandatory components and the amount of the mandatory Pell Grant component depends in part on the annual amount of discretionary funding.

In the projections that CBO published in *The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2015 to 2025* in January 2015, mandatory outlays for means-tested programs are projected to grow over the next decade at an average annual rate of 4.6 percent, compared with an average rate of 5.5 percent for non-means-tested programs, which include, for example, Social Security, most of Medicare, and civilian and military retirement programs (see Table 1).[1]

Overall, the growth rates projected for total mandatory spending over the coming decade are slower than those experienced in the past 10 years—by a little less than one-half percentage point per year, on average. Projected growth from 2016 to 2025 is slightly higher for non-means-tested programs (which will have grown at an average rate of 5.4 percent from 2006 to 2015, CBO estimates), but much lower for means-tested programs (which will have grown at an average rate of 6.8 percent from 2006 to 2015, by CBO's estimate; see Table 2).

A number of programs shown in Tables 1 and 2 have been or are scheduled to be significantly affected by changes in law, the most recent recession, and the continuing recovery. As a result, important aspects of the programs in the future may differ significantly from historical experience, and those differences may be the source of some of the variation between the growth rates in the past 10 years and those in the coming decade. For example, spending for Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), subsidies for health insurance purchased through an exchange, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the refundable portions of the earned income and child tax credits has been or will be significantly affected by program changes that unfold over time:

Medicaid spending shot up by 35 percent from 2008 to 2010, during the most recent recession. After dropping off a bit in the following few years, it has been boosted by the expansion of Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act. As that expansion has been phased in, spending for the program increased by 14 percent last year and is projected to rise by 11 percent in 2015. Under current law, the rate of growth in Medicaid spending will decline through 2018, CBO projects, after which it will level off at a rate of roughly 5.5 percent per year through the end of the projection period.

Spending authority for the CHIP program expires at the end of fiscal year 2015. Consistent with statutory guidelines, CBO assumes in its baseline spending projections that annual funding for the program after 2015 will continue at $5.7 billion.[2] As a result, in CBO's baseline, spending for CHIP is projected to drop from $11 billion in 2016 to about $6 billion in subsequent years; it had grown from $5 billion to $10 billion from 2005 to 2015.

Payments of subsidies for health insurance purchased through an exchange began in January 2014 and are projected to grow rapidly between 2015 and 2018, largely as a result of significant growth in enrollment. CBO and the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation project annual growth will average about 4 percent between 2019 and 2025.

SNAP spending increased markedly during the most recent recession—roughly doubling between 2008 and 2011—as more people became eligible for those benefits. In addition, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) raised the maximum benefit under that program; subsequent legislation eliminated that increase as of October 31, 2013. The program's caseload peaked in 2014, and CBO expects that it will fall in each year of the projection period as the economy continues to improve. As a result, spending for SNAP is projected to decline slightly over the next several years, after growing by an average of 9 percent per year over the 2006–2015 period.

Outlays for the earned income and child tax credits rose by almost 40 percent from 2007 to 2008 and have grown slowly since then. They are expected to dip after 2018 because provisions expanding the refundability of those credits (which were originally enacted in ARRA and were subsequently extended) are scheduled to expire on December 31, 2017.[3] In 2025, those outlays are projected to be about what they were in 2014.

Finally, because of the unique budgetary treatment of the Pell Grant program—which has both mandatory and discretionary components—the growth rates for the mandatory portion of that program give incomplete information. The bulk of the funding for Pell grants is provided annually in appropriation acts and thus is discretionary. In recent years, spending for Pell grants also has included two mandatory components, which have allowed the discretionary budget authority provided by the regular appropriation acts to remain well below the full cost of the program.

In keeping with procedures that govern CBO's baseline, the projection for the discretionary portion of the Pell Grant program is based on the budget authority appropriated for fiscal year 2015, adjusted for inflation. (Discretionary spending for the program is shown as a memorandum item in both tables.) Thus, the baseline projection for both discretionary and mandatory spending for Pell grants does not represent an estimate of the expected future costs of the program; such a projection also would take into account such factors as changes in eligibility and enrollment.

I hope that you find this information helpful. If you have any further questions, please contact me or my staff. The primary staff contact is Barry Blom.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF,
Director.

Enclosure.

Table 1.

Mandatory Outlays in CBO's January 2015 Baseline
(Outlays by fiscal year, billions of dollars)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average Annual Growth 2016-2025
Means-Tested Programs												
Health Care Programs												
Medicaid	335	360	384	405	428	452	477	503	530	558	588	5.8%
Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidies	24	28	28	28	32	34	37	44	46	46	54	8.4%
Health insurance subsidies[a,b]	28	55	75	86	89	91	97	102	105	109	112	15.1%
Children's Health Insurance Program	10	11	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	-5.9%
Subtotal	397	454	493	524	555	584	617	656	687	719	760	6.7%
Income Security												
SNAP	78	78	76	75	74	74	74	73	74	74	75	-0.4%
Supplemental Security Income	55	60	57	54	61	63	64	71	68	65	72	2.7%
Earned income and child tax credits[b,c]	83	85	86	87	75	76	77	78	79	80	82	-0.1%
Family support and foster care[d]	31	32	32	32	33	33	33	34	34	34	35	1.0%
Child nutrition	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	4.3%
Subtotal	268	277	274	273	267	271	275	285	284	284	295	1.0%
Veterans' pensions	6	7	6	6	7	7	7	8	7	7	7	2.0%
Pell Grants[e]	11	6	7	9	9	9	9	9	10	10	10	-1.3%
Subtotal, Means-Tested Programs	683	744	781	811	838	871	909	957	988	1,019	1,072	4.6%
Non-Means-Tested Programs[f]	1,847	1,947	2,018	2,094	2,241	2,370	2,516	2,708	2,820	2,933	3,165	5.5%
Total Mandatory Outlays[g]	**2,530**	**2,691**	**2,799**	**2,905**	**3,079**	**3,241**	**3,425**	**3,666**	**3,808**	**3,952**	**4,237**	5.3%
Memorandum												
Pell Grants (Discretionary)[h]	20	27	27	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	3.0%

Source: Congressional Budget Office; staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation.

Notes: The projections shown here are the same as those reported in Congressional Budget Office, *The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025* (January 2015). CBO recently updated its baseline projections as reported in Congressional Budget Office, *Updated Budget Projections: 2015 to 2025 (March 2015)*. Some of the projections are different in the March baseline, but at the request of the committee staff, the projections shown are from the January baseline.

The average annual growth rate over the 2016-2025 period encompasses growth in outlays from the amount projected for 2015 through the amount projected for 2025.

Projections of spending for benefit programs in this table exclude administrative costs that are classified as discretionary but generally include administrative costs classified as mandatory.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Because October 1 will fall on a weekend in 2016, 2017, 2022, and 2023, certain federal payments that are due on that date will instead be made at the end of the preceding September and thus be shifted into the previous fiscal year. Those shifts primarily affect outlays for Supplemental Security Income, veterans' compensation benefits and pensions, and Medicare.

a. Differs from the amounts reported in Table 3-2 from *The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025* because it does not include payments to health insurance plans for risk adjustment (amounts paid to plans that attract less healthy enrollees) and reinsurance (amounts paid to plans that enroll individuals who end up with high costs). Spending for grants to states to establish exchanges is also excluded.

b. Does not include amounts that reduce tax receipts.

c. Differs from the amounts reported on Table 3-2 from *The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025* because it does not include other tax credits that were included in that table.

d. Includes the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the Child Support Enforcement program, the Child Care Entitlement program, and other programs that benefit children.

e. Includes mandatory spending designed to reduce the discretionary budget authority needed to support the maximum award level set in the appropriation act plus mandatory spending that, by formula, increases the total maximum award above the amount set in the appropriation act.

f. Does not include offsetting receipts.

g. Does not include outlays associated with federal interest payments, which are not considered part of mandatory spending.

h. The discretionary baseline does not represent a projection of expected costs for the discretionary portion of the Pell Grant program. As with all other discretionary programs, the budget authority is calculated by inflating the budget authority appropriated for fiscal year 2015. Outlays for future years are based on those amounts of budget authority and also reflect a temporary surplus of budget authority provided in 2015.

Table 2.

Mandatory Outlays Since 2005
(Outlays by fiscal year, billions of dollars)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Estimated, 2015	Average Annual Growth 2006-2015
Means-Tested Programs												
Health Care Programs												
Medicaid	182	181	191	201	251	273	275	251	265	301	335	6.3%
Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidies	0	11	17	17	19	21	24	20	22	22	24	8.9% [a]
Health insurance subsidies[b,c]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	28	n.a.
Children's Health Insurance Program	5	5	6	7	8	8	9	9	9	9	10	7.3%
Subtotal	187	197	213	225	277	302	308	279	297	346	397	7.8%
Income Security												
SNAP	33	35	35	39	56	70	77	80	83	76	78	9.1%
Supplemental Security Income	38	37	36	41	45	47	53	47	53	54	55	3.7%
Earned income and child tax credits[c]	49	52	54	75	67	77	78	77	79	82	83	5.3%
Family support and foster care[d]	31	30	31	32	33	35	33	30	32	31	31	0.3%
Child nutrition	13	14	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	20	21	5.1%
Subtotal	163	168	170	202	217	247	260	254	266	263	268	5.1%
Veterans' pensions	4	4	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	5.0%
Pell Grants[e]	0	0	0	1	2	4	14	12	16	8	11	n.a.
Subtotal, Means-Tested Programs	354	369	386	431	501	557	587	550	584	623	683	6.8%
Non-Means-Tested Programs[f]	1,094	1,188	1,242	1,349	1,787	1,553	1,648	1,710	1,752	1,757	1,847	5.4%
Total Mandatory Outlays[g]	**1,448**	**1,556**	**1,628**	**1,780**	**2,288**	**2,110**	**2,236**	**2,260**	**2,336**	**2,380**	**2,530**	5.7%
Memorandum												
Pell Grants (Discretionary)	13	13	13	15	13	20	21	21	17	23	20	4.3%

Source: Congressional Budget Office; staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation.

Notes: The average annual growth rate over the 2006-2015 period encompasses growth in outlays from the amount recorded in 2005 through the amount projected for 2015.

Data on spending for benefit programs in this table exclude administrative costs that are classified as discretionary but generally include administrative costs classified as mandatory.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; n.a. = not applicable.

Because October 1 fell on a weekend in 2006, 2007, and 2012, certain federal payments that were due on that date were instead made at the end of the preceding September and thus shifted into the previous fiscal year. Those shifts primarily affected outlays for Supplemental Security Income, veterans' compensation benefits and pensions, and Medicare

a. The average annual growth rate reflects the program's growth from its inception in 2006 through 2015.

b. Differs from the amounts reported in Table 3-2 from *The Budget and Economic Outlook: Fiscal Years 2015 to 2025* because it does not include payments to health insurance plans for risk adjustment (amounts paid to plans that attract less healthy enrollees) and reinsurance (amounts paid to plans that enroll individuals who end up with high costs). Spending for grants to states to establish exchanges is also excluded.

c. Does not include amounts that reduce tax receipts.

d. Includes the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the Child Support Enforcement program, the Child Care Entitlement program, and other programs that benefit children.

e. Includes mandatory spending designed to reduce the discretionary budget authority needed to support the maximum award level set in the appropriation act plus mandatory spending that, by formula, increases the total maximum award above the amount set in the appropriation act.

f. Does not include offsetting receipts.

g. Does not include outlays associated with federal interest payments, which are not considered part of mandatory spending.

ENDNOTES

1. CBO published *Updated Budget Projections: 2015 to 2025* in March 2015; some of the amounts shown in Table 1 are different in the March baseline, but at the request of the committee staff, these tables show the projections from the January baseline. In total, for mandatory spending, the differences between the two baselines are small, and the average annual growth rates over the 2016–2025 period are very similar—5.3 percent in the January projections versus 5.2 percent in the March baseline.

2. Under current law, funding for the program in 2015 consists of two semiannual allotments of $2.85 billion—amounts that are much smaller than the allotments made in the four preceding years. (The first semiannual allotment in 2015 will be supplemented by $15.4 billion in onetime funding for the program.) Following the rules prescribed by the Deficit Control Act, CBO extrapolates the $2.85 billion provided for the second half of the year to arrive at projected annual funding of $5.7 billion.

3. Refundable tax credits reduce a filer's overall income tax liability; if the credit exceeds the rest of the filer's income tax liability, the government pays all or some portion of that excess to the taxpayer. Those tax credits also affect the budget, to a lesser extent, by reducing tax revenues; those revenue effects are not shown in the tables.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 18, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

785. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's interim rule — Gypsy Moth Generally Infested Areas; Additions in Minnesota, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin [Docket No.: APHIS-2014-0023] received March 16, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

786. A letter from the Administrator, FSA Regulatory Review Group, Commodity Credit Corporation, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Biomass Crop Assistance Program (RIN: 0560-AI27) received March 16, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

787. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a statement pursuant to Sec. 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended, on a transaction involving U.S. exports to Korean Air Lines (KAL) of Seoul, South Korea; to the Committee on Financial Services.

788. A letter from the Director, Division of Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's direct final rule — Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act: Transmission of Documents and Information (RIN: 1240-AA09) received March 13, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

789. A letter from the Chief, Planning and Regulatory Affairs Office, OPS, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 [FNS-2011-0030] (RIN: 0584-AE19) received March 16, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

790. A letter from the Deputy Director, ASPA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Official Symbol, Logo and Seal received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

791. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Implementation of Sec. 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 March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

792. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a letter asking Congress to raise the debt limit as soon as possible; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

793. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Correction and Disclosure for Charitable Hospitals (Rev. Proc. 2015-21) received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

794. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Empowerment Zone Designation Extension Notice [Notice 2015-26] received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

795. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Reporting for Premium; Basis Reporting by Securities Brokers and Basis Determination for Debt Instruments and Options [TD 9713] (RIN: 1545-BL46) (RIN: 1545-BM60) received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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:

Ms. FOXX: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 152. Resolution providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 132) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (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 (Rept. 114–45). Referred to the House Calendar.

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. POE of Texas (for himself, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. SALMON, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. PEARCE):

H.R. 1385. A bill to provide for a legal framework for the operation of public unmanned aircraft systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CURBELO of Florida (for himself and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 1386. A bill to include subcontracting goals for small business concerns in the responsibilities of certain members of a Federal agency responsible for acquisition; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina (for herself, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. HURT of Virginia, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 1387. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the determination of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act without regard to alien agricultural seasonal workers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. LATTA, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. JONES, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. YOHO, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. FLORES, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. LONG, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. BLUM, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. BARR, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK):

H.R. 1388. A bill to improve the establishment of any lower ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BARR (for himself and Mr. TIPTON):

H.R. 1389. A bill to improve the mortgage finance system and the regulation of financial institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KNIGHT:

H.R. 1390. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to modify the requirements for joint venture offers for bundled or consolidated contracts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (for himself, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. NADLER, Mr.

NOLAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TONKO, and Mr. VARGAS):

H.R. 1391. A bill to protect our Social Security system and improve benefits for current and future generations; to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 1392. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to reduce the amount of Federal highway funding available to States that do not enact a law prohibiting the use of certain communication devices while operating a motor vehicle, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. HARPER, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. LIPINSKI):

H.R. 1393. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish an innovation in surface transportation program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. NOLAN):

H.R. 1394. A bill to prohibit land border crossing fees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DESANTIS:

H.R. 1395. A bill to eliminate the payroll tax for individuals who have attained retirement age, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to remove the limitation upon the amount of outside income which an individual may earn while receiving benefits under such title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 1396. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to authorize a bipartisan majority of Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission to hold nonpublic collaborative discussions; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FLEMING (for himself and Ms. GRAHAM):

H.R. 1397. A bill to allow seniors to file their Federal income tax on a new Form 1040SR; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 1398. A bill to prioritize funding for an expanded and sustained national investment in basic science research; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Science, Space, and Technology, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 1399. A bill to reauthorize and improve a grant program to assist institutions of higher education in establishing, maintain, improving, and operating Veteran Student Centers; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GRIFFITH (for himself, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. BUCSHON):

H.R. 1400. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to transition the Medicaid thresholds applied for determining acceptable provider taxes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HECK of Nevada (for himself and Mr. QUIGLEY):

H.R. 1401. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to stimulate international tourism to the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 1402. A bill to direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to convey certain property from the United States to the County of Marin, California; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. KAPTUR (for herself and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 1403. A bill to require that, in cases in which the annual trade deficit between the United States and another country is $10,000,000,000 or more for 3 consecutive years, the President take the necessary steps to create a more balanced trading relationship with that country; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KIND (for himself, Ms. ESTY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. TONKO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. FARR, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. POLIS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. TITUS, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 1404. A bill to amend the method by which the Social Security Administration determines the validity of marriages under title II of the Social Security Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LIPINSKI (for himself, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. DUCKWORTH, and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ):

H.R. 1405. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure railroad safety; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:

H.R. 1406. A bill to make technical corrections to the Navajo water rights settlement in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida (for himself, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. KIND, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. YOHO, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. JOLLY, and Mr. COSTA):

H.R. 1407. A bill to establish an independent advisory committee to review certain regulations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself and Mr. LUETKEMEYER):

H.R. 1408. A bill to require certain Federal banking agencies to conduct a study of the appropriate capital requirements for mortgage servicing assets for nonsystemic banking institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. PETERS:

H.R. 1409. A bill to amend the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to restore the authority of the Federal Communications Commission to adopt certain rules relating to preserving the open Internet and to direct the Commission to take all actions necessary to restore to effect vacated portions of such rules; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 1410. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to require the implementation of a data quality improvement plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio (for himself and Mr. TIBERI):

H.R. 1411. A bill to provide for a grants program to develop and enhance integrated nutrition and physical activity curricula in medical schools; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 1412. A bill to achieve border security on certain Federal lands along the Southern border; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, 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. SCHWEIKERT (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. JONES, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. BABIN, and Mr. CONAWAY):

H.R. 1413. A bill to terminate Operation Choke Point; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. TITUS:

H.R. 1414. A bill to direct the Secretary to make interim payments of disability compensation benefits for certain claims for such compensation prior to the adjudication of such claims, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. KAPTUR:

H.J. Res. 38. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States waiving the application of the first article of amendment to the political speech of corporations and other business organizations with respect to the disbursement of funds in connection with public elections and granting Congress and the States the power to establish limits on contributions and expenditures in elections for public office; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H. Res. 153. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Middle Level Education Month; 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. POE of Texas:
H.R. 1385.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The 4th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. CURBELO of Florida:
H.R. 1386.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, which provides Congress with the ability to enact legislation necessary and proper to effectuate its purposes in taxing and spending.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:
H.R. 1387.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Power to tax and pay debts—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 Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States:''
The Commerce Clause—Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3: ''To regulate Commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes:''

By Mr. OLSON:
H.R. 1388.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. BARR:
H.R. 1389.
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. KNIGHT:
H.R. 1390.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, which provides Congress with the ability to enact legislation necessary and proper to effectuate its purposes in taxing and spending.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:
H.R. 1391.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, 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. BRADY of Pennsylvania:
H.R. 1392.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause 3 (relating to the authority to regulate commerce among the several states).

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois:
H.R. 1393.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1, Clause 3, Clause 7, and Clause 18.

By Ms. DELBENE:
H.R. 1394.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution. ''The Congress shall have Power *** To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. DESANTIS:
H.R. 1395.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause I, and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. ESHOO:
H.R. 1396.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
Article IV, Section 3

By Mr. FLEMING:
H.R. 1397.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Amendment 16 of the U.S. Constitution, which grants Congress the power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

By Mr. FOSTER:
H.R. 1398.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8—The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida:
H.R. 1399.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 (Clauses 1, 12, 13, and 14) of the United States Constitution, which grants Congress the power to lay and collect taxes for the purpose of spending; to raise and support armies; to provide and maintain a navy; and to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:
H.R. 1400.
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. HECK of Nevada:
H.R. 1401.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution, to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing Powers, and all other powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or officer thereof.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:
H.R. 1402.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

By Ms. KAPTUR:
H.R. 1403.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Section 8: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes...

By Mr. KIND:
H.R. 1404.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I Section 8.

By Mr. LIPINSKI:
H.R. 1405.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
clause 3 of section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution, which allows for Congress to regulate commerce amongst the several states.

By Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico:
H.R. 1406.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:
H.R. 1407.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to Article 1 Section 8 Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, which states that the Congress shall have Power To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:
H.R. 1408.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 1

By Mr. PETERS:
H.R. 1409.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8

By Mrs. RADEWAGEN:
H.R. 1410.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, which provides Congress with the ability to enact legislation necessary and proper to effectuate its purposes in taxing and spending.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:
H.R. 1411.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The above mentioned legislation is based upon the following Section 8 statement:
To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof

By Mr. SALMON:
H.R. 1412.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article IV Section 4: The United States shall guarantee to every state in this union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence.

By Mr. SCHWEIKERT:
H.R. 1413.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1. Section 8

By Ms. TITUS:
H.R. 1414.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Amendment XVI, of the United States Constitution

By Ms. KAPTUR:
H.J. Res. 38.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article V of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 24: Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. HUDSON, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. BOST, Mr. LOUDERMILK, and Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 131: Mr. WALBERG and Mr. HUELSKAMP.

H.R. 174: Mr. REED.

H.R. 184: Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 188: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 217: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. PERRY, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. RUSSELL, and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 223: Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 232: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 242: Mr. DESAULNIER and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 249: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 266: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 270: Mr. JOLLY, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 281: Mr. PALMER.

H.R. 292: Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JOLLY, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 296: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 304: Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. DELBENE, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 333: Mr. VALADAO, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 335: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. ISRAEL, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 360: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 369: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 379: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 430: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 449: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 452: Mr. CRAWFORD.

H.R. 456: Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. MENG, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 511: Mr. DESJARLAIS and Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 524: Mr. POSEY and Mr. CRAWFORD.

H.R. 540: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DESANTIS, Ms. LEE, and Mr. LOUDERMILK.

H.R. 542: Mr. TAKAI, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 546; Mr. PETERS and Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 551: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 572: Ms. PLASKETT.

H.R. 588: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. JOLLY, and Mr. ZELDIN.

H.R. 592: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 601: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 605: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 610: Mr. FINCHER and Mr. WESTERMAN.

H.R. 612: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 613: Mr. JOYCE and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 662: Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 672: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 681: Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 721: Mr. HARPER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. KILMER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. PERRY, Mr. ABRAHAM, and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 723: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 746: Ms. LEE, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mrs. LAWRENCE.

H.R. 751: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 764: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 766: Mr. CÁRDENAS and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 767: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 784: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 805: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 815: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 816: Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 818: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 829: Ms. NORTON and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 831: Mr. HONDA, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 837: Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 846: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 850: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 852: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 855: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 868: Mrs. NOEM, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. MICA.

H.R. 879: Mr. MESSER and Mr. YODER.

H.R. 881: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 885: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HONDA, and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 887: Mr. HARPER and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 908: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. Honda, Ms. HAHN, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 911: Mr. ASHFORD and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 919: Ms. KUSTER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 940: Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. POSEY, Mr. NUGENT, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. TURNER, Mr. WALKER, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. CONAWAY, and Mrs. LUMMIS.

H.R. 957: Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 971: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 976: Mr. BOUSTANY and Mr. STUTZMAN.

H.R. 985: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. POSEY, Mr. AMODEI, and Mr. LONG.

H.R. 986: Mr. PALMER, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, and Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 990: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. FARR.

H.R. 997: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 1021: Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 1035: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 1037: Mr. PETERS, Mr. KILMER, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. KUSTER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KIND, Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. POCAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1058: Mr. BOST.

H.R. 1059: Mr. BOST.

H.R. 1092: Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 1094: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROUZER, and Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 1095: Ms. PINGREE.

H.R. 1104: Mr. BOST.

H.R. 1105: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. OLSON, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. REED, Mr. LATTA, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. ROSS, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. BOST, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 1117: Mr. GALLEGO.

H.R. 1136: Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 1142: Mr. ZINKE, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. JOLLY, and Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 1143: Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. HARPER, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1148: Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1151: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 1155: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 1172: Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 1174: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1190: Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 1197: Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RUSH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 1198: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. BEYER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. NEAL, and Mr. FARR.

H.R. 1209: Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. HARPER, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1227: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 1232: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1234: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1249: Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. HUDSON and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 1257: Ms. DELBENE, Ms. TITUS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. LEE, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 1271: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 1293: Mr. LYNCH, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. SIRES, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 1299: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. STUTZMAN.

H.R. 1300: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1309: Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 1328: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1333: Mr. LONG.

H.R. 1365: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. FLORES, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.J. Res. 9: Mr. KLINE.

H.J. Res. 22: Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.J. Res. 29: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H. Con. Res, 14: Mrs. BEATTY, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. TIBERI.

H. Con. Res. 23: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H. Res. 28: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. WALZ, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. FARR, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. LANCE, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CLAY, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H. Res. 50: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. MENG, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H. Res. 53: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H. Res. 109: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H. Res. 116: Mr. PETERS.

H. Res. 118: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H. Res. 119: Mr. BYRNE.

H. Res. 122: Mr. RIBBLE and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H. Res. 139: Mr. BYRNE.

DELETION 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. 296: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015 No. 45

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

We praise You, our God and King. You rule generation after generation. You are so high that the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain You. Yet You dwell with those who possess a contrite spirit. Thank You for Your kindness and mercy, for showering compassion on all creation.

Bless our Senators. Give them words that will illuminate and refresh. Help them to accept timely advice and valid criticism as a measure of progress. Lord, infuse them with patience and truth as they practice self-control.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO RUBY PAONE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate's doorkeeper, Ruby Paone, will mark her 40th year of service to the Senate.

Ruby has seen the Senate from a lot of different angles. She has had a lot of unique titles—everything from card desk assistant to Reception Room attendant—as she climbed the ladder to her current post.

I am sure that Ruby will tell you that a lot has changed since her first day here back in 1975. I am sure she will tell you a lot has stayed the same. One thing that won't change is the Senate's gratitude to its many dedicated employees. That is why the Senate community extends its congratulations to Ruby Paone this morning and why we thank her for her many years of service.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, in about an hour the Democratic Party will confront a momentous choice. Will Democrats launch a historic filibuster against helping oppressed victims of modern slavery because leftwing lobbyists appear to demand it? Will they do that at the behest of these leftwing lobbyists?

Democrats filibustering help for terrified children and abused women would represent a new low in the Senate. Filibustering help for terrified children and abused women certainly represents a new low for the Senate, and the American people will not soon forget it—nor should they. It is hard to even keep straight anymore why Democrats would filibuster this human rights bill.

The bill Democrats apparently now oppose was introduced months ago by a Democrat and a Republican. The bill Democrats now oppose was originally cosponsored by 13 of our Democratic friends. Thirteen of them cosponsored it. The bill Democrats now oppose was approved by every Democrat on the Judiciary Committee. Every single Democrat on the Judiciary Committee supported the bill.

The bill Democrats now oppose was brought to the floor last Monday after Democrats agreed unanimously to do that. But that was Monday. By Tuesday, Democrats were threatening to launch a historic filibuster against helping the abused and the enslaved—launching a filibuster against the abused and the enslaved.

Democrats' supposed rationale was that they had not bothered to read the very bill they introduced, cosponsored, and voted for. That in itself is a stunning admission. But as embarrassing as this admission might be for Democrats, it doesn't tell the full story. It is obviously absurd to believe that not a single one of the 13 Democrats who originally cosponsored this bill and not a single member of any of these Democrats' well-educated staff would have read this bill before agreeing to support it. It is really hard to believe; isn't it?

The bipartisan Hyde language Democrats now cite as the basis for their human rights filibuster would not have been hard to find. It was sitting right there on page 4.

Democrats would have recognized the bipartisan Hyde provision easily because so many Democrats voted to support the same bipartisan provision just 3 months ago in December. It was in the CRomnibus that most of our Democratic friends voted for in December—the very same language. So they surely would have recognized it sitting right there on page 4.

The top Democrat on the Judiciary Committee certainly would have noticed the Hyde provision he supported in December. He actually offered an unrelated amendment to the very same page as the provision he now objects to.

The bipartisan Hyde language is supported by about 7 in 10 Americans. How do the American people feel about the Hyde language? The Hyde language is supported by 7 out of 10 Americans as a policy principle and has been part and parcel of the legislating process for decades. It appears in just about every funding bill we consider, and it appears in numerous authorizing bills that have received bipartisan support.

Not surprisingly, the leadership of the House of Representatives said last

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

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night that ''any House-Senate agreement on a trafficking bill that includes a victims fund will'' have to contain ''the Hyde Amendment, as we have done for nearly 40 years.'' So the House of Representatives says that any bill that passes the House will also include this language.

What about that great bastion of conservatism—the Washington Post? The Washington Post recently noted in an editorial that ''the Hyde Act has been in force for four decades,'' and pointedly asked whether the inclusion of this bipartisan provision ''justifies the defeat of this important legislation.'' Given the long legislative history of this bipartisan provision and the overwhelmingly popular support for what it does, the answer, obviously, is no. No, most of our colleagues on the other side voted for this very same provision 3 months ago.

Let's remember what this debate should really be about. It should not be about what leftwing lobbyists want. It should be about helping the victims of modern slavery—victims such as Melissa, whom my colleague Senator CORNYN has spoken about before. She was sold into the sex trade when she was just 12 years old. She was beaten regularly and chained to a bed in a warehouse. She was even set on fire by those who enslaved her. That is Melissa's story. She said she just wanted to die.

When Melissa finally escaped the grasp of her tormenters, she was not treated like a victim. Melissa was treated like a criminal by our justice system. It is stories such as Melissa's that should motivate every Member of this Chamber to act.

The victims who suffer in dark warehouses may not have the same clout as the lobbyists who appear to oppose this bill, but these victims need our help, and they need it now. So if there truly are Senators who are concerned with removing a bipartisan provision they have supported so many times in the past, they should offer an amendment to strike it and then stop blocking this human rights bill. I offered them a chance to do just that last week.

Let's have a vote—a simple majority vote—on a measure they now belatedly find they object to, having supported it in the past, and then, as an official with the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women put it: ''Win or lose and move on.'' But as it stands now, in her words, ''Senate Democrats are choosing a phantom problem over real victims.'' That is the spokesman for the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women.

The White House needs to get involved here too. So far the White House has barely lifted a finger to help us pass this legislation, and that needs to change. I think the White House should do this because it is the right thing to do. But if that is not enough, they should also consider the consequences of Democrats making a historic mistake.

If Democrats actually vote to filibuster help for oppressed victims of modern slavery, I cannot imagine that the American people will forget it.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRIBUTE TO RUBY PAONE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the longest serving Member of this body is the President pro tempore emeritus of the Senate, PATRICK LEAHY of Vermont. He came to this body in January of 1975, 40 years and 2 months ago. But nipping at his heels is an individual well-known in this Chamber, Ruby Paone. Ruby came to the Senate right out of college and has worked in the Reception Room and other places in the Senate for decades—four decades, in fact.

Today marks Ruby's 40th anniversary of working in the Senate. To put that in perspective, she has worked through 7 different Presidential administrations, 16 different Sergeants at Arms, and has seen 383 Senators serve in this Chamber during her time.

After working with 383 different Senators, one would think that maybe she could not remember these names and faces, but that is not Ruby. She knows everyone and remembers everything during her time here in the Senate.

During these 40 years in the Senate, a lot has happened, not the least of which is meeting her husband, whom we all know, Marty. Marty also worked in the Senate for many, many years, eventually serving as the secretary of the majority, and we all depended on him so much.

In fact, Ruby and Marty were both here in the Capitol working on their wedding day. The Senate was in session until 12 p.m. that day. Marty and Ruby decided to get married 3 hours later, and they did.

Ruby and Marty have three wonderful children. I can remember their careers in soccer and working their way through school. Their children are Alexander, Stephanie, and Tommy. Ruby and Marty are rightly very proud of these three fine young people, one girl, Stephanie, and the two boys.

No words can adequately sum up the 40 years of service to our country, but Adlai Stevenson came close when he said: ''Patriotism is not a short and frenzied outburst of emotion but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime.''

I appreciate very much Ruby's steadfast dedication. I admire her continued support of this institution that is very dear to so many of us. Thank you, Ruby, for your 40 years of faithful service, and we look forward to many more.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that an article that appeared and was posted last night at 7:14 p.m. in the Washington Post be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 16, 2015]

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT ADDS 16.4 MILLION TO HEALTH INSURANCE ROLLS

(By Lenny Bernstein)

About 16.4 million adults have been added to health insurance rolls under the Affordable Care Act, which provided especially robust gains in coverage for minorities and states that expanded their Medicaid programs, administration officials announced Monday.

The total includes 14.1 million adults who joined the insurance rolls since October 2013 and 2.3 million younger adults ages 19 to 25 who were able to remain on their parents' health insurance plans since October 2010, when that provision of Obamacare went into effect.

Richard Frank, the assistant secretary for planning and evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services, called the gains ''historic,'' comparing the impact to the creation of Medicare and Medicaid in the mid-1960s.

HHS Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell said she was ''pleased'' with the numbers but added that the government still can enroll greater numbers of African Americans and Latinos.

''African American, Latino [rates] are not exactly where you want to be, because the [uninsured] numbers are still high,'' Burwell said. ''I believe we can do more.''

The Latino uninsured rate dropped by 12.3 percentage points between the first quarter of 2014 and the same period in 2015 as 4.2 million adults gained coverage. That ethnic group, however, continues to have the lowest rate of insurance coverage.

About 2.3 million African Americans enrolled, dropping that group's uninsured rate by 9.2 percentage points, and 6.6 million whites obtained coverage, a decline of 5.3 percentage points.

The data are based on surveys conducted for HHS. The totals do not show whether an individual obtained coverage through the new insurance marketplaces, a private employer or some other method. No numbers on children were included.

States that decided to expand their Medicaid insurance programs for the poor recorded bigger gains than those that didn't, reducing their uninsured rate by 7.4 percentage points as compared with 6.9 points for states that declined to expand.

Meena Seshamani, director of HHS's Office of Health Reform, said the 16.4 million newly covered adults no longer need to put off health care ''because they can't afford it'' or ''worry about going broke'' if they face a serious illness.

''Today's news is good for the health and financial security of millions of Americans,'' she said.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, referring to this article just printed in the RECORD: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released some very good news, further proof that ObamaCare is working and insuring millions of Americans—16.4 million to be exact.

Reading from the Washington Post report that is now part of this RECORD, I state:

About 16.4 million adults have been added to health insurance rolls under the Affordable Care Act, which provided especially robust gains in coverage for minorities—

And everyone, in fact—

and states that expanded their Medicaid programs, administration officials announced Monday.

The total includes 14.1 million adults who joined the insurance rolls since October 2013 and 2.3 million younger adults ages 19 to 25 who were able to remain on their parents' health insurance plans since October 2010, when that provision of Obamacare went into effect.

As if that weren't enough good news, the Department of Health and Human Services also reported that uninsured rates for minorities are plunging.

Quote:

The Latino uninsured rate dropped by 12.3 percentage points between the first quarter of 2014 and the same period in 2015 as 4.2 million adults gained coverage. . . .

About 2.3 million African Americans enrolled, dropping that group's uninsured rate by 9.2 percentage points, and 6.6 million whites obtained coverage, a decline of 5.3 percentage points.

So it is clear that the Affordable Care Act is working just as Congress intended.

Not only are record numbers of Americans gaining health coverage, but historically underinsured communities are now getting access to quality health care.

At some point, my Republican colleagues need to face reality. ObamaCare is helping their constituents.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION AND LORETTA LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to speak a little bit about human trafficking and Loretta Lynch.

The Republican leader is right. In an hour or so the Senate will vote to end debate on the human trafficking and child pornography legislation. That vote is going to fail. The Republican leader knows it is going to fail, just as I do. It is going to fail because Republicans have chosen to manufacture a political fight that has nothing to do with human trafficking.

Abortion legislation has no place in human trafficking legislation. The Republican Congressman who drafted this version of the human trafficking bill in the House said as much. Congressman ERIK PAULSEN 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.''

We have a long piece out of the New York Times. My friend quoted partially from the Washington Post. But let's be realistic. There has been a sleight of hand here to get the abortion language in this bill.

As this article indicates:

This legislation, which sailed through committee in February, stalled last week when Democrats noticed a provision that would prohibit money in the fund from being used to pay for abortions. The original Senate bill, introduced in the last Congress, made no reference to abortion. Nor did the House's version of the bill, introduced by Representative Erik Paulsen. Paulsen said, ''there is no reason it should be.'' He said last week, ''This issue is far too important to tie it up with an unrelated fight with politics as usual.''

Republicans say they routinely add the abortion language to bills, but Democrats say Republicans operated in bad faith—not to mention in violation of Senate norms—by misrepresenting the bill's contents.

This dispute has nothing to do with the needs of the Justice Department. It is beyond irresponsible to strand the Department without a leader, sowing instability and uncertainty in an important executive agency.

The chief law enforcement officer of our country is being detained because of this fight between us, Democrats and Republicans, over whether abortion should be in this bill. We believe it shouldn't be; Republicans believe it should be.

This is a good person who deserves our immediate attention. The Loretta Lynch nomination should be done immediately. There is no reason we can't do this now, today.

Would the Presiding Officer tell us the business of the day?

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

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. Under the previous order, the time until 11 a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum, and I ask unanimous consent that the time be charged equally.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. 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. CORNYN. Mr. President, at 11 a.m. this morning we will be having a very important vote on human trafficking in an important piece of legislation, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. I am glad this issue is finally getting the kind of attention it deserves, but I would be lying to you if I said I wasn't disappointed in the way this bill has become a political football for people who want to cause the Senate to cease to function entirely or to relitigate issues that have been resolved 40 years ago such as the Hyde amendment.

We in the Senate have an opportunity to do a great deal of good for thousands of people, including children who are victims of sex trafficking, many of whom are young girls not even of high school age. On average the typical victim of human trafficking is between the age of 12 and 14.

But instead of voting to pass this bill last week, as I had originally hoped, the minority leader, the Democratic leader, blocked the vote, and he has consistently taken the position that they are not going to allow us to progress with this legislation. The majority leader offered to give the other side a vote to strip out the language which they find offensive, but that was declined; and instead, the obstruction and the blocking of this legislation continues.

I would like to come back to the question that I have asked myself privately and I have asked here publicly repeatedly, and that is, Why are so many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle objecting to language they have repeatedly voted for time and time and time again? Why do they want to make this an issue on this piece of legislation, which is one of the rare islands of bipartisan comity, cooperation, and collaboration we have seen in recent times? Most importantly, why are Democrats going to the wall to block a bill that would help thousands of innocent victims of sex trafficking across the country who are crying out for our help? It truly baffles me, but that is what is going on.

Of course, we know human trafficking is a problem all across the country, including my home in Texas. I was recently reminded of a couple of Texas stories about how important it is that we pass this legislation, including a recent story out of Waco, TX, involving the Border Patrol, where it was reported that over the last 5 months the Border Patrol has apprehended 144 known sex offenders trying to sneak back into the United States illegally. So reportedly 100,000 people are trafficked each year, according to the Washington Post. They say an estimated 100,000 children are trafficked each year for sex. Why in the world can't we find some way to set these differences aside, to fight them another day, and to move on doing some good where we can by passing this legislation?

It has, unfortunately, become clear that this obstruction is about politics, plain and simple, because you know there is actually a whole lot of agreement about the importance of this legislation. For example, we have 12 Democratic cosponsors to this legislation. This bogus story you have heard about language being slipped in the bill that they didn't know was there is just that, completely bogus. Each of these Democrats has highly skilled professional staff, and they themselves weren't born last night, didn't fall off the turnip truck. They know what the legislation included, and it had language in it they had voted in favor of repeatedly in previous pieces of legislation.

Then there is the fact that all 20 Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee voted in favor of this legislation, including 9 Democrats, all Members of the Judiciary Committee. Then when it came to the floor last week, all 100 Senators basically consented to bring this legislation forward. So why is it that after so much bipartisan cooperation and trying to work together to solve a real problem and help the victims of human trafficking—particularly those 100,000 children trafficked for sex—how is it this legislation became a political football to relitigate the Hyde amendment? Well, unfortunately, we know the abortion lobby has been working very hard to derail this legislation. Why? Because they care about these victims of human trafficking? Absolutely not, because everyone knows the Hyde amendment language contains an exception for rape and the health of the mother. So under this act, these limitations on spending wouldn't have anything to do with the services available to help those victims of human trafficking.

I know that Members of the Senate on the Democratic side care deeply about this issue. I know the ranking member, the former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator LEAHY, cares deeply about this issue. I believe all 12 Democratic cosponsors of this legislation care deeply about this issue, and all Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee—all 20 of us who voted in favor of the legislation—care deeply about this issue. But there is one person who appears not to care one bit about this issue, and that is the senior Senator from Nevada, the Democratic leader. He apparently doesn't care at all about the victims of human trafficking. If he did, then I think he would find a way to work with us to pass this legislation.

Unfortunately, we are going to have a vote here at 11:00 which is going to be very telling. I hold out some hope that our Democratic colleagues who cosponsored this legislation or who previously voted for legislation that includes this same type of language or the members of the Judiciary Committee who voted to support this bill at the committee markup will find a way to vote for cloture to allow us to progress to final passage of this legislation.

There is going to be a very important choice. The choice is simply between the victims or party and lobbyists and outside groups who are trying to blow this piece of legislation up in order to relitigate the settled law of the land for the last 40 years.

In fact, the Washington Post editorial yesterday I think stated the issue very well. They said, at the conclusion of their editorial, ''the question is whether the Senators who want to accomplish something can overcome the advocacy groups and politicians who would rather use this controversy as one more opportunity to raise funds and to sharpen divisions.''

That is absolutely pathetic, that someone would use the plight of these victims of human trafficking to raise funds and to drive divisions between Americans.

So we will find out what the choice is and what Democrats choose. Will they follow the lead of the Democratic leader who apparently does not care about the consequences of this obstruction, and will they find a way in their heart to do what they know is right? Because they voted for this legislation previously, they have agreed to cosponsor it, and, of course, as I said, they voted for previous language that is identical to that contained in this bill.

I will quote from a Texas newspaper, the Corpus Christi Caller-Times, which published an editorial with the headline ''Anti-Trafficking bill is nothing to bicker about.'' That should be obvious, but unfortunately, the obvious has to be said, apparently time and time again.

The editorial closes with this line, which I find to be poignant. It says:

> This fight is supposed to be against human trafficking. Distracting attention from that fight is shameful.

It is shameful.

Scripture reminds us that it does not profit a person to gain the whole world and lose your soul, and I worry that the Senate is losing its soul and its unique role as an institution where we can actually work out our differences, we can have debate, and we can have votes, and we can actually make some discernible progress forward on behalf of the people we represent.

This is an important time of choosing for Members of the Senate. At 11 o'clock when we have this vote, we will need a handful of brave and courageous Members of the Senate on the other side of the aisle who will say to their leader: This is a bridge too far. We are not going to march in lockstep with the leader and take what could be legislation that will help these victims of human trafficking and turn it into a failure.

This is a time for choosing. I know there are Senate Democrats who care deeply about the victims of human trafficking. Unfortunately, not everybody does, or else we would not be having this obstruction. So I hope that our colleagues, in thinking about this vote today—or perhaps during a sleepless moment last night as they were contemplating this very important time of choosing—I hope that they will examine their conscience and that they will reflect on the reason why they came to the Senate in the first place. Was it to play these kinds of partisan political games to advance the fundraising interests of the abortion lobby or some other group who wants us to derail this legislation or to relitigate issues that were settled 40 years ago? That is not the reason why I believe the overwhelming number of the Senators came to the Senate. They came here because they wanted to do something good, something positive, something that would help the most vulnerable among us.

We will have that opportunity here today with this vote at 11 o'clock. Shame on us if we cannot rise to the occasion, if we cannot transcend this sort of partisan division and the tug at our sleeves by the outside groups who want to derail this important piece of legislation. Shame on us.

There is going to be a time of choosing. Everybody who votes will make a record. That record will be part of their permanent legacy in this body. History will reflect whom they chose in this fight—the 100,000 children who are trafficked for sex in America who might benefit from this legislation or the abortion lobby that wants us to relitigate this issue based on language that every single Democrat has voted for in one fashion or another time and time again.

This is a phony fight and a phony issue. We ought to do what is right. We ought to pass this legislation as soon as possible.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I hope we will do what is right, but I hope we will step back from either partisan name-calling or ascribing motives to people. Even though my dear friend from Texas voted against the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, I am never going to say he is for violence against women or for human trafficking, even though that bill had the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act as an amendment in it.

While he and the distinguished majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, Senator HATCH, Senator GRASSLEY, and others voted against the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, I would not ascribe to them a motive that they believe in violence against women or in human trafficking. Even though that legislation had a strong anti-human trafficking amendment in it, I do not ascribe their vote against the bill as admitting they are for violence against women or human trafficking.

One of the lessons that I have learned in my time as a Senator is that if you listen to the people you serve, really listen to them, you will almost always do the right thing. This morning, as

some Senators are trying to shut off debate and end our efforts to provide a comprehensive, victim-centered response to the horrible crime of human trafficking, I ask that we stop and listen. Listen to the voices of the survivors. What they are saying is clear: Stop playing politics with our lives.

Holly Austin Smith, a survivor, a girl who ran away at the age of 14, who was bought and sold for sex, put it this way:

> 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.

We ought to stand with these survivors and put aside our agendas. The survivors are asking us to vote against this bill because it includes unnecessary and destructive, partisan language.

A letter signed by the Alliance To End Slavery & Trafficking, Rights4Girls, Shared Hope International, and nearly 100 other anti-trafficking groups says this:

> We urge all members of the Senate to turn away from this divisive debate and find a bipartisan approach to this new initiative to protect and serve the needs of survivors.

Two years ago the Senate came together and passed an expansive new authorization of the Violence Against Women Act. I realize some in this body who now say we must vote for this bill voted against the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. But I worked for months with the remarkable people of the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, a coalition of thousands of organizations representing millions of victims of domestic and sexual violence.

They spent hours upon hours explaining what we needed to do to ensure that we protected all victims—and we listened. Together, we crafted a bill that responded to those needs. I trust these advocates. They have dedicated their lives to making sure survivors have a voice.

And here is what they are telling us:

> We write today to express our deep concern about the controversy of inserting the Hyde provision into the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. The House passed a version of that Act that did not include this new Hyde provision and we ask the Senate to do the same.

They are right. The highly partisan House passed a version of the very bill we are debating today that does not contain this unnecessary and destructive provision. That deeply divided body came together and they passed this bill with a unanimous vote just a few weeks ago, without this divisive language that Senator CORNYN has insisted be in the Senate bill. I am confident that if we did the same, we could also pass it easily.

I want to make clear to everyone who is paying attention to this vote, the partisan provision embedded in the Senate version of this bill is not something the survivors of human trafficking are asking for. It is not something the experts in the field who work with them every day are asking for. In fact, those who are closest to the damage wreaked by this terrible crime are asking us to take the provision out.

We are not talking about taxpayer money; we are talking about money collected from the various offenders who have already controlled too much of the lives of these women and girls. These survivors deserve more options, not fewer. It is in response to the request of these human trafficking survivors that I am opposing cloture on this version of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. I support the rest of this 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. These children are exceptionally vulnerable to human traffickers and we must not turn our backs on them.

If we are serious about helping to end this heinous crime, we must stop playing politics and start listening. Let's listen to the people who suffer from the trafficking. Let's listen to the victims. Let's listen to the experts who have always stood with us on this. They say: Take this provision out. Let's do so. The Republican-controlled House came together and they passed the House version of this legislation unanimously without this divisive language. Shouldn't we do the same thing? This is not a question of whether you are for or against trafficking. I do not think there is anybody who is for it. Those who, like me, actually prosecuted these cases know how important it is. So listen to the victims. They say: Take out this language and let's move forward. I will vote no on cloture so that we can move forward and return to the bipartisan path that we have always walked on this issue.

I yield to the distinguished Senator from Washington State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor with a simple message for our Republican colleagues: Enough is enough. The bill we are debating today, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, should without question be bipartisan because the bill about combating trafficking is no place for politics. That means it is no place for harmful, partisan measures that restrict women's respective health options. So it is deeply disappointing that over the last week, Republicans have insisted on including such a provision in this Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. Then, instead of working with us to take this provision out, get this bill done, and move on to other important work, they have dug in their heels.

Democrats want to work with Republicans on this legislation and get it back on track. We put forward a substitute that takes out the politics and focuses on what matters in this debate, which is helping the survivors of trafficking get the justice they deserve. It would be shocking if Senate Republicans refused to support this alternative just because it does not include an expansion of the so-called Hyde amendment that restricts women's access to health services—especially, by the way, since the House has already passed this bill without this harmful women's health provision, just as the Senate did last year. So we know Republicans can support an antitrafficking bill that does not hurt women. There is no reason why we should not be able to shift this back to something that both sides can support.

What makes all of this even worse is that the majority leader is now insisting on even more gridlock and dysfunction. He has said that in efforts to continue a political attack on women's health, he will not only hold up the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act but also the confirmation of a highly qualified nominee for Attorney General. That is indefensible. Loretta Lynch deserves a vote. She has been waiting longer than any of the last five nominees for Attorney General. She has been confirmed by the Senate twice already for her position for previous roles. She deserves to be able to get to work.

The majority leader has said the Senate will not move to her nomination until we finish the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. I would like to note that we voted last night on two other nominations, so it seems pretty absurd to say that we cannot work on both at the same time.

The bottom line is that Senate Republican have a choice today—politics as usual or working with us to get this done. They can continue to hold up important work, to draw out a political fight we have had again and again, or they can work with us to get our nominee for Attorney General on the job, pass the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and move on to tackle the many other challenges our country faces today. I really hope they will choose to work with Democrats, fight human trafficking, and help women across the country.

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. CORNYN. 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.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, James Lankford, Deb Fischer, Tom Cotton, Ron Johnson, Richard Burr, Daniel Coats, Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Tim Scott, Pat Roberts, Bill Cassidy, Jerry Moran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of human trafficking, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Alexander	Ernst	Paul
Ayotte	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Flake	Portman
Blunt	Gardner	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heitkamp	Rubio
Casey	Heller	Sasse
Cassidy	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Collins	Johnson	Sullivan
Corker	Kirk	Thune
Cornyn	Lankford	Tillis
Cotton	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Daines	McCain	Wicker
Donnelly	Moran	
Enzi	Murkowski	

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Hirono	Reed
Bennet	Kaine	Reid
Blumenthal	King	Sanders
Booker	Klobuchar	Schatz
Boxer	Leahy	Schumer
Brown	Markey	Shaheen
Cantwell	McCaskill	Stabenow
Cardin	McConnell	Tester
Carper	Menendez	Udall
Coons	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Franken	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Nelson	
Heinrich	Peters	

NOT VOTING—2

Cruz	Graham

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 43.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Shelley Moore Capito, Steve Daines, Roger F. Wicker, James Lankford, Deb Fischer, Tom Cotton, Ron Johnson, Richard Burr, Daniel Coats, Roy Blunt, Chuck Grassley, Tim Scott, Pat Roberts, Bill Cassidy, Jerry Moran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

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) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 73 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Alexander	Ernst	Paul
Ayotte	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Flake	Portman
Blunt	Gardner	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heitkamp	Rubio
Casey	Heller	Sasse
Cassidy	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Collins	Johnson	Sullivan
Corker	Kirk	Thune
Cornyn	Lankford	Tillis
Cotton	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Daines	McCain	Wicker
Donnelly	Moran	
Enzi	Murkowski	

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Hirono	Reed
Bennet	Kaine	Reid
Blumenthal	King	Sanders
Booker	Klobuchar	Schatz
Boxer	Leahy	Schumer
Brown	Markey	Shaheen
Cantwell	McCaskill	Stabenow
Cardin	McConnell	Tester
Carper	Menendez	Udall
Coons	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Franken	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Nelson	
Heinrich	Peters	

NOT VOTING—2

Cruz	Graham

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 43.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

The Senate majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is entered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this morning was a sad day for the Senate, when a straightforward bill designed to help the 100,000 or so children who are sex trafficked in America goes down because of the advocacy of a group that wants to turn this into an abortion debate and to change the settled law of the last 39 years.

As I said before the vote, I really feel as if this is a time when the very soul of the Senate is being tested. Are we going actually to break out of these shackles that we seem to be bound by, which say that we are going to turn every issue—no matter how sensitive or how much good could be done—into a political issue that divides us? I would have thought of all the topics where there would be bipartisan consensus, it would be combating the crime of human trafficking.

Indeed, everything that went on before today seemed to give me hope that we would be able to do that. For example, there is the fact that there were 12 Democratic cosponsors of the underlying legislation. In the Senate Judiciary Committee, there were 20 votes, a unanimous vote including 9 Democrats, in favor of the bill in committee, and it came to the floor of the Senate.

As the Presiding Officer knows, ordinarily we would have to jump through some procedural hoops. But thanks to the consent of 100 Senators, we did not have to do that so we could get on the bill and begin the open amendment process without having to jump through those hoops. At least that is what I thought. Then somehow, somewhere, somebody decided they wanted to pick a fight on something that has been the settled law for 39 years; and that is the Hyde amendment.

The Hyde amendment basically says that no taxpayer funds can be used to fund abortion except in the case of rape and in the case of the health of the mother being in jeopardy, as certified by a physician. So one might wonder why people want to fight over the Hyde amendment when the Hyde amendment itself has an exception for sexual assault, which obviously would be the major concern on behalf of any of these victims of human trafficking. That is why this has been called a phantom issue. I would use another word. I would say it is a phony issue. It is a fake fight in order to derail legislation which would demonstrate that we, on a bipartisan basis, can work together and try to solve a real problem and make progress.

I suspect the Presiding Officer had the same experience I did during this last election. Back in Texas, people would say: Can't you guys and gals get anything done in Washington, DC? Why is it so broken and so dysfunctional? Why can't you find common cause on something and make some progress and

deal with real problems that confront the people of Texas or the people of Oklahoma or the people of the United States of America?

Now, that doesn't mean we come up here and leave our principles behind. It is just the opposite. I am not suggesting for a minute, in the interest of compromise, that we leave our principles behind, but there is a lot we can do, consistent with our principles, to help pass legislation which will have a very positive impact on the American people.

The President mentioned issues such as trade as something we can work on together. But little did I imagine that the powers that be would pick on an anti-human trafficking bill in order to try to divide the Senate—in order to peel off the 12 Democratic cosponsors who didn't even vote. Many of them didn't even vote for the bill.

In other words, they were for the bill—enough to cosponsor it—and then this morning they did not vote to see the bill progress to final passage. I don't know how they can explain that or, frankly, how they can reconcile that in their own conscience, recognizing that this legislation was designed to help vulnerable children, by and large, who are victims of what we call modern day slavery—sexual, economic bondage.

This legislation was designed not only to rescue them but to help them heal and begin a path toward a better, more productive life. That is why this morning I said I really felt this was a vote for the soul of the Senate.

I cannot imagine any Senator who does everything they have to do to be elected to get to serve here—the hardship for your family, raising money, and all the stuff you have to do to get here—and then to squander it by refusing to take a step to help the most vulnerable people who exist in our country. It is just beyond my imagination.

But I am afraid this is more than about a piece of legislation. There is an idea here in the Democratic leadership that they really don't want the Senate to be able to function. They don't really want us to be able to pass legislation or solve problems. What they want to do is to have the talking point that after the last election nothing has really changed in the Senate—that it is just as dysfunctional as it was when they were in charge.

I am happy to say I am optimistic—despite this morning's vote—that we will begin to make some progress as soon as next week, when we will, I think, take the first step to pass a budget. It will be the first time a budget has been passed since 2009.

I am grateful to the majority leader, the Senator from Kentucky, for saying that we are going to come back and vote again and again and again on this human trafficking bill until it passes. He is not going to schedule the nomination confirmation vote on the next Attorney General until such time as we get this passed.

Unfortunately, that is what this place has degenerated into—everybody looking for leverage to try to get a little bit more of what they want, and in the process, the very people we are supposed to be trying to work for and trying to help get lost.

I am very disappointed. This is not why I came to the Senate. This is not the kind of Senate I want to serve in. This is not what my constituents—the 26.9 million people I work for in Texas—sent me here to do. They expect more of us. They deserve more of us. I hope, now that this initial vote has been cast—thank goodness for the four Democrats who broke ranks with their leadership on that side of the aisle and decided to vote to advance this legislation, but we still need two more. We still need two more brave Democratic Senators who are going to defy their leadership and not simply follow them off the cliff.

This is what, from a practical political standpoint, I don't understand. One reason why Republicans are in the majority now is because, frankly, the President's policies were repudiated in the last election and the people who ran for reelection as incumbent Senators didn't have a record of accomplishment they could point to. So what they were left with was a referendum on the President's record which they followed down the line, and they had nothing else they could point to that they actually had done on the Senate floor because the Senate had been locked down and no amendments, no good ideas, no votes occurred. We literally had a U.S. Senator from Alaska, for example, who was running for reelection after serving in the Senate for 6 years who could not point to a single bill or amendment that bore his name that had been passed. So when people wondered, What are the issues in this election, they were left with the President of the United States saying: My policies are on the ballot, even though my name is not. Then we had the incumbent U.S. Senator with no record of accomplishments separate and apart from that referendum on the President's policies, and that referendum—the President's policies—lost and the people who enabled them and supported them.

Frankly, I really don't understand the calculation of our colleagues on the other side who have now slavishly voted according to the dictates of their party leadership and said no to the victims of human trafficking who would have benefited from that legislation. I don't know how they reconcile that in their minds. I don't know whether they have had sleepless nights worrying about it or whether their hearts have become so hardened, whether they have become so accustomed to this sort of mindless partisanship that they don't even think about it anymore.

Thanks to the majority leader, we are going to have another opportunity for them to rectify their ''no'' vote. All we need is two additional Senators who will vote to progress this legislation given the next opportunity. So I hope our colleagues will reconsider.

RECESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess as under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:04 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Thank you, Mr. President.

First, let me say Happy St. Patrick's Day to all my friends and family and colleagues in the Senate.

(The remarks of Ms. STABENOW pertaining to the introduction of S. 758 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Ms. STABENOW. I yield the floor.

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

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

THE FUTURE OF COLORADO AND AMERICA

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, in 1893 Katharine Lee Bates made her way up the slopes of Pikes Peak and first wrote the words to one of America's greatest patriotic hymns, poeticizing ''purple mountain majesties'' and ''amber waves of grain.''

One hundred years ago, Enos Mills helped preserve ''mountain scenes of exceptional beauty and grandeur,'' giving to the country the crown jewel of American splendor, Rocky Mountain National Park.

For over a century, visionaries such as John Iliff helped to settle the high plains of Colorado, described by Ian Frazier as a ''heroic place,'' an expanse of splendid isolation with unparalleled sense of space and generations of pioneers.

This is Colorado. From west to east and north to south, the beauty, heritage, and vitality of Colorado calls and beckons across our Nation and the world to those looking and longing for a place to call home, to live and work, to visit and vacation.

Our love for Colorado drives us to be better stewards of the land, to reach for solutions to great challenges, and to find optimism in every vale and valley. For generations, we have challenged our sons and daughters to always look up—look up to that great

Rocky Mountain horizon—as our ever-young State and our ever-hopeful attitude live peak to peak—the honor of living in the west, a land of opportunity and new beginnings.

It is this constant drive for a better future for our great State and Nation that leads me to the floor of the Senate to speak for the first time, where my duties as Colorado's newest Senator begin, walking in the footsteps of Colorado's first Senators, Jerome Chaffee and Henry Teller, and alongside my colleague Senator MICHAEL BENNET. It is an incredible and heavy obligation to fulfill to well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office, defending our Constitution with faith and allegiance to the rights we cherish, but an obligation and duty every person in Colorado expects us not just to fulfill but to excel at—from Beecher Island to the Book Cliffs, from Fisher's Peak to the Pawnee. Somewhere in between is my hometown of Yuma, home to hardy pioneers that have seen the high plains through great success and record harvests, depression and dust bowls, drought and tragedy. Yet through it all, the good times and challenges, it is still called home by generations who would live nowhere else.

It is here in this little eastern plains town, weatherworn and always thirsty, that Jaime and I are raising our children, Alyson, Thatcher, and Caitlyn, in a home that once belonged to their great-great-grandparents and are surrounded in town by family, Lala and Papa, great-grandparents, and more.

No matter where across Colorado's four corners you live or across this great Nation, we all hope for the same thing for our children—to live in a loving community that values every citizen, where they learn the value of hard work and perseverance, where hard work is met with merited reward, and that they find a Nation of liberty and freedom that they help make a little more free and a little more perfect to carry on the tradition of our Founding Fathers, always endeavoring to be better tomorrow than they are today.

Our Nation has always understood that this endeavor is not something that is just passed on, hoping someone else does the work for us. It is something we ourselves have to fight for today. We are responsible for the starting point we hand to the next generation, and we have a moral obligation to make it the best point possible, always advancing.

To accomplish this I have laid out a Four Corners plan representing all areas of Colorado and those issues that matter most to the people of this country: growing our economy and getting this Nation back to work in the kinds of jobs with the kind of salary that allows people to achieve their dreams, to develop North American energy security while enhancing the protection and appreciation of our environment, and making sure that we give our children the tools they need to succeed in a world growing both in its complexity and its interconnectedness.

In rural America we must work not only to keep the generations of families who grew up there on the farm and ranch but to find new ways to bring new families back to the farms, ranches, and small towns throughout our great State. We must revitalize Main Streets that are slowly losing their place as the heart and soul of the community—boarded up and forgotten. To do this I will introduce legislation that will help provide ways to infuse new investments and life into our rural communities, called the Rural Philanthropy Act. It will help struggling businesses to find new private sector partners to serve their community, whether it is a smalltown newspaper or a local clothing store. It will help grow jobs and create more opportunities for startups and innovation.

We must look to reimagine burdensome rules and regulations that tie the hands of people who want to start a business by revitalizing Main Street and breathing new life into a tired city block. Doing good things shouldn't be so difficult, and we need a government that recognizes this.

Colorado's economy will also benefit from value-added trade opportunities with the passage of new trade agreements opening up new markets and eliminating barriers to growing markets. I will work to ensure that small businesses have the resources they need to participate in trade, making sure the benefit of new markets doesn't just stop at the biggest corporations.

Through my First in Space Initiative, we will focus on policies that promote and grow Colorado's leading aerospace economies, launching new jobs in space, engineering, and aeronautics.

A healthy economy means that everyone benefits—not just those who already have found success. That is why I will work to expand the earned-income tax credit. By eliminating the waste, fraud, and abuse all too common within the EITC, we can save billions of dollars and then use that money to expand the credit, making a program that has already lifted millions of people out of poverty to do even more good for people throughout Colorado and in our urban centers. Measuring a successful economy shouldn't simply be a matter of looking to see whether the haves have more but about what policies we have put in place to actually help the poor lift themselves out of poverty.

We are living in a veneered economy. While the numbers on Wall Street look good and profits are looking up, scratch the surface and too many people continue to suffer, endlessly searching for jobs they desperately need and earning the kinds of salary they need to help achieve their family's goals. While parts of Colorado may be succeeding, others are struggling. True success means that every part of our State's economy flourishes.

Thanks to our State's energy economy, parts of the State that seem to have been left behind are now thriving. A national policy geared towards North American energy independence will not only boost jobs and provide abundant and affordable energy upon which our economy relies, but it will boost our national security by providing to our allies abroad the energy partner they need that presents an alternative to nations such as Russia and Iran.

I look forward to continuing my push for an expedited export process for LNG, allowing Mesa and La Plata County energy producers the opportunity to play a leading role in national security while creating jobs at home.

Commonsense Colorado energy solutions also means focusing on renewable energy as well. Harnessing the winds in Weld, the sun in San Luis, and the power of water in the West, we can lessen pollution and help clean up the air. Working across the aisle with Senator CHRIS COONS from Delaware, I will focus on energy-savings performance contracts, an often overlooked private sector tool that has the potential to create thousands of jobs and save the taxpayer billions of dollars while helping to reduce pollution.

Reducing pollution and protecting our environment is a cornerstone of Colorado. I look forward to working with Congressman SCOTT TIPTON on legislation to help preserve and restore our great forest lands and to protect Colorado landscapes. Whether it is healthy forest legislation, reducing the maintenance backlog in our national parks or finding collaborative solutions to challenging land conflicts, we owe it to future generations of Coloradans to pass on an environment that is cleaner when they receive it than the one which we inherited.

Future generations of Coloradans also deserve the opportunity to receive an education. Whether that is fighting to restore local control to States, school districts, and parents or working to make the dream of a college degree a reality, our future depends on our ability to provide the skills and training for the next generation of leaders and entrepreneurs.

I will continue work on my legislation called the Making College Affordable Act. This will help families save for college and meet expenses in primary and secondary education. I look forward to promoting STEM education opportunities and transforming our immigration system from one that sends the best and brightest students back home to compete against us to one that allows them the opportunity to stay here in the United States to create jobs and innovation that we will continue to benefit from.

There is no doubt in the next 6 years many issues will arise that fall outside these Four Corner issues, and I look forward to meeting every single one of these challenges by finding new opportunities that will help make Colorado a better place.

I look forward to working with Congressman MIKE COFFMAN to finish the

VA hospital in Aurora, a hospital earned through sacrifice but tarnished by delay. When it is completed, it will give veterans a far better place for the care they deserve. That always must be our focus, making Colorado and the United States a better place, giving the people of this country the confidence that we can work together to achieve common goals, to strive for brighter horizons, to deliver to the American people a government they can be proud of again. I will work with Senator BENNET and anyone who is committed to these common goals.

Too many people believe that government can no longer address the great challenges of our time—an $18 trillion debt, mounting entitlement costs, a health care crisis that continues into the next century, and seemingly overwhelming policy challenges. Some leaders would have us believe they can't do anything about it, that a managed decline is better than a rapid decline.

The American people know better. They don't have to—and indeed, they will not—accept second best. A government that we can be proud of is one that solves the greatest challenges of our time, balances our budget, and puts in place solutions that rise above the rhetoric. A government we can be proud of again means an America that is always advancing and never in retreat.

Our search for solutions, our search for a government we can be proud of comes from the common bond—regardless of color, gender or creed, and, yes, even party—that we as Americans all hold: the shared story of our lives, the unrelenting American spirit. This is the American story.

We owe our Nation to the sacrifices made by millions of men and women for freedom for each other, to countless generations in the past and present who have worn a uniform in the defense of our Nation—a nation made exceptional by pioneering people, a nation of innovation and opportunity, a nation that imagines and inspires, a nation that rises above to be better tomorrow than we are today.

I grew up working at the family implement dealership, a family business that was started by my great-grandfather 100 years ago. Sweeping the floors and cleaning the bathrooms, I learned what it takes to make a business work. I learned about the employees who made the business function and how we succeed as a business when our employees succeed—the hard-working men and women who hope their aspirations will be fulfilled.

I learned from my grandma, the real life Rosie the Riveter who welded liberty ships in World War II alongside her husband, my grandpa. They gave up everything, moving their family and all they had in life to be part of the effort to win the war and to provide their four children with the opportunity to succeed and to build their own futures for their own families in a free world.

A few weeks ago, when going through some old boxes—a random collection of endless material, pictures—I discovered a stack of letters that were written by my grandfather to his parents and to my grandmother during World War II. The letters were written in near perfect cursive. Others were typed on an old hammer-strike typewriter they undoubtedly used to the last days of the implement dealership. He talked about the loneliness for home, new friends he had made during the war, questions about his young son, and the new countries he was visiting in France and beyond.

I would like to share parts of one of those letters today because it shares part of our American story. It was written on August 15, 1945.

> Dear Folks,
>
> Aha, that day, 14 August, is indeed a history making day, and last night at twelve o'clock when at last all the rumors were confirmed that the world was at peace I said a silent prayer and know that it won't be long until we are all together again. If you pull those reins hard enough, maybe I will be home for Xmas, mother, certainly have a good chance of making it now, although anything can still happen and there are thousands of miles to cover, but one can't help but be optimistic.

It must have been an incredible feeling to know that the war you had been fighting, the war that had consumed the world and taken our Nation's young men and women thousands of miles away from home was over, to have received word that ''the rumors were confirmed that the world was at peace.'' And after years of battle and weariness and a silent prayer, the optimism of one soldier and that soldier's Nation persevered.

There are countless families across this country who share a similar story. One of their aunts or uncles, parents or siblings are people who share the honor and the obligation of wearing a uniform for the United States of America with all of the responsibility that comes along with it.

They are people whom we will most likely never meet, nor will we ever be able to fully thank them, but they still fought for all of us. Through the words of one simple letter, we recognize the power of peace over conflict, of love for family and country. A silent prayer, no doubt of thanks, thanks for answering so many other silent prayers, silent prayers for a day of peace and homecoming. What it must have been like to know that the great darkness of war which threatened freedom not for some but for all had finally come to an end. Just like that, you will be home as if nothing ever happened.

Somewhere in that silent prayer, under the new calm of a war-torn horizon was the thanksgiving of a soldier for his victorious nation, a soldier looking to go home a civilian to live out his dreams far away from harm, in the arms of his family.

While we may disagree on the details of policy and the tactics of direction, let us make no mistake in our charge—to ensure that we have a nation that is worthy of the sacrifice so many have made; to refuse to pass on to future generations a nation in retreat or decline; to make sure ours is a nation that is always worth fighting for. This is Colorado. This is the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

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

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

REMEMBERING EDWARD WILLIAM BROOKE III

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, on January 3, the Nation lost a courageous public servant—actually, an icon of the 20th century: Massachusetts Senator Edward William Brooke III. He was 95 years old.

I have had the privilege of serving with more than 350 Senators since Vermonters first elected me to represent them in this Chamber. There is a very special list of those with whom I have served, and it is a privilege to count among those on that special list Senator Edward Brooke. We were both elected representatives of Northeastern States, even though we came from different political parties.

Senator Brooke and I forged a relationship that lasted long after he left Congress. We actually shared a similar start to our careers. As a former State's Attorney, I admired and respected Senator Brooke's legacy as a fearless prosecutor. As Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Senator Brooke exposed and fought against political corruption.

He was no stranger to breaking barriers, and he ultimately became the first African American elected in Massachusetts to serve in the United States Senate—a post he held for 12 years.

Senator Brooke was a problem-solver. He wanted to spend his time in the Senate making a difference, not just making pronouncements. He invested his considerable abilities in bridging racial, economic, and political divides to solve the challenges facing the Nation. He was a key, and sometimes crucial, voice along the difficult path toward enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1968. He spearheaded equal opportunity legislative initiatives from housing, to education, to employment. I think there was no bridge Senator Brooke was unwilling to cross to make lives better.

Senator Brooke is one of the few Senators to receive the Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He was also the recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal. His service in World War II was recognized with a Bronze Star.

This lifelong public servant dedicated his life to defending the bedrock principles of this country. His legacy of fighting for justice and equality is as important today as ever before. It is a legacy that will always deserve to be remembered and honored.

Marcelle and I feel privileged to have known him and I send my condolences to his wife, Anne, his children, and his grandchildren.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. President, the New York Times ran an editorial this morning aptly entitled ''The Loretta Lynch Confirmation Mess.'' The editorial writers note:

> Of course, as Mr. McConnell readily acknowledged, the delay [of the vote on Loretta Lynch's nomination] is not simply about trafficking legislation but a redirection of Republicans' fury at what they consider Mr. Obama's lawless actions.

If Republicans are serious about law enforcement, serious about implementing the legislation I hope will pass to combat and prevent human trafficking, they will stop their partisan attacks and allow a vote on Loretta Lynch's nomination. After all, she has a very good record of prosecuting people who are involved in trafficking. You can't say you are in favor of stopping trafficking and then block an Attorney General who has a record of enforcing the trafficking laws.

It has been 19 days since the bipartisan majority in the Senate Judiciary Committee favorably reported her nomination. She has been waiting longer for a floor vote than the five most recent attorneys general combined. She has been waiting for a vote for 19 days. If you took Attorneys General Reno, Ashcroft, Gonzales, Mukasey, and Holder, all of them together were 18 days. For Loretta Lynch it is 19 days.

It has certainly been much longer than for the three men nominated during the last Republican administration or for the incumbent Attorney General nominated by this administration. She has now waited, as I said, longer than the previous five Attorneys General combined.

If we don't vote on her this week, her nomination will have waited on the Senate floor longer than the most recent seven Attorneys General combined. I hope it doesn't come to that. That would show a real disdain for the Department of Justice in its efforts to enforce our laws, to stop trafficking, and to go after terrorists, but it is also beneath the Senate.

Certainly when I was chairman, I did not do that for President Bush's Attorney General nominee when he was in his last 2 years as President. As chairman I moved Judge Mukasey through in a fraction of the time we have taken on Loretta Lynch. I did this even though his nomination was not something I supported and I ultimately voted against it. I moved him forward quickly even though Judge Mukasey was unwilling to state how he felt about President Bush's position on torture and did not seem to have a position on the politicization of his predecessor, or his work with U.S. attorneys, things that set back law enforcement for years. In fact, even though he had no position on most of the issues President Bush was involved in, either through Executive orders or otherwise, he was still moved through in a tiny fraction of the time Loretta Lynch has been pending so far.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the New York Times article I mentioned earlier.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, March 17, 2015]

THE LORETTA LYNCH CONFIRMATION MESS

(By the Editorial Board)

What does the abortion issue have to do with the prevention of human trafficking? Nothing.

What do either of those things have to do with Loretta Lynch, whom President Obama nominated more than four months ago to succeed Eric Holder Jr. as attorney general of the United States? Even less.

Yet Ms. Lynch's confirmation as the nation's top law enforcement officer—which seemed like a sure thing only a few weeks ago—is being held hostage to last-minute political mischief.

Ms. Lynch, a supremely well-qualified prosecutor, has waited far too long to be confirmed. Senate Republicans said as recently as last week that they would schedule Ms. Lynch's confirmation vote for this week, but, on Sunday, the majority leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, said that won't happen until the Senate moves forward on a bipartisan trafficking bill, which would, among other things, establish a fund for victims through a fine paid by those convicted of trafficking crimes.

The legislation, which sailed through committee in February, stalled last week when Democrats noticed a provision that would prohibit money in the fund from being used to pay for abortions. The original Senate bill, introduced in the last Congress, made no reference to abortion. Nor did the House's version of the bill, introduced by Representative Erik Paulsen, a Republican of Minnesota. ''There is no reason it should be included in these bills,'' Mr. Paulsen said last week of the abortion language. ''This issue is far too important to tie it up with an unrelated fight with politics as usual.''

Republicans say they routinely add the abortion language into many bills and that Democrats should have read more carefully. Democrats say Republicans operated in bad faith—not to mention in violation of Senate norms—by misrepresenting the bill's contents.

This dispute has nothing to do with the needs of the Justice Department. It is beyond irresponsible to strand the department without a leader, sowing instability and uncertainty in an important executive agency.

Mr. Holder announced his retirement in September, to the evident delight of Republicans who have opposed him from the start. One would have thought they would be eager to see him go, yet almost six months later he remains in office because a replacement has not been confirmed. No one disputes Ms. Lynch's experience or accomplishments. She currently leads the federal prosecutor's office in the Eastern District of New York, and she has received the support of senators of both parties. The only objection anyone could come up with was that she might not stand up against President Obama's policies, an odd criticism to aim at a prospective cabinet member.

Of course, as Mr. McConnell readily acknowledged, the delay is not simply about trafficking legislation but a redirection of Republicans' fury at what they consider Mr. Obama's lawless actions. Ms. Lynch is ''suffering from the president's actions,'' he said Sunday, referring to Mr. Obama's move on immigration policy last November.

This is not the way for Republicans to reassure the country of their ability to govern now that they control both houses of Congress. Instead, they could start by ending the delay on what should be a straightforward floor vote and do the job Americans elected them to do.

Mr. LEAHY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH IRAN

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, next Tuesday, March 24, we will reach the deadline for the deal with Iran for its illicit nuclear program. That is the date by which the Obama administration said it would have a framework for a final agreement with Iran. So far, it seems as though the administration is willing to make a deal at any cost. America cannot afford that and Congress should not allow it. An overwhelming majority of Americans believe we should not accept a bad deal with the Iranians. In one poll earlier this month, 84 percent of Americans said it is a bad idea to accept the kinds of concessions this administration seems to be making.

The Obama administration started negotiating with Iran more than 5 years ago. It has mishandled these talks from the very beginning by conceding Iran's right to enrich uranium. This deal was supposed to be about stopping Iran's nuclear program as a pathway to a bomb. Negotiators started off by insisting that Iran should have no more than 1,500 centrifuges to produce nuclear materials. That number has steadily grown during the negotiations. According to David Ignatius in the Washington Post on February 24, the number is now four times the level where we started. His article is entitled ''A compelling argument on Iran.'' It says, ''The deal taking shape would likely allow Iran about 6,000'' centrifuges. So we have gone from 1,500 to 4,000 to now 6,000. The author of the article says one administration official told him that even 9,000 centrifuges would be okay.

Remember, Iran is not supposed to have a uranium enrichment program. The United Nations Security Council has demanded the program be suspended. So why is the Obama administration negotiating on this point at all? When did this change from being an attempt to stop Iran's nuclear program to become an attempt to delay or to manage Iran's nuclear program? If this deal makes too many of these kinds of concessions to the Iranians, it would be just one more example of the failed foreign relations of this Obama Presidency.

Go back and look at what happened with the Russian reset. It was the reset button Secretary of State Clinton launched in March of 2009—6 years ago this month. Look at her comments in which she said that Syrian President Assad was ''a reformer.'' President Obama talked about a redline with Syria—a redline that Syria could not cross by using chemical weapons against his own people. Assad crossed that line more than 2 years ago.

Remember when the President called ISIS a JV team?

This is all part of a pattern of the Obama administration underestimating our enemies and being outmaneuvered by them. This administration has a terrible record of being wrong about Iran as well.

When Congress was debating increased sanctions against Iran, the White House opposed those sanctions. Congress had to force sanctions authority on the President. It was those sanctions—the ones Congress imposed upon the President—that brought Iran to the negotiating table. Now the administration says it opposes congressional participation once again. Well, I don't believe the White House gets to be the sole decider on this important issue.

The administration claims it understands it would be better to have no deal at all than to have a bad deal, and I agree. That is why we need oversight—oversight by Congress—to make sure this is not a bad deal. The negotiators don't get to decide for themselves if it is a good deal or a bad deal. The American people get a say, and Congress, as the elected representatives of the people, is the right place for the people to have their voices heard.

So what does the Obama administration have to say about all this? The President's Chief of Staff sent a letter over the weekend, Saturday night—the Saturday night surprise—and he said Congress will get to be involved only after the administration signs a deal. Congress gets to be involved only after people get to find out what is in it, after President Obama signs a deal. It is kind of like NANCY PELOSI when she said of the health care law, first you have to pass it before you get to find out what is in it.

So why is it the Chief of Staff of the President is acting this way? Why is the Obama administration telling Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, to sit down and be quiet? Let's be clear about what is at stake here. If the Obama administration allows Iran to continue with its illicit nuclear program, the world will be less safe, less stable, and less secure. Any agreement must be accountable, must be enforceable, and must be verifiable. If that is not the case, then it is a bad deal.

We need to make sure this deal is about protecting Americans, not protecting the President's diplomatic legacy. If the Obama administration is so confident it can negotiate a good deal, why not let Congress participate?

We have bipartisan legislation here that Senator CORKER has written with Democrats and Republicans as cosponsors. That bipartisan legislation would make sure that congressional sanctions currently in place stay in place, and they stay in place long enough for Congress to hold hearings and to take whatever action is needed. That bill being proposed will be before the Committee on Foreign Relations next week. That bill will guarantee the President keeps an eye on Iran's compliance with any agreement. If the Iranians try to break the deal, we would know about it so that Congress would reimpose sanctions, reinstate sanctions.

The American people need to be involved in this process. Getting onboard and getting the approval of Congress only strengthens the agreement the administration negotiates. It will validate, give more legitimacy to it, and more credibility. Congress should and must be involved. It will make clear to both our allies and our enemies that America stands united in our commitment to ending Iran's nuclear program. It also makes it far more likely this agreement will outlast the Obama administration.

When President Obama and Vice President BIDEN were Senators, they favored this kind of involvement by Congress. They both actually cosponsored legislation requiring Congress to approve any long-term security commitment President Bush was to make with Iraq. Well, a long agreement with Iran over its nuclear program to me is even more important.

In one policy after another, President Obama has disregarded the views of the American people. This is a huge concern. He has ignored Congress. He acted on his own even when he had no authority to act. He has done it on the domestic side, he has done it on the foreign relations side, and it looks to me as if the administration is planning once again to ignore Congress and the American people in pursuit of an inadequate deal with Iran. It is time for Congress to step in and to stand up for the American people.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the Washington Post story of February 24 by David Ignatius entitled ''A compelling argument on Iran.''

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Feb. 24, 2015]

A COMPELLING ARGUMENT ON IRAN

(By David Ignatius)

Prussian King Frederick the Great offered this rebuke to those who refused to allow any concessions: ''If you try to hold everything, you hold nothing.''

President Obama might make a similar retort to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's attack on the alleged ''bad deal'' the United States is contemplating with Iran. Netanyahu rejects any concessions that allow Iran to enrich uranium; he thinks the U.S. goal of a one-year ''breakout'' period before Iran could build a bomb isn't enough.

To which several leading administration officials respond: Okay, then, what's a better practical idea for controlling Iran's nuclear program? They see in Netanyahu's maximalist goals an air of unreality—of fantasy, even. They grant that their solution isn't perfect. But they argue that it's far better for Israel and the West than any other plausible scenario.

The Iran nuclear talks, arguably the most important diplomatic negotiations of the last several decades, will come to a head next month. Netanyahu will take his case against the agreement to Congress on March 3 in an unusual speech organized by the Republican House speaker. His own political leadership will be tested in Israeli elections on March 17. The Iran negotiations will reach a March 24 deadline for the framework of a final comprehensive accord.

Israel's Minister of Intelligence Yuval Steinitz made the case against the Iran agreement in an interview with me last week. ''From the very beginning, we made it clear we had reservations about the goal of the negotiations,'' he explained. He said Obama's effort to limit the Iranian nuclear program for a decade or so, in the expectation that a future generation of leaders wouldn't seek a bomb, was ''too speculative.''

The administration's response is that the agreement is better than any realistic alternative. Officials argue it would put the Iranian program in a box, with constraints on all the pathways to making a bomb. Perhaps more important, it would provide strict monitoring and allow intrusive inspection of Iranian facilities—not just its centrifuges but its uranium mines, mills and manufacturing facilities. If Iran seeks a covert path to building a bomb, the deal offers the best hope of detecting it.

If the current talks collapsed, all these safeguards would disappear. The Iranians could resume enrichment and other currently prohibited activities. In such a situation, the United States and Israel would face a stark choice over whether to attack Iranian facilities—with no guarantee that such an attack would set Tehran back more than a few years.

The deal taking shape would likely allow Iran about 6,000 IR–1 centrifuges at Natanz. The Iranians apparently wouldn't install IR–2s, which operate twice as fast, and they would limit research on future models, up to IR–8s, that are on the drawing board. How these research limits would be monitored and enforced is a key bargaining issue. Another critical variable is the size of the stockpile Iran could maintain; U.S. officials want a very low number, with additional enriched material shipped out of Iran.

One official argues that the United States would be better off with 9,000 IR–1s and a small stockpile than with 1,000 IR–2s and a large stockpile. Netanyahu probably won't address this issue in his speech to Congress, since he insists the only acceptable number of centrifuges is zero.

Another key technical issue is how nonpermitted centrifuges would be dismantled. There is a range of options, from simply unplugging the equipment to pulverizing it altogether. The United States wants a formula that would require at least a year for the Iranians to restart the shelved equipment. As for the planned Iranian plutonium reactor at Arak, negotiators seem to have agreed on a compromise that will halt construction well before Arak becomes ''hot'' with potential bomb fuel.

The length of the agreement is a crucial variable. U.S. officials have always spoken of a ''double-digit'' duration period, somewhere between 10 and 15 years. Negotiators are also exploring the possibility of different phases

of the timeline, with inspection provisions having a longer life span than, say, limits on the number of centrifuges.

The deal-breaker for the administration is if Iran balks at U.S. insistence that sanctions will only be removed step by step, as Iran demonstrates that it's serious about abiding by the agreement. In the U.S. view, Iran has to earn its way back to global acceptance.

The Iran deal is imperfect. As Count Metternich observed in 1807 about negotiations with the rising powers of his day, ''Peace does not exist with a revolutionary system.'' But U.S. officials make a compelling case that this agreement is a start toward a safer Middle East.

Mr. BARRASSO. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TOOMEY. 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.

Mr. TOOMEY. Thank you, Mr. President. I rise to speak on S. 178, the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and the Toomey-Manchin amendment No. 291 to that bill.

First of all, I wish to thank Senator CORNYN for bringing this bill to the Senate floor. It is a bipartisan bill. It is an extremely important bill. It has been awfully frustrating that we can't even get onto this bill. It is especially hard to understand because of the fact that this is a bipartisan bill which has 10 Democratic cosponsors and another 3 Democrats who voted for it in the Senate Judiciary Committee. This shouldn't even be controversial.

It is particularly disturbing because when you think about what we are trying to address with Senator CORNYN's bill, it is awfully important. I mean, what can be more despicable than what we are trying to go after here—trafficking human beings? This is a form of modern-day slavery, is what it is, and some of the most despicable people in the world take the most vulnerable people in our society and they turn them into essentially slaves in the sex industry. I mean, as appalling as that is, it happens, and it happens in every State.

What this bill does is it provides more tools for law enforcement to better be able to crack down on this appalling practice and provides harsher penalties, as well it should, and it provides more resources for folks who do the important work of helping victims to heal, which is a very long, very difficult, very painful process. It is unimaginable what some of these folks go through. Children are forced into slavery, brutalized, beaten, and raped. It is dehumanizing—an atrocious situation. We have a bill which is bipartisan and which would actually do something constructive about it, and our Democratic colleagues will not even allow us to begin the debate, much less move on in the process.

I understand there is a provision in the bill they don't like. I get that. But we have offered repeatedly that they would be allowed to offer any amendment they like. They can offer an amendment to strike the language to which they object, and that is the way the Senate is supposed to work. You put a bill on the floor. If somebody doesn't like something that is in it, you try to change it. It is pretty basic, pretty fundamental, and that is what we ought to be doing. But we haven't been able to persuade enough of our Democratic colleagues to allow us to proceed to this bill yet. I hope we will soon.

One of the reasons I hope so goes beyond the substance of this bill, and that is the amendment Senator MANCHIN and I will introduce as soon as we are able to do that. This is an amendment which will allow us to amend the underlying trafficking bill with a bill Senator MANCHIN and I have introduced designed to protect kids from sexual abuse. It is amendment No. 291, and it is based on a bill we have called the Protecting Students from Sexual and Violent Predators Act. The goal is to protect kids from pedophiles in schools. That is what it comes down to. There is overwhelming bipartisan support for our legislation, the bill I introduced with Senator MANCHIN. It passed the House unanimously.

I rose last week to ask unanimous consent to bring up this amendment and make it pending so we could debate and we could vote on it, and one of our friends from the other side of the aisle objected to that as well. So there is no progress on this yet, but I am convinced that this isn't going to stand. I am convinced that enough Democratic Senators are going to come to their senses and they are going to join us in voting on this bill and that we are going to be able to somehow proceed with this and proceed with the various amendments I and others intend to offer.

I want to speak a little bit about my amendment because I think we are going to get to it. As I mentioned, it is about protecting kids at school from violent and sexual predators. Let me start with an observation that should go without saying, but I will say it anyway.

We all know that the overwhelming majority of school authorities, teachers and nonteachers alike, are very good and decent people and that it would never occur to them to abuse the children in their care. They are motivated in their desire to help kids succeed in the various ways they help guide these kids. I am completely convinced that the overwhelming majority of teachers and school employees don't want a pedophile anywhere near their school. They don't want them in the classroom next to them. They don't want them coaching their kids. They don't want them in any way involved because most teachers have good sense and decency. That is the way they are. But the reality is that schools are, in fact, where the kids are, and pedophiles know this. So we have a problem. The problem is that some of these predators are finding ways into the schools.

Stated very clearly, last year alone, 459 school employees—some teachers, some not teachers—459 adult school employees were arrested across America for sexual misconduct with the kids they are supposed to be looking after; 459 that we knew enough about what they were doing and the prosecutors felt they had a strong enough case that they could actually go ahead and make the arrest. How many more are under investigation? How many more where there are suspicions but no evidence with which to pursue a case? Probably a lot more. But we know for sure there are 459 appalling cases, and so far this year, we are on track to have similar numbers. We are 76 days into the school year, and over 90 school employees have already been arrested this year across the country.

This is absolutely a real problem. Some of these predators are finding ways to slip through the cracks of the system that is meant to keep them out, and Senator MANCHIN and I want to do something about it.

Here is our suggestion. We have a bill that does two simple things. It says to the State: If you are going to collect the millions of dollars in Federal funding that go to primary and secondary education, then you have to do a proper background check and you have to make sure you are not hiring a pedophile. You have to check the Federal and State databases to make sure you are doing a thorough background check. And the second requirement is you can't engage or permit anybody to engage in this appalling practice that is known as passing the trash. It is shocking that this could even exist, but it does.

I will tell you the story that actually inspired this legislation, which is a case in point of passing the trash. The story begins with a teacher teaching in Delaware County, PA. This teacher was a pedophile who was molesting boys who were in his care. The school district figured out what was going on. There was never enough evidence to actually prosecute him, but they knew something was very wrong. The school district decided it would be better if this teacher became someone else's problem, so, as appalling as it is, what they did was they wrote a letter of recommendation to recommend this teacher for another job provided that he leave. Well, he leaves. He goes across the State border into West Virginia, applies for and, in part on the strength of the letter of recommendation he had, he gets hired at a school in West Virginia. He works as a teacher. He resumes what these people do—abusing children. Eventually, he becomes principal, and while principal at the school, he rapes and murders a 12-year-old boy named Jeremy Bell.

So the practice of sending a letter of recommendation along with a monster

such as this is known as passing the trash. As appalling as that is, it happens enough that it has its own name. As a matter of fact, just Friday, I was in Pittsburgh and I was visiting a wonderful group of people—Pittsburgh Action Against Rape—a great group of professionals who do wonderful work, mostly helping victims cope with the aftermath of their assaults. One of the people I met there and heard from is the president of the board of directors. Her name is Beth Docherty. She told her story. Her story began when she was 15 years old. She was in the band at her school when the band instructor began to rape her. When she came forward and told the authorities what was happening, the school promised the teacher they wouldn't conduct any investigation if he would just quietly resign. Then the school wrote a glowing letter of recommendation for this guy, which he took with him, went to Florida, and found a teaching job there.

Fortunately, the prosecutors in the case in Pennsylvania felt confident that they had a strong enough case, and in time they were actually able to get him back from Florida. They prosecuted him and they locked him up, and he is in jail today, where he belongs and might be for the rest of his life.

The point of this is, as appalling and shocking as it is to our conscience that anyone would do this, I am here to say it happens. It happens, and we need to do something about it for the sake of Jeremy Bell and for the sake of Beth Docherty and who knows how many other children.

Our legislation simply requires that the State have a provision in its law that makes it illegal to knowingly recommend for hire someone who is attacking kids. This, too, strikes me as a bill that should not be controversial. It passed the House unanimously. But there are people who are trying to kill this bill. We have some of our friends on the other side of the aisle, and outside organizations from the left have argued against this.

I want to quote from a letter that was sent to all of us explaining why a number of those groups are opposing the legislation. Here is the quote. This is what they say in their letter:

''Individuals who have been convicted of crimes and have completed their sentences should not be unnecessarily subjected to additional punishments because of these convictions.''

Well, wait a minute. Think about the logic of that position. By that logic, an admitted convicted child molester who serves a 10-year prison sentence for his crime should be able to walk out of the jail, walk down the street, apply for and get a job teaching elementary schoolkids. How ridiculous is that? It is completely ridiculous.

Our kids should not be involuntary members of a social experiment where we are trying to see which convicted child molesters are going to be recividists. Frankly, most of them are. I am not willing to take the risk that our kids should be left alone with people like that. We have a National Sex Offender Registry for a reason. It is because we recognize those people pose a danger that extends past the time of their incarceration. Parents need to know about that. That is why we have this national registry. Schools need to avoid the danger.

To be clear, I am not suggesting a convicted child molester can never work again anywhere, but I am saying they should not work in a school. I think that is completely reasonable. I am shocked, frankly, that these organizations would come out against this commonsense legislation.

But the objection, in fairness—some objection comes from our side of the aisle as well. I have a colleague for whom I have all the respect in the world. The senior Senator from Tennessee is a wonderful Senator. I agree with him on far more than I disagree. But I have to say, I strongly disagree with his view of this particular view. He has been here on the Senate floor. He has been very upfront with me about his opposition to our bill. The basis of his opposition to my bill is he believes that passing the legislation Senator MANCHIN and I are proposing, requiring background checks and forbidding the passing of trash, constitutes the equivalent of a national school board, that it is an unreasonable infringement on schools.

Well, I could not disagree more. Now the idea of a national school board is a terrible idea. I have no interest in that. You will never hear me arguing that the Federal Government should impose on States and school districts things such as appropriate class size, or whether you should teach geometry before algebra in middle school, or what grade should students read ''The Grapes of Wrath.'' Any of those kinds of curriculum issues or testing issues should be left to local school boards and States. But that is not what we are trying to do here.

What I am saying with my legislation with Senator MANCHIN is if a State takes billions and billions of Federal tax dollars each year, then you cannot use that money to pay the salary of a convicted child abuser. I think that is totally different. That is nothing like a national school board.

Furthermore, we all voted in favor of the substance of these background check requirements when we all passed the child care development block grant bill, which, by the way, passed this Chamber with one dissenting vote. It was 98 to 1. There was one ''no'' vote, which had nothing to do with the background check provisions, by the way. The senior Senator from Tennessee was an original cosponsor of that legislation.

By the way, that also passed the House unanimously. It is virtually identical. It holds that children in these daycare centers should have the protection that comes with knowing the employees have gone through this background check system.

So do we have a national daycare board? I do not think so. If it is okay to protect the youngest of kids, which it certainly is and should be, why cannot we also extend that protection to kids who are a little bit older? We are insisting on a standard that is appropriate and rigorous for kids who are toddlers. Then when they go to kindergarten, we are not going to have the same standard to protect them? That makes no sense to me at all.

Then another point I would make regarding this idea of a national school board is this practice of passing the trash. When a school district sends a letter of recommendation for a known offender, and he takes that letter with him and goes across State lines, what can a single State do about that? The case I described of Jeremy Bell, the little boy who was killed by the teacher in West Virginia who originated in Pennsylvania—what could West Virginia do to forbid Pennsylvanians from sending a letter of recommendation for that teacher? Absolutely nothing is the answer. Because West Virginia's legislative authority does not reach into Pennsylvania. This happens across State lines. In fact, it is a very conscious decision on the part of many of these predators, because they want to put as much distance between their criminal activities as they can. When they move, they move far sometimes. So this demands a Federal response. There is nothing a State can do to solve this problem. That is why we address it in our bill.

The other point I would make is, look, this is not the first time we have had the Federal Government establish some employment standards. We have Federal laws that, for instance, ban discrimination in schools. Schools are not permitted, under Federal law—you cannot discriminate in your hiring on the basis of sex or race or age or religion or pregnancy. Does that mean we have a national school board? Does that mean we have a national school board? Does this mean we have to repeal all of these laws? I do not think so. I think it is perfectly reasonable to have employment standards.

Finally, I would say do we not have some responsibility of oversight of how Federal tax dollars get spent by the States? I mean, do we send the money and say: Hey, here is a pile of cash, do whatever you like with it? I do not think that is a very reasonable standard. What could be more reasonable than simply saying you cannot use Federal tax dollars we are responsible for if you are going to use it to pay the salaries of convicted child abusers. I think that is pretty straightforward.

I will say there may be alternative amendments here. There has been some discussion that some of our colleagues may offer alternatives to the legislation Senator MANCHIN and I have. I am still willing to work with anyone on our side or the other side of the aisle.

If we can constructively work—if the goal is to actually get something passed that is going to be helpful, that is going to be constructive, then I will work with anybody to get there. But there are a few things I will not agree to. I will not agree to a provision that, under the guise of privacy, requires a school to stay silent while a known child molester seeks a new teaching job. That is not reasonable. I will not agree to a bill that does nothing to change the status quo, a bill that does nothing to provide additional protections for our kids.

Unfortunately, in my view, the amendment that is offered by the senior Senator from Tennessee fits into this latter category. He has got an amendment that I think provides absolutely no additional protections. It says all States have to have a background check system. But guess what. All States already do. The problem is, many of them are inadequate. As I said before, there is nothing a State can do about passing the trash across State lines. So it does nothing to stop passing the trash. It does nothing to stop schools from hiring a convicted child rapist. It does not say anything about the standards of the background check. The bill is so loose that if a State simply decided to do a Google search, that would meet the criteria of the bill. It is completely unacceptable. It does not change the status quo. It does nothing to protect the kids. You could make the argument that this bill is arguably worse than doing nothing, because it could undermine the effort to do this right, create the illusion of having done something at the national level when, in fact, it has not done so.

I will conclude by simply saying I am not prepared to settle for the status quo. I am not satisfied when we have a situation where 459 school employees are arrested in a single year—arrested for sexual misconduct with the kids they are supposed to be taking care of. Obviously we have a problem here. I am not going to settle for a pretend piece of legislation that accomplishes nothing.

What comes home to me is my own three kids. I have three young children. When one of my children gets on a schoolbus in the morning, I have every right to expect the school that child is going to—the school my child is going to—is as safe an environment for him or her as it can possibly be. Every other parent in Pennsylvania and every parent in America deserves to have peace of mind. Every child deserves to have that security. So that is why I am not going to give up on this.

I am confident at some point our Democratic friends are going to realize it is a huge mistake for them to continue their filibuster of the trafficking bill. When they do, they will agree to let us proceed to it. When that happens, I will be back. Senator MANCHIN and I will offer our legislation as an amendment. We are going to have a debate about it. We are going to have a vote about it. I certainly hope we win this vote. This, again, is legislation that passed the House unanimously. If it passes the Senate, it is sure to become law. If it does not pass for some reason, then I am going to come back again and again until it does.

I hope we will take this up sooner rather than later. I hope we get on this bill still this week. There is still time. I know we will have an open amendment process when we do. I look forward to offering this amendment.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, yesterday, I, along with a number of my colleagues, filed an amendment to the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. This amendment, based on the Rape Survivor Child Custody Act which we filed as a stand-alone bill last Congress, would provide grants to States that have laws on the books that allow women to petition for the termination of parental rights based on clear and convincing evidence that a child was conceived through rape. The goal is to encourage more States to adopt such laws.

The amendment as drafted gives broad discretion to the Attorney General to determine which States are eligible for grants and which are not. For that reason, I would like to say a few words regarding our intention in drafting this amendment.

Under the Rape Survivor Child Custody Act, the Attorney General is empowered to make grants to ''States that have in place a law that allows the mother of any child that was conceived through rape to seek court-order 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.'' Termination is defined as ''a complete and final termination of the parent's right to custody of, guardianship of, visitation with, access to, and inheritance from a child.''

There are a number of States that have such a law on the books but which also state that parental rights can be reinstated if extenuating circumstances occur. And while the bill states that a determination must be final, the bill was drafted with the idea that there is a difference between a ''final'' determination and an ''unmodifiable'' one. And States with such laws on the books should still qualify because the amendment does not say the determination has to be unmodifiable, just final.

The intention as currently drafted is that 10 States would be eligible under their current laws. These 10 States are Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Once this amendment is hopefully adopted as part of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking and passed into law, I am confident that the Department of Justice will concur in this assessment.

In addition to this amendment, I have two other amendments which I filed yesterday. The first amendment would provide help support local law enforcement in their efforts to track down homeless and runaway youth by providing funding for retired Federal agents who assist the local law enforcement in these investigations.

In September of 2013, a group of retired FBI agents in Northwest Ohio came to my office and asked for help in creating a pilot program that would allow retired agents to assist local law enforcement in finding runaway children and teens. Generally, Northwest Ohio children who become involved in trafficking do so within about 2 weeks of running away from home, so finding them quickly is critical. Overall, about one-third of runaways become victims of trafficking.

Toledo has just one detective working on missing person's cases, both adults and children. These retired FBI agents want to help law-enforcement officials investigate the 18,000 runaways in Ohio every year, but they need resources. Police don't have the manpower to track these children, but every city has retired agents who could assist the ''overworked'' departments.

The second amendment mirrors Congressman MALONEY's Human Trafficking Prevention Act. This legislation comes in response to a State Department inspector general report recommended the changes made by this amendment. It would train Foreign Service officers working at U.S. Embassies overseas to help stem the demand for trafficking and spot victims before they are trafficked into the United States. It passed the House in January on a voice vote, and I am confident that it would find similar broad support in the Senate.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. AYOTTE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VOTING RIGHTS ACT ANNIVERSARY

Mr. COONS. Madam President, today is the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the bipartisan Voting Rights Act of 1965, a day we are reminded of what is possible when we come together across party lines.

It was 50 years ago today that Republican minority leader Senator Everett Dirksen and Democratic majority leader Senator Mike Mansfield came together on this floor to introduce landmark legislation that sought to fulfill the promise of the 15th Amendment to the Constitution and ensure that no person would be denied the right to vote because of the color of his or her skin.

I was reminded of the power of their example just 2 weeks ago when I gathered with Republicans and Democrats from the House and Senate in Selma, AL, to honor the Americans who came

from across our country 50 years ago to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma and demand equal voting rights. Their example was one of unity, as was the example of Members from both sides of the aisle who came together to introduce and eventually pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

So I am concerned as I come to the floor this afternoon about our troubling inability to come together in this Chamber on issues where there clearly should be broad agreement as well. I have with me a photographic reminder that the last time the Voting Rights Act was signed into law—was reauthorized—it was signed by Republican President George Bush, with the support of both Democrats and Republicans in the then Congress.

Those of us who gathered 2 weeks ago at the bridge at Selma were treated both to a stirring speech by our current President, and the cheering presence of President Bush, when a challenge was issued to those Members of Congress present that we should come together, fix the Voting Rights Act, and reintroduce it in this Chamber.

When it comes to voting rights, it surely is true that today's America is not the America of half a century ago, just as today's hurdles to the ballot box are not the same as in the time of Jim Crow. Yet it is also true that in too many cities, towns, States, and counties across our country, new roadblocks are being built to make it more difficult for Americans to vote.

It is clear that, as President Obama said to us on the Edmund Pettus Bridge 2 weeks ago, ''our march is not yet finished.''

In the coming weeks, as Senator LEAHY, I, and others work to bring to the Senate a new voting rights act that reflects today's challenges, it is my sincere hope and my prayer that Republican colleagues will partner with us to continue the work that remains undone.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Madam President, this was also to be the week that we would take up, consider, and vote on the nomination of Loretta Lynch to serve as Attorney General. I must say that the Senate's proceedings this week do not portend well, because we find ourselves, yet again, stuck in regrettable partisan gridlock.

For the past 129 days, we have had before us an incredibly qualified and talented nominee for Attorney General. Loretta Lynch was first nominated by President Obama in November. She has now waited for a vote longer than any Attorney General nominee in 30 years.

As of today, her confirmation has waited longer on the floor than the last five Attorneys General combined.

That is unacceptable, and I frankly haven't heard a single good reason from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle for why Ms. Lynch's nomination deserves such a delay. Instead, her nomination is being used by many to continue their fight with the President over his immigration policy, and this is after nearly shutting down the Department of Homeland Security because of those same disagreements.

While we do need to have a focused and functional debate in this Congress about immigration, it is simply irresponsible to hold up a highly qualified nominee for Attorney General because some don't like that she agrees with the very President who nominated her.

I take very seriously the Senate's role to advise and consent on Presidential nominations. So let's just take a minute and look at Loretta Lynch's experience, her background.

She is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. She spent 8 years in private practice at a prestigious law firm, then known as Hogan & Hartson. She served on the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

She has served the public and previously been unanimously confirmed by this body—twice, I should add—to be the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York. That is a job where she has prosecuted drug crimes, violent crimes, and where she has taken on corrupt politicians.

At her nomination hearing in the Judiciary Committee, on which I serve, our chairman called an outside witness panel of nine witnesses. When asked, not one of them said they opposed Ms. Lynch's confirmation to be Attorney General on the basis of her skills or experience. The committee was, in fact, unable to produce one shred of testimony in opposition to her nomination.

Yet we stand today in the middle of March and the first African-American woman ever to be nominated Attorney General of the United States, our Nation's top law enforcement official, has foundered on this floor longer than the five prior nominees combined. I think this is unacceptable and sets an unfortunate, even dangerous precedent. We should not play political games with the Department of Justice, an executive branch agency with 125,000 employees and a $28 billion departmental budget that is charged with all sorts of different law enforcement functions, from running the Federal prisons to enforcing the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act, to making sure we fight human trafficking and money laundering.

Frustratingly, we find ourselves this week also considering a bill to combat human trafficking, which we don't seem to be able to move forward. It is important legislation that includes broad bipartisan support, except for a simple, partisan, political provision that has now turned it into a divisive issue.

The Republican leader this week has argued that once we finished work on this human trafficking bill, we could then move on to Loretta Lynch's nomination vote. But I am forced to wonder when the delay tactics here will end.

Not only is it seemingly untrue that we can't do human trafficking legislation and this nomination at the same time—because if my memory serves, we just confirmed two other executive branch nominees last night—but the Republican leader knows well that if he truly wanted to move this bill forward, Democrats would be ready to partner with him with just a minor revision to the bill.

There is, in fact, a bitter irony that, as was reported last night, Loretta Lynch's confirmation is being held up over an issue—human trafficking—which she herself said she would prioritize if confirmed.

I ask my Republican colleagues: Let's find a way to move forward on all of these issues—on combatting human trafficking and confirming Loretta Lynch to serve as Attorney General and on reauthorizing the Voting Rights Act, which is such an important linchpin of civil rights in this country.

We agree that we need to combat human trafficking. So let's work together on the broad areas where we are, in fact, united. Let's confirm an Attorney General nominee who is qualified, smart, and will give the fight against human trafficking the dedication it deserves. Ms. Lynch would make a superb Attorney General.

As someone who has herself served in law enforcement and served in that role at the State level, I think the Presiding Officer appreciates the importance of having a confirmed Attorney General to lead our Federal Department of Justice.

Loretta Lynch has demonstrated—throughout her confirmation process and through her many years of service to her country—that she is well and amply prepared and qualified to take on this vital and important role.

I urge my colleagues to end the delays and give Loretta Lynch the vote our country deserves.

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

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

BRINGING MONTANA SOLUTIONS TO WASHINGTON

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, it is an incredible honor to represent Montana in the Senate. More than 150 years ago, a young Norwegian woman named Karine Dyrud immigrated to this country. She came in search of freedom and opportunity. She came to a nation where government served the people and not the other way around. After her husband passed away, this tough widow and mother of seven headed West to Montana and settled with her children about an hour north of Great Falls.

Karine Dyrud was my great-great-grandmother and the beginning of my Montana story. Her perseverance is the reason why my family has called Montana home for five generations. It is

why Cindy and I have been able to pass along the legacy of faith and freedom, of personal responsibility, to our four children.

We are blessed to live in the greatest Nation on Earth, and it is a solemn responsibility of the Senate to do everything in its power to keep it that way.

Before I was elected to Congress, I spent 28 years in the private sector growing companies and creating jobs. In fact, I am the only chemical engineer in Congress. In the private sector, we understand the importance of hard work, of innovation, accountability, and not spending more than you take in.

The freedom of ideas and trade, private property and opportunity, are the fundamental elements of liberty and of prosperity. These are the elements that helped RightNow Technologies—a Montana-based cloud computing business that I served as vice president of for 12 years—grow from a small startup into a publicly traded company and a global leader in cloud computing. We created over 1,000 high-paying jobs—jobs that support a vibrant community with good schools and quality of life for Montana families.

Unfortunately, Washington, DC, under the guise of equality, is encroaching upon these freedoms, replacing the constitutional rule of law through elected officials with bureaucratic rule that is unaccountable, inefficient, ineffective, and far too costly. Washington is more concerned with its own self-interest and self-gain than the well-being of the American people.

As we begin consideration of the Federal budget this week, we must hold government accountable to the people. Last year, the New York Times did an assessment of the health and wealth of every county in the Nation. You might expect folks in Silicon Valley to be doing fairly well or perhaps in the suburbs of New York City. What shocked me was seeing that six of the Nation's top 10 wealthiest counties surround Washington, DC. That sends a pretty clear message about where Washington priorities are.

During the recession, while millions of Americans were struggling to make ends meet amidst layoffs and economic instability, Washington, DC, thrived. The Federal Government poured millions of dollars into new buildings, and salaries kept growing and growing.

It is time for Washington to be held accountable to the American people, and that is why the first bill I introduced in the Senate was the Balanced Budget Accountability Act. It simply requires Congress to balance the budget or Members won't get paid. It is not that complicated. It is easy to measure. It is very simple. No balanced budget, no paycheck.

Washington is out of touch with the day-to-day struggles that American farmers, ranchers, union workers, and tribal members face every day. Look no farther than President Obama's recent veto of the Keystone XL Pipeline. Instead of working toward North American energy independence, President Obama continues to play politics with good-paying American jobs. Instead of advancing economic opportunity for hard-working Montana families, President Obama is instead perpetuating his war on energy and standing in the way of affordable made-in-Montana and made-in-America energy.

While serving in the House, I invited Crow tribal chairman Darrin Old Coyote to testify before the Natural Resources Committee. The Crow Reservation in Montana is home to some of the richest energy reserves in our country, but the President's senseless agenda is preventing them from developing their resources. What Chairman Old Coyote said has stuck with me. He said, ''A war on coal is a war on the Crow people.''

President Obama and the EPA's regulatory overreach is a direct threat to thousands of jobs and our Nation's economic future. We shouldn't be hitting pause on American energy production. We need to encourage it. More made-in-America energy doesn't just mean more money in the pockets of hard-working families. It also means more jobs. It means energy independence.

Our energy security, though, isn't just about jobs and low energy prices. It is tied directly to our national security. I am happy to report the United States will become the largest oil and gas producer in the world this year, surpassing both Russia and Saudi Arabia. As we see the growing threat of ISIS and a nuclear Iran, one thing is clear: We need more made-in-America energy, not more made-in-the-Middle East oil.

We have tremendous opportunities to develop our Nation's energy resources and create new jobs across the entire Nation, but we must allow the States to take the lead. Rather than moving forward with commonsense, job-creating solutions, such as the Keystone Pipeline, Washington continues to put barrier after barrier up to prevent job creation and the responsible management of our resources.

We see that in our national forests and our public lands. Our public lands out West are a tremendous asset to our tourism economy and our way of life. It is one of the many reasons people come to Montana in the first place. But the Federal Government's perpetual failure to properly manage our national forests has led many of Montana's forested counties into economic despair. Like many Western States, Montana once boasted a robust timber industry. Now timber harvests in our national forests have declined 82 percent. In fact, I had dinner one evening with a couple from Eureka, MT, up in the northwest corner of our State, in Lincoln County. They said: STEVE, basically we describe this area now as poverty with a view.

We must implement meaningful forest management reforms that get our timber industry up and running again. It improves the health of our forests and it ensures our rural counties aren't dependent on the whims of the Federal Government's annual budget. But we must ensure that States have primacy in these decisions. We must ensure the hard-working farmers, the ranchers, the loggers, and the sportsmen who live, work, and recreate on these lands every day have their voices heard, and that those closest to the land are guiding management practices, not bureaucrats in Washington, DC, or lawyers in San Francisco, who would be hard pressed to find Montana on a map.

But Washington's overreach doesn't just affect our natural resources. We are seeing it in our technology sector and the Internet. I worked in the technology sector for more than 12 years. I know firsthand how the Internet has removed geography as a constraint for countless businesses in Montana and across our Nation.

I know technology has created jobs and economic opportunities in communities where little previously existed. We must encourage the growth of these high-tech jobs in Montana and across our country. These are good-paying jobs that will help us grow economically and allow us to remain globally competitive.

The Internet is a laboratory of innovation, yet DC wants to tie our entrepreneurs' hands by placing more regulations on the Internet. The FCC recently approved a 300-plus-page plan to regulate Americans' Internet access as a title II utility, in short, a government takeover of the Internet. That is like putting a buggy whip manufacturer in charge of Tesla.

The Internet is unconstrained innovation. That is why I will stand strong against DC's attempts to tax the Internet, to regulate the Internet, and to stifle innovation. If we want to remain the greatest Nation in the world, we need to remain globally competitive, and technology plays a key role in that.

We also must implement meaningful tax reforms that encourage American businesses, incentivize American businesses to grow and create jobs here at home, not overseas. During my time at our software company, in the last 5 years I managed Asia Pacific, and I had offices in Tokyo and Sidney, but headquartered in Bozeman, MT, as we were growing and competing against some of the world's best technology companies.

We must expand our trade opportunities, certainly for our farmers and ranchers across our country. So it is important that innovation and entrepreneurship are encouraged, not hindered. Unfortunately, Washington, DC, is more interested in issuing press releases and headlines than getting results.

As an engineer, I was trained to solve problems, find solutions, and get results. It is time for Washington to look to the States for these solutions—to adhere to the principles of federalism

and States rights, as clearly found in our Constitution—and empowering local communities, State legislatures, Governors, and tribes to manage their resources, to grow economic opportunity, and to find and determine their own destiny.

In fact, it is time for Washington to listen to the States and it is time for Washington, DC, to listen to Montana.

I have always said one of the best decisions I ever made in my life was when I picked my great-great-grandmother. She got her family out to Montana, and she is buried in a small country cemetery just east of a small town called Conrad, MT. On her headstone, in this very remote small country cemetery, reads three simple words: ''saved by grace.'' She placed her ultimate faith in her God, not in her government.

It is an honor to stand here today on the Senate floor to serve as Montana's voice in Washington. I will continue working to bring more Montana solutions to Washington and get it working again for all Montanans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR DAINES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I want to congratulate our freshman colleague from Montana on his initial speech, and particularly to second his observations about the devastation in the coalfields of America. We have a depression in the eastern part of my State as a direct result of this administration and the EPA, and I know it has affected the great State of Montana as well. So among the many insightful observations the Senator from Montana made, I particularly appreciate his thoughts about energy.

CLOTURE MOTION

Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the committee-reported amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, James Lankford, David Vitter, Richard Burr, Chuck Grassley, Joni Ernst, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, James E. Risch, Daniel Coats, James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, Mark Kirk, Cory Gardner, Thom Tillis.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 178, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, James Lankford, David Vitter, Richard Burr, Chuck Grassley, Joni Ernst, Pat Roberts, Mike Rounds, James E. Risch, Daniel Coats, James M. Inhofe, Shelley Moore Capito, Mark Kirk, Cory Gardner, Thom Tillis.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls be waived with respect to these cloture motions.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam 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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHATZ. 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. SCHATZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, I rise today to speak on two topics. The first topic is to urge my colleagues to bring up the vote on Loretta Lynch right away. The delay on her nomination to be Attorney General has gone on long enough, and there are no longer any legitimate excuses. She is by all accounts an excellent candidate. She is highly qualified, and she has bipartisan support in the Committee on the Judiciary. No one has questioned her stellar credentials. Her nomination has been held up for too long. In fact, Republicans have held up her nomination longer than the five most recent Attorney General nominees combined. But now her nomination has been tied to a piece of legislation that Republicans themselves have poisoned. Why are they putting poison pills in their own legislation? They took a perfectly good bipartisan bill and ensured it would go nowhere. Then they took a perfectly qualified Attorney General nominee and tied her vote to their poisoned legislation.

The majority party is getting in its own way when it comes to the major responsibilities of governing. It is time for the Republicans to act like the majority and govern. This is the difference between being in the majority and being in the minority. Putting poison pills in legislative vehicles may be an odious practice, but it is normally reserved for the minority party—the party that is not in charge. Generally speaking, you do not poison your own piece of legislation.

The American people have given the keys to the car to the Republican Party, and now they need to drive the car. This is the difference between being in the minority and the majority. Governing includes giving advice and consent on nominations. This is a particularly important nomination. The Attorney General is the top law enforcement official in the country. He or she is responsible for enforcing our Nation's laws, protecting national security, and upholding our constitutional rights.

This last role is vital at a time when the DOJ is investigating violations of constitutional rights by local law enforcement agencies. Just last week, DOJ released a scathing report on the deep and pervasive racism in the Ferguson, MO, police force. In that report, the Department described shocking practices: systematic targeting of African Americans and an abuse of power to collect enormous amounts in fees. In a city with a population of 21,000 people, 16,000 people have outstanding arrest warrants—16,000 people. That is three-quarters of Ferguson's population. Those arrest warrants are overwhelmingly issued to Ferguson's African-American population—92 percent, to be exact. Emails and other documents DOJ collected prove the Ferguson police force acted with racial animus.

If confirmed, Ms. Lynch would continue DOJ's task of investigating unconstitutional policing across the country. She faces weighty issues—the over-militarization of our police, our policing practices, and reforming our sentencing guidelines, just to name a few.

As the first African-American woman to serve as Attorney General, this would be a historic nomination and a crucial one.

At a time when the public's trust in law enforcement is badly eroded, we need to confirm Ms. Lynch as our Attorney General and let her get to work on fighting for our civil rights.

THE HOUSE BUDGET

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, today the House released its budget proposal. It is a proposal divorced from reality that seeks to balance the budget on the backs of those in the country who can least afford it. It takes from the middle class and gives to the ultrawealthy.

Without a doubt, my colleagues and I will have much more to say about the Republican budget in the coming weeks and months, but today I want to discuss a section of the budget that seeks

to deny the very real and very current threat of climate change to our public health and military readiness.

The Department of Defense is responsible for protecting the security of the United States, and that requires taking into consideration every threat and every threat multiplier that affects the global security environment and our national interests, including climate change. That is why the military spends considerable time assessing the effects climate change could have on its facilities, capabilities, and missions, and how those effects could undermine its ability to protect our national security. It is unfortunate that today in their budget proposal House Republicans said that this planning is wasteful spending. I am as against wasteful spending as anyone, but preparing for threats to our national security planning and operations is the opposite of wasteful. It is prudent.

Today, I want to talk about how a climate change prohibition would tie the hands of our national defense strategy.

Climate change affects our national security in two major ways.

First, the DOD has warned that climate change is likely to impact the military's facilities and capabilities. In particular, America's military bases may be particularly vulnerable to climate change.

According to a 2008 National Intelligence Council finding, ''more than 30 U.S. military installations were already facing elevated levels of risk from rising sea levels.'' In my home State of Hawaii, for example, Navy and Marine Corps installations such as Pearl Harbor and Marine Corps base Kaneohe Bay are literally on the water's edge.

According to the Department of Defense, the combination of decreasing sea ice, rising sea levels, and thawing permafrost along the coast of Alaska has increased coastal erosion at several Air Force radar early warning and communication installations. This coastal erosion has already damaged roads, seawalls, and runways at our bases.

Second, climate change exacerbates the drivers of global instability, including drought, food shortages, water scarcity, and pandemic disease.

ADM Sam Locklear III, commander of the USPACOM, said that the biggest long-term security threat in the region is climate change because ''it is probably the most likely thing that is going to happen . . . that will cripple the security environment.''

I would like to make a point here. The Department of Defense is in no position to get caught up in our partisan or ideological battles. The Department of Defense has to deal with what is. The Department of Defense has to prepare for and contend with reality. And we should have debates on the Senate floor. We should talk about whether the President's clean powerplant is the right approach. We should talk about how we should approach international agreements coming into the Paris Accords. Let's have that debate about whether a carbon fee is the most prudent approach. But what we should not do is make it impossible for the Department of Defense to do its planning and preparation. That is what the House budget does.

In its 2014 QDR, the Department of Defense warned that the effects of climate change ''are threat multipliers that will aggravate stressors abroad such as poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and social tensions—conditions that can enable terrorist activity and other forms of violence.'' The stresses could break the backs of weak governments and institutions in countries around the world where the United States has enduring interests. In particular, the National Intelligence Council stated in its ''Global Trends 2030'' report that climate change will pose stiff challenges to governance in places such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.

That is why I find it ironic that many of my Republican colleagues who are so committed to slowing the pace of our withdrawal from Afghanistan on the premise that doing so will preserve our security gains and keep Afghanistan stable are now tying the hands of the national security community so that they are unable to study the security effects of climate change on Afghanistan and the region. Again, I don't think we should tell them how to study it, what conclusions to draw, what preparations to make, except to say that we should stay out of their way as they do their security planning, as they do their security preparation. I am not suggesting that they take my view on climate change; I am suggesting that they be allowed to deal with what is and that they not be sucked into a partisan ideological battle over climate change. They don't have the luxury of getting sucked into a partisan ideological battle when it comes to climate change. They have to deal with what is because they are responsible for our national defense.

Fortunately, while some in Congress play politics, our military leaders are clear-eyed about the current and present threats posed by climate change, and they are making the necessary investments in knowledge of impacts to their readiness and to regional and global conflicts. We need to back them up and make sure that climate deniers do not tie one hand behind their back while they work to understand the threats to defend our country.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEE. 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. LEE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with the senior Senator from Illinois and the junior Senator from New Jersey, as well as the junior Senator from Arizona.

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

SMARTER SENTENCING ACT

Mr. LEE. Madam President, we rise today to speak in favor of the Smarter Sentencing Act, a bipartisan piece of legislation that would make targeted reforms to mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent drug offenders.

I was proud to join my distinguished colleague from Illinois, Senator DURBIN, in introducing this legislation. He and I wish to thank our cosponsors, Senators JEFF FLAKE, CORY BOOKER, TED CRUZ, PAT LEAHY, RAND PAUL, SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, JOHNNY ISAKSON, and CHRIS COONS.

I also wish to thank the lead sponsors of the House version of the Smarter Sentencing Act, Congressmen RAÚL LABRADOR and BOBBY SCOTT.

It is not often that you see a political coalition such as this one on Capitol Hill. It reflects the importance of an issue whose time has come—reforming our Federal sentencing laws. We come to the floor today to explain what the Smarter Sentencing Act does and to address some common misconceptions about our bill that have been expressed on the Senate floor.

I ask my friend and colleague Senator DURBIN: What problems does the Smarter Sentencing Act seek to address?

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from Utah not only for his leadership on this issue but for the fact that we have been able to work together on an issue that is not considered to be simple in nature. It is challenging, complex, and controversial in some respects. As the Senator mentioned at the outset, we have done it on a bipartisan basis. If one looks at the cosponsors of the Smarter Sentencing Act, they span the political spectrum.

I was standing at our press conference—as the Senator from Utah was speaking—next to Senator TED CRUZ. Some said: DURBIN and CRUZ are on the same bill? As the saying goes around here, obviously one of us has not read it. The fact is that we both read it, and we both understand the importance of this undertaking.

Our criminal justice system in America is in crisis. The United States of America holds more prisoners, by far, than any other country in the world. The Federal prison population has grown by 750 percent since 1980 and our Federal prisons are approximately 30 percent over capacity.

Over the past 30 years, spending on Federal incarceration has increased more than 1,100 percent. Our exploding prison population now consumes a quarter of the Justice Department's

discretionary budget. These runaway expenditures are undermining other law enforcement efforts. The U.S. attorney's office and the Drug Enforcement Administration have already lost hundreds of positions, and resources for State and local law enforcement have decreased dramatically.

The biggest drivers of growth in the Federal prison population are drug sentences. There are almost 50,000 more drug offenders in Federal prisons now than 20 years ago—50,000. This problem is made even worse by mandatory minimum sentences which have grown by 155 percent over the past 15 years. One-third of all Federal prisoners are now subject to mandatory minimums and 50 percent of those are drug offenders.

These mandatory penalties don't allow our courts to distinguish between the big-time career offenders, who ought to be the focus of our effort, and lower-level offenders. Now, that just is not very smart, and it is not effective when it comes to holding offenders accountable and protecting public safety.

We are expected to be joined at any minute by the Senator from New Jersey, Mr. BOOKER, and I thank my friend for joining us in this effort to spotlight this important issue of criminal justice reform.

I will turn the floor over for my colleague and the lead sponsor of this bill, Senator LEE, to respond to the question of the importance of this undertaking.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, we have new research that shows there are two big problems we face as a result of these mandatory minimum sentences within our Federal system. First, they are not needed to ensure public safety in many instances, and second, they are having a very negative impact on certain disadvantaged communities.

Last year, the National Research Council of the National Academies issued a major study of incarceration in the United States. One of their main conclusions is that mandatory sentencing and excessively long sentences generally do not have a significant deterrent effect and are ineffective unless targeted at offenders with a very high rate of recidivism or extremely dangerous offenders.

The National Research Council concluded: ''[We] have reviewed the research literature on the deterrent effect of such laws and have concluded that the evidence is insufficient to justify the conclusion that these harsher punishments yield measurable public safety benefits.''

And recent data from the U.S. Sentencing Commission, an independent and bipartisan Federal agency, shows that shorter sentences can accomplish the same goals without compromising public safety.

Our communities have paid a high cost for the stiff sentences that mandatory minimums require. The National Research Council found that high incarceration rates are concentrated in poor, minority neighborhoods, and that the incarceration of significant numbers of residents in these neighborhoods actually compounded existing social and economic problems such as unemployment, poverty, family disruption, poor health, and drug addiction.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, if I could ask the Senator from Utah if he would yield for a moment.

Mr. LEE. Yes.

Mr. DURBIN. Senator BOOKER has joined us, and we are happy to have his cosponsorship on this legislation. I hope he might be able to make some of his own observations on the very issue the Senator from Utah has been discussing.

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I wish to pick up where my friend left off. I thank, from the bottom of my heart, the leadership of Senator LEE and Senator DURBIN on what is an extraordinary piece of legislation in terms of its impact.

My colleagues have made it clear time and again—in the last Congress and in this Congress—that the application of mandatory minimum sentences, especially in drug cases, feeds the perception of pervasive unfairness in our criminal justice system just for the points that Senator LEE was making. This perception is based in that reality.

When I was mayor, I used to always say, ''In God we trust,'' but everyone else, ''Bring me data.'' The data is clear from the U.S. Sentencing Commission, which shows that mandatory minimums have a disparate impact on minority communities.

Let's be clear. The majority of illegal drug users and dealers in our country are white, but three-quarters of all the people incarcerated for drug offenses are Black and Latino, and the large majority of individuals subject to Federal mandatory minimum penalties are African American and Hispanic. That perception is fed by this reality: African Americans are granted relief from mandatory minimum penalties as are other citizens under the so-called safety valve, but Blacks get the safety valve far less than other groups.

For example, the data shows that in 2010, 63.7 percent of White offenders received the safety valve relief while only 39.4 percent of Black offenders received that benefit.

In 2012, Blacks were 26.3 percent of all drug offenders, but they were 35.2 percent of the drug offenders who received no safety valves whatsoever—no relief from the mandatory minimum penalties.

I will now yield back for Senator LEE, again, the lead sponsor of this bipartisan legislation, and I ask the Senator: What does this legislation do, specifically, to address mandatory minimums?

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I thank the Senator from New Jersey for this question, which really cuts to the heart of many of the most important reasons why we feel this bill needs to become law.

First, the Smarter Sentencing Act would reduce Federal mandatory minimum penalties for drug offenses in a very targeted way. Our bill would allow Federal judges to determine—on a case-by-case basis—when the harshest penalties should apply. We don't repeal any mandatory minimum sentences, and we do not lower any maximum sentences. This approach maintains a floor below which no offenders can be sentenced, but it gives judges the discretion to determine when the very harshest penalties should apply in a particular case.

These changes in mandatory minimum sentences do not apply to violent offenses, and they do not apply to offenders who import drugs into the United States unless, of course, the offender's role is limited solely to transporting or storing drugs or money.

Second, the Smarter Sentencing Act would modestly expand the Federal safety valve, which allows Federal judges to sentence a limited number of nonviolent drug offenders at levels below the mandatory minimum sentence. Our bill would expand the safety valve to nonviolent offenders with only a minor criminal history. Individuals who use weapons or play a leadership role in the offense in question would be ineligible for the safety valve in those circumstances.

I ask the senior Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, to explain other important provisions of our bill.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Utah.

When I was a Member of the House of Representatives many years ago, we were told there were some dramatic changes when it came to the use of narcotics in America. In fact, they came to us and said: We are worried. There is a new form of cocaine called crack cocaine. It is dirt cheap. It is $5 for a hit. It is deadly addictive, and if a woman is addicted to it and happens to be pregnant, it could seriously damage the baby she is carrying.

We did something at the time which seemed like the right thing to do. What we did was to establish a sentencing standard for crack cocaine dramatically larger than powder cocaine—100 times larger. I voted for it, and the belief was that we were sending a clear message to anyone in America: If you get caught with crack cocaine, we are going to throw the book at you. That is what we voted for.

I remember that the rollcall in the House of Representatives was bipartisan. We felt—all across the spectrum: Let's get the message out and get it out now before crack cocaine causes its damage.

Under the law at the time, it took 100 times more powdered cocaine than crack to trigger the same mandatory minimum sentences—100 times. For example, possessing 5 grams of crack carried the same 5-year mandatory minimum sentence as selling 500 grams of powdered cocaine. That was the 100-to-1 crack-powder sentencing disparity.

The crack-powder disparity disproportionately affected African Americans, who made up more than 80 percent of those convicted of Federal crack offenses.

At a hearing I held in 2009, former Bush administration DEA head Asa Hutchison, known to many of us as a former colleague in the House, testified: ''Under the current disparity, the credibility of our entire drug enforcement system is weakened.''

What was happening? African Americans were noting what was going on here. They were being sent, as Senator BOOKER said, over to the prison system and put away for years and years for the use of a tiny amount of crack cocaine because of the sentencing guidelines that we established in the House of Representatives. The Smarter Sentencing Act addresses this issue.

I might add that in 2010, I joined with Senator JEFF SESSIONS, a Republican from Alabama, in sponsoring the Fair Sentencing Act. We decided that we would address this issue of the 100-to-1 disparity and try to make sense out of it. I support 1 to 1. I think that is what the science backs. But we reached a political agreement—that is the nature of the Senate and the House. The bill unanimously passed the Senate and the House and was signed into law by the President. The Fair Sentencing Act reduced the sentencing disparity between crack and powdered cocaine.

The Smarter Sentencing Act—the bill we are considering today—addresses this again. It would allow some inmates who were sentenced before the Fair Sentencing Act to petition for the sentence reductions that this law put in place in 2010. This provision would not automatically reduce a single sentence of anyone serving under the old 100-to-1 standard, but it would allow Federal judges and prosecutors to conduct a case-by-case, singular, individual review as to whether the individual should have their sentence reduced. Responding to our decreased reliance on prisons, the Smarter Sentencing Act would direct the Justice Department to report to Congress on how the cost savings from our bill would be used to reduce crime and prevent recidivism.

Let's respond to a few misstatements that have been made about the Smarter Sentencing Act. One of our colleagues said: ''We are not sending huge numbers of nonviolent drug offenders to Federal prison under lengthy mandatory minimum sentences.''

I ask the Senator from New Jersey how he would respond to that comment?

(Mr. GARDNER assumed the Chair.)

Mr. BOOKER. I appreciate that, and I hope we all in the Senate can deal with the same set of facts. We are entitled to different opinions and different conclusions regarding the facts, but we should not be debating facts when we have them here before us.

So let's take a look at those facts. In 2011, the sentencing commission issued a comprehensive study about mandatory minimum sentences. The study found that almost 55,000 people were in Federal prisons serving mandatory minimum sentences for a drug crime. That was more than 50 percent of all Federal drug offenders and more than a quarter—25 percent—of all Federal prisoners, period.

Second, the great majority of Federal drug offenders do not use violence. Let me say that one more time because it is very important. We are talking about in this bill nonviolent offenders, and the great majority do not use violence. The sentencing commission's most recent data shows that less than 1 percent of offenders used or threatened violence in committing their crime, and no weapons—no weapons—were involved in more than 80 percent of drug cases.

Third, many of those serving mandatory minimum drug sentences are low-level offenders. It is true that certain low-level offenders such as the couriers don't often receive mandatory minimums. But other low-level offenders frequently are sentenced to mandatory minimums.

For example, among those who are most likely to receive a mandatory minimum sentence are street-level dealers—those who sell less than 1 ounce of a drug. Almost 45 percent of street-level dealers are serving mandatory minimums in Federal prison.

Finally, these mandatory minimum sentences are lengthy. They are costly. They drain taxpayer resources. A recent sentencing commission study shows that the average sentence for mandatory minimums was 132 months—11 years in Federal prison without parole.

Some claim also that mandatory minimum prison sentences are not a major factor in the massive increase in the Federal prison population and overcrowding in Federal prisons. Remember, in the last 30 years, we have had an explosion in our Federal prison population—800 percent. Some people say that mandatory minimums have had nothing to do with that. I look to my colleague from Utah to respond. Is that true?

Mr. LEE. It is not true. It is simply inaccurate. So those who insist that our exploding Federal prison population somehow has nothing to do with the explosive use of mandatory minimum prison sentences within our Federal system are simply wrong.

In its 2011 report, the U.S. Sentencing Commission concluded that mandatory minimums have had ''a significant impact on the Federal prison population.''

From 1995 through 2010, the number of Federal prisoners serving a mandatory minimum sentence grew from 29,603 to 75,579. That is a 155-percent increase. It represents over one-third of all Federal prisoners.

As of December 2014, over 59 percent of the 210,567 Federal inmates—125,000 inmates over all—had been convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum. Of these, 74.3 percent, which represents 91,806 inmates, were required to serve that mandatory minimum sentence or more.

In 2013, 62.1 percent of all drug offenders were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum. Over 60 percent of them received no safety valve relief and 70 percent of them did not receive relief for cooperating with authorities.

Some have argued that those serving sentences for nonviolent drug offenses have long and violent criminal histories, but sentencing commission data shows this is inaccurate. In 2013, 49.6 percent of drug offenders had little or no criminal history, and only 7 percent of drug offenders were sentenced under the ''career offender'' sentencing guideline, which requires two prior convictions for a drug offense or a crime of violence.

But here is the important point: The Smarter Sentencing Act reduces certain mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent drug offenses, but we do not lower the maximum sentence. That means a judge can sentence offenders all the way up to the statutory maximum if she determines it is appropriate under the circumstances.

Some have raised concerns about how reducing mandatory minimum sentences might impact serious problems such as the heroin epidemic or narcoterrorism. Can the Senator from Illinois address that?

Mr. DURBIN. I want to address that because it is a problem in my State and across the United States. We are finding that high school students are turning to heroin. It is affordable, sadly. It is affordable, and they are using it as an alternative to other drugs. We certainly know the peril and dangers from narcoterrorism. The Smarter Sentencing Act which we are cosponsoring only reduces mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent drug offenses. There is a separate mandatory minimum of 20 years that applies when the drugs have resulted in death or serious bodily injury. Any dealer who sells drugs that killed or hurt someone, such as an accidental overdose, will still be subject to the same mandatory minimum of 20 years. Our bill does not touch that provision of the law.

As for narcoterrorism, a special Federal sentencing guideline applies. The truth is charges under that statute are very rare. Between 2008 and 2012, only three cases—three—out of almost 200,000 were sentenced under that guideline. But the Smarter Sentencing Act does not change the sentencing guideline enhancement for narcoterrorism or any of the enhancements for terrorism. We don't cut corners when it comes to that serious crime.

In fact, our bill directs the sentencing commission to ensure that severe sentences for ''violent, repeat, and serious drug traffickers who present public safety risks remain in place.'' Also, there will continue to be dozens

of statutory penalties and sentencing enhancements in the sentencing guidelines allowing judges to impose heightened sentences for violent and repeat offenders.

The Smarter Sentencing Act which we are describing doesn't automatically reduce a single sentence and it doesn't eliminate any mandatory minimum or reduce any maximum sentence at all. Our bill simply restores the traditional authority of a Federal judge to impose a sentence that fits the crime and the criminal, based on the circumstances of the case, while maintaining a floor below which no one person can be sentenced.

Can the Senator from New Jersey discuss the impact the Smarter Sentencing Act will have on communities that have been most negatively impacted by the crisis in our Federal justice system?

Mr. BOOKER. I appreciate that question. This is one of the reasons I am so passionate about the legislation originally introduced by Senator LEE and the Senator from Illinois, because the mandatory minimums are patently unfair to people all across America. Whether one is White or Black, to have a disproportionate sentence unnecessary to punish a person and prevent a person from doing a future nonviolent crime is bad enough, but when we are talking about, as the Senator from Illinois was before, so negatively concentrated in certain urban areas, it creates an invasive belief that begins to undermine faith in our criminal justice system alone. As we said earlier, the overwhelming majority of drug users and sellers are White, but the overwhelming number of people incarcerated and arrested for it are Black, as well as those receiving mandatory minimums.

But what people have to understand is that this has a punishing effect on us all. No. 1, it is hurting families. A friend of mine brought to my attention a ''Sesame Street'' clip where even the educators in public broadcasting are seeing that certain communities have so many of their men—nonviolent offenders—being sucked into the prison system for these long sentences that we have created a generation of children growing up without their parents. That has a difficult impact when it comes to the poverty of that family, when it comes to the challenges of having a provider pull away. So the Smarter Sentencing Act is a tool to help to relieve that problem, as well as the costs to us all.

What is wonderful—at a time when we have debt, when we need to invest in infrastructure and many other needs, the current system is costing us hundreds of billions of dollars annually. This legislation I have signed on to as a cosponsor offers a savings that can be redirected to community efforts that prevent crime in the first place—evidence-based programs that undermine crimes in the first place—as well as to helping people coming out of prison stay out of prison. We can save money and still protect public safety with lower rates of incarceration and a greater reliance on community revision and treatment.

The wonderful thing about this is that what I am saying is not speculation. It is the facts we are experiencing in States that have already embraced reducing mandatory minimums. In fact, many of these States—and it is wonderful that this is bipartisan legislation—many States are red States. We are seeing this path of reducing crime, reducing prison populations, creating savings, being shown to us in State after State model that the Federal Government should follow—models seen in Texas and in Georgia.

Senator FLAKE encouraged us to pay attention to overcriminalization in the Federal system. He too is a champion of reforming the system and making it better. I wish to ask the Senator from Arizona: How does the Smarter Sentencing Act address the problem of overcriminalization?

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the Senator from New Jersey, and I thank Senator DURBIN and Senator LEE. It is great to be a part of this bipartisan effort, the Smarter Sentencing Act.

This is important because this section requires the Attorney General and the heads of certain Federal agencies to each submit a public report that identifies all criminal offenses that are established by statute or regulation that each agency enforces. These reports must provide information on the elements of each offense, the potential penalty and the required intent for each offense, and the number of prosecutions for each offense for the last 15 years. This is valuable information.

This section also requires the Attorney General and the relevant agencies to establish a publicly accessible index for these offenses. This information is an important step toward understanding the scope of the overcriminalization problem. When we have this information, we will have a better idea of why these sentences are being imposed and we can make better recommendations moving ahead.

There are some who argue that long mandatory prison sentences encourage defendants to plead guilty and to cooperate with prosecutors. They claim that by reducing mandatory minimum sentences, our bill will reduce the incentive for defendants to plead guilty and thus cooperate.

How would the Senator from Utah respond to that complaint?

Mr. LEE. Those who make that argument—those who suggest that by passing this bill we would reduce the bargaining power of prosecutors—are mistaken.

The sentencing commission data on this point shows that the longer a mandatory minimum sentence is, the more likely a defendant is not to plead guilty and to cooperate and instead to insist on going to trial.

Sentencing commission data also showed that rates of cooperation for crimes that have no mandatory minimum sentence are the same and even higher for drugs that do have rigid mandatory minimum sentences.

The reality is that defendants are most likely to cooperate when they have information to give. That is why high-level drug offenders receive relief of mandatory minimum sentences at much higher rates than lower offenders. Defendants who organize or manage a drug trafficking enterprise have the most information with which to bargain as they enter into discussions with prosecutors. Low-level offenders who have less responsibility and less knowledge often don't have much information to offer, no matter how long a mandatory minimum sentence they might face in a particular case.

Judge William Wilkins, who was appointed to the bench by President Reagan and served as the first chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, said the following:

> There are few Federal judges engaged in criminal sentencing who have not had the disheartening experience of seeing major players in crimes before them immunize themselves from the mandatory minimum sentences by blowing the whistle on their minions, while the low-level offenders find themselves sentenced to the mandatory minimum prison term so skillfully avoided by the kingpins.

Some of them claim the Smarter Sentencing Act will add up to $1 billion in Federal spending.

Senator FLAKE, is that true?

Mr. FLAKE. That is creative accounting, to put it mildly. Here is the reality. The Congressional Budget Office has taken a look at this and has analyzed the impact of passing the Smarter Sentencing Act. It is true there will be costs incurred mainly because of benefits that are paid to people who are not in prison for so long, but the CBO estimated that in the first 10 years alone, our bill would save approximately $4 billion, for a net savings of about $3 billion. Those savings can be redirected to efforts to reduce and prevent crime in the first place.

Senator BOOKER, I think it is partly because of this reason, the cost savings, that we have such broad support of the bill. Would the Senator discuss some of the groups that are supporting this legislation?

Mr. BOOKER. This incredible convergence of people from all different stripes in our country, all different backgrounds, races, religions, and political philosophy—let's just start with the bipartisan U.S. Sentencing Commission and the Judicial Conference have both urged Congress to reduce mandatory minimum penalties and both have stated their support for this legislation, the Smarter Sentencing Act.

It is supported by faith leaders such as the Justice Fellowship and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is supported by advocacy groups across the political spectrum and has been endorsed by conservative leaders such as Grover Norquist and

Americans for Tax Reform, Eli Lehrer and the R Street Institute, Pat Nolan, former president of the Justice Fellowship, Marc Levin of the Texas Public Policy Institute, and Freedom Works.

It is supported by law enforcement leaders, including the Major Cities Chiefs Association and the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, which represents many of the largest district attorney's offices in the country—big cities. They represent county, Federal, State, and local prosecutors—prosecutors at every level.

The bill is supported by the Council of Prison Locals, which represents more than 28,000 correctional workers in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The bill is also supported by crime victims themselves, including the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, a coalition of more than 1,000 different organizations that advocate on behalf of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. As they explain, mandatory minimum drug sentences are draining the resources needed for victims. Women who are victims of domestic violence sometimes end up serving long sentences that the Congress intended for kingpins and other drug organization leaders. All of that unity in this country supports this act.

I wonder, is there anything else Senator LEE would like to say about this bipartisan, widely supported by both the data and the advocates across the quantum spectrum—is there anything else the Senator would like to add?

Mr. LEE. Yes, and I would like to conclude my remarks in a moment by wrapping up. Before I do that, though, I notice on the floor with us is my friend Senator WHITEHOUSE, who happens to be another supporter and cosponsor of this bill and who is also the ranking member on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and I would ask Senator WHITEHOUSE to say a few words about this bill.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Senator LEE. I am glad to be a part of this conversation. I share the concern that we all have for a Federal prison system that is 30 percent over capacity and costs $6 billion a year already. We have to add, if we are going to take care of the 30 percent over capacity—that is $6 billion under the present circumstances, and that $6 billion comes out of law enforcement budgets and community support budgets that could be making our streets safer.

At the beginning of every sentence, a judge imposes the duration of the sentence, and at the end of every sentence, a prisoner makes a decision about how he or she is going to engage with the public upon their release. There is a bill that deals with the latter part, helping prisoners make better decisions and be better prepared to reengage with the public once they are released. I hope very much the bill Senator CORNYN and I are leading in the Senate Judiciary Committee can, as this moves forward, be connected because the two are linked thematically, and it makes a big difference.

The reason we care about how people at the end get back into regular society is because if they reoffend they go back to prison again and add to the prison population and add to the costs. If they are in longer than they should be, then we are not getting any public safety benefit out of all of this.

So I look very forward to working with all my colleagues to try to see if we can get together in the Senate a comprehensive piece of sentencing reform legislation. Having been a prosecutor myself, having used mandatory minimums, I appreciate that they can, in certain circumstances, have value, but I think if one looks at the big picture, this sentencing reform legislation is important and will serve the public interest in a great variety of respects, including safer communities. So that is why I am cosponsoring it and that is why I am an ardent supporter of it.

In closing, let me thank Senator DURBIN and Senator LEE for their leadership as the lead coauthors of this legislation and Senator FLAKE and Senator BOOKER for their efforts on behalf of this as fellow cosponsors.

Mr. LEE. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE.

Mr. President, I would like to conclude by thanking my colleagues for their help. First of all, thanks to Senator DURBIN for working with this Senator over the last couple of years in developing this legislation. I thank my other cosponsors as well. I thank Senator BOOKER, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator FLAKE, who have joined us today.

This is truly a bipartisan, bicameral effort that brings support from across the political spectrum. Excessive mandatory minimums do not make us safer. The last 30 years have shown us that they are applied unevenly and they leave a gaping hole in the communities they impact most heavily. Now we as a society have to pick up the tab. We must decide if we will continue to pay the high fiscal and social costs that mandatory minimums impose. It is important for us to remember these costs do have many manifestations.

Sometimes in this body we focus only on the fiscal pricetag that can be expressed in raw numbers, but doing that allows us to ignore too often the high human costs—the families and the communities that have lost brothers, sons, fathers, uncles, and nephews, people who could be back in their communities contributing meaningfully to their success, who are instead sent away for sometimes far too long of a prison sentence. We can continue down this current path or if we could try something smarter, that perhaps would be better.

The Smarter Sentencing Act gives us an opportunity to do precisely that—to do something smarter, to rely less on prison, and to do more with scarce resources. Instead of just paying for prisons, it would allow us to work smarter in pursuit of justice.

I hope all my colleagues will join us in supporting the Smarter Sentencing Act.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, to change the subject from sentencing reform to climate change, I come to the floor today for the 93rd consecutive week that the Senate has been in session to urge that my colleagues wake up to the urgent threat of what results from our levels of carbon pollution. It is an opportune time now to consider a step-up in American corporate responsibility on climate change. Call it corporate climate responsibility 2.0.

Americans can celebrate and applaud the fact that America's corporate leaders have taken so many important steps on climate change. Companies such as Walmart and Coca-Cola, to pick just two, see the problem clearly and have done great things. Walmart, for instance, has taken exemplary responsibility for its carbon footprint not only within its facilities but out beyond its corporate walls into its international supply chain. Walmart has led the move for consumers away from incandescent bulbs and into high-efficiency lighting. If you have ever used that machine where you have to crank electricity in order to light up an incandescent bulb and then do the same thing for a high efficiency bulb, you have an unforgettable experience of how much more efficient those modern bulbs are. Walmart has strong and responsible carbon policies and Walmart has made a successful business model of saving money by reducing carbon emissions. Walmart even has an internal price on carbon so it can properly evaluate its internal processes in its own facilities against its climate standards.

This is not new for Walmart. A decade ago, Walmart's then-CEO Lee Scott said:

> The science is in, and it is overwhelming. We believe every company has a responsibility to reduce greenhouse gases as quickly as it can.

Coca-Cola, the other company I mentioned, has exemplary carbon policies too. Coca-Cola knows how disruptive climate change can be on the water supply that is Coca-Cola's most basic need in its bottling facilities. They, too, have found the sweet spot of saving money by reducing their carbon output.

As the Arctic melts, Coca-Cola even put a polar bear on its iconic Coke can. Muhtar Kent, Coca-Cola's CEO, has said:

> It is absolutely imperative that our commitment to a low-carbon future be fully understood. We're here to lend a Coca-Cola voice to the public and political debate on getting to a fair framework, an inclusive framework, and an effective framework so that we can achieve climate protection.

Many other major corporations have too. There is Google and Apple, apparel giant VF Corporation and Nike, Mars, Nestle, and Cargill, General Motors and the Ford Motor Company, UPS and Federal Express, Unilever and Starbucks. All are in different ways clear-eyed and responsible climate champions.

So there is a lot to celebrate from America's corporate leaders, but there is also more to be done. We are right now at a societal and political tipping point on climate change, where corporations that are already good on climate change—corporations that are sensible and responsible on climate change—can make a big difference by taking it up one more step and putting their politics where their policies already are.

So what is putting your politics where your policies are? First, it is making climate change an issue, something we talk about when we come to Congress. I don't know whether Walmart has ever spoken to Senator BOOZMAN or Senator COTTON, from their home State of Arkansas, about climate change. I know they never spoke to Senator Pryor when he was in the Senate because he told me so. I don't know whether Coca-Cola has ever spoken about climate change to Senators ISAKSON or PERDUE from Coca-Cola's home State of Georgia.

It is not just them. I pick out Walmart and Coca-Cola because they are two of the best companies on carbon reduction. I actually don't know of one major American corporation that makes climate change a priority when it comes here to Washington and lobbies Congress, not one.

America's corporate leaders have great carbon reduction policies, but when they come to Congress, that is not on the agenda of their politics. If it were, it would make a difference. I know it is not easy. Senior corporate leaders in major American companies have told me and others that they fear retribution if they lobby Congress on climate change; that they will be punished on tax or trade or liability or regulatory or other issues they have in Congress.

That is how ugly and rough the fossil fuel lobby plays around here. But there is an answer: group up. The fossil fuel industry and its allies in Congress cannot punish everyone. They cannot punish Coke and Pepsi and Walmart and Target and VF Corporation and Nike and Apple and Google and Ford and GM and Mars and Nestle and Unilever. They cannot punish them all.

So, please, I ask our corporate leaders: Make an agreement with one another that you will not abandon your climate principles when you come to Congress. If good corporations will not speak up, the only corporate force lobbying and politicking Congress on climate change is the fossil fuel industry. You will get exactly what you have now: a Congress in which Members fear to take action on climate because they know one side, the fossil fuel boys, will punish them. They do not know any other side that will help them.

So the first part of corporate climate responsibility 2.0 is: Do not abandon hope all ye who enter here. Do not check your principles at the door. A second part of corporate climate responsibility 2.0 would be to stand by your principles with those who advocate for you. The best corporate citizens push their good climate policies out beyond their corporate walls into their supply chains. They insist that their suppliers comply with those climate principles. They will not do business with suppliers that do not abide by their climate principles.

So it would be consistent to push their good climate policies out into their advocacy organizations, too, and insist that their advocates comply with those same climate principles, just like their suppliers must.

They ought not to do business with advocacy groups that will not abide by their climate principles. What am I talking about? I have described how good Coca-Cola has been on climate issues. It is terrific on climate issues. Coca-Cola and its bottlers are also important vital members of the American Beverage Association, which sits on the board of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which is one of the worst climate denial organizations and which is a persistent obstacle to any responsible action on carbon emissions.

Similarly, Verizon, 3M, and Ford, all with good climate policies, all sit on the board of this organization with opposite policies. If they would not put up with it from their suppliers, if their suppliers flouted their principles, why put up with it from a corporate mouthpiece they support but that flouts their principles?

If corporate climate change policies are important enough to push beyond the corporate walls and into the supply chain, they should be important enough to push beyond the corporate walls and into the corporation's advocacy organizations. It does not make sense for corporations to speak out of one side of their mouths on climate change and then contradict themselves, through their corporate mouthpieces, their advocacy organizations.

Some do not. Nike resigned from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce board of directors over the chamber's horrible climate policies. Apple left the chamber altogether. So have big electric utilities such as Exelon and PG&E and so have many local chambers of commerce. Google left the American Legislative Exchange Council, known as ALEC. When Google left ALEC last year because of that group's bad climate position, Google CEO Eric Schmidt said of the group: ''They are literally lying'' about climate change. You do not need to support an organization that is ''literally lying'' about climate change—not under corporate climate responsibility 2.0. It is not necessary to have your own trade association or legislative organization arguing against you.

The same should be true of opinion outlets. For decades, the Wall Street Journal editorial page has been an important and respected voice of the business community. But now on climate change, the Wall Street Journal editorial page never reflects the views on climate change of most of America's corporate leaders, only its fossil fuel corporate leaders.

That page has become exclusively the voice of the fossil fuel industry, and of their climate denial front organizations. In fact, in some ways we could say the Wall Street Journal editorial page has actually become a climate denial front organization. The fossil fuel companies have co-opted the Wall Street Journal editorial page. Where is the objection from American corporations, big well-known American corporations that have spent millions and millions of dollars addressing their carbon emissions, that have spent enormous corporate effort, all the way up to the CEO level, dedicated to a carbon solution and that have developed great policies on climate change? Why be silent when the voice of the business community is saying the exact opposite of what you have worked so hard for and care so much about?

Under corporate climate responsibility 2.0, companies such as that could stand up for their own well-established climate principles and against the opposition to their own corporate principles from the Wall Street Journal editorial page. I feel we are so close to getting something done, something big done on climate change. Our corporate sector has shown so much leadership. The great American corporate leadership on climate change aligns exactly with what America's science leadership is also saying.

The great American corporate leadership on climate change aligns exactly with what America's military and national security leaders are also saying. The great American corporate leadership on climate change aligns exactly with what so many of our religious leaders are saying all the way up to Pope Francis. Of course, American corporate leadership on climate change aligns with what Americans, the customers of these corporations, want and expect.

So let's take it up a step. Let's ask our corporate leaders to step it up to corporate climate responsibility 2.0 and take their existing good policies and line them up with their politics, take what they demand of their suppliers and demand the same of their advocates. That would be a big way for America's corporate leaders to help this body wake up.

I yield the floor and 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. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

REMEMBERING SAM SMITH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the life of Sam Smith from Las Vegas, NV. Mr. Smith passed away last month.

Mr. Smith was a retired firefighter and the founder of the bookstore and treasured community establishment, Native Son. Native Son operated in West Last Vegas for 17 years, and throughout that time Mr. Smith was its heart and soul. Mr. Smith offered free math and reading classes and helped many students prepare for fire department entrance exams. He had a saying, ''People who study calculus don't go to jail.'' Mr. Smith cared about the people in his community, and he worked to improve their lives.

Mr. Smith helped people like Trina Jiles become the first Black woman in the Clark County Fire Department. When she came into Native Son in 1995 he told her there were no Black women firefighters and asked how many push-ups she could do. When she did 20, he told her she would be all right and began teaching her in his free math and reading classes. Soon after, she passed all of her tests and became Clark County's first Black female firefighter. She went on to work her way up the department to become an arson investigator.

Through his years of service, Sam Smith was a fixture in the West Las Vegas community. I appreciate all he has done, and I celebrate his life.

CONSERVING LA MOSQUITIA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to briefly draw the Senate's attention to a recent announcement made by Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández concerning his government's efforts to secure and preserve a newly discovered archaeological site in the eastern part of his country. The area is part of La Mosquitia, a large swath of tropical rain forest along the Mosquito Coast in eastern Honduras, which also extends into northeastern Nicaragua.

Reaching the remote forest is accomplished primarily by air or water, and it was airborne sensing technology in 2012 that first uncovered the ancient site, now revealed to be as much as 1,000 years old. The site is believed by some to be the location of the mythic White City, a safe haven where indigenous populations took refuge from Spanish conquistadores. However, archeologists Christopher Fisher of Colorado State University and Oscar Neil Cruz of the Honduran Institute of Anthropology and History and ethno-botanist Mark Plotkin of the Amazon Conservation Team who reached the site earlier this month believe the discovery could be even more significant as just one of many sites that may reveal an entire lost civilization.

La Mosquitia is also the home of the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, a World Heritage Site that has twice been placed on UNESCO's world heritage in danger list, most recently in 2011. The designation was the result of an investigation that revealed rampant deforestation, primarily by cattle herders seeking to meet the demand for beef in the United States, in addition to illegal hunting and fishing. Perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve's designation is that it is representative of the threats to all of La Mosquitia.

That is why President Hernández's announcement is so important. La Mosquitia is not just a treasure of the Honduran people; it has preserved centuries of cultural artifacts and is now home to a multitude of plant and animal life that has remained largely undisturbed by the outside world.

President Hernández's commitment to preserve these archeological sites from looters and other criminal activity and to protect the broader forest area by replanting the jungle and countering deforestation deserves our support. I look forward to working with the Government of Honduras on how the United States may be able to assist its conservation efforts.

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks at the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

We're here today to review the president's fiscal year 2016 budget request for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the independent federal agency responsible for regulating the safety of our nation's commercial nuclear power plants and other nuclear materials.

This is the first time in many years that the subcommittee has held a hearing to examine the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's budget.

It is also the first of several hearings that the subcommittee will hold this year on nuclear power. These hearings are important because nuclear power provides about 20 percent of our nation's electricity and more than 60 percent of our carbon-free electricity.

I plan to focus my questions today on four main areas:

1. Licensing nuclear waste repositories;
2. Avoiding excessive regulations;
3. Licensing for new and existing reactors; and
4. Making sure the agency is running effectively

First, we must solve the 25-year-old stalemate about what to do with used fuel from our nuclear reactors to ensure that nuclear power has a strong future in this country.

Later this year, I will reintroduce bipartisan legislation with Senators Feinstein, Murkowski and perhaps others, to create both temporary and permanent storage sites for nuclear waste. Also, Senator Feinstein and I plan to include a pilot program for nuclear waste storage in the Energy and Water appropriations bill, as we have for the past three years.

The new sites we'd seek to establish through the legislation Senator Feinstein and I are reintroducing this year would not take the place of Yucca Mountain—we have more than enough waste to fill Yucca Mountain to its legal capacity—but rather would complement it.

This legislation is consistent with the president's Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future.

But let me be clear: Yucca Mountain can and should be part of the solution. Federal law designates Yucca Mountain as the nation's repository for used nuclear fuel.

The Nuclear Waste Fund, which is money that utilities have paid the government to dispose of their used nuclear fuel, has a balance of about $36 billion and there are still several steps to go in the licensing process for Yucca Mountain.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has a balance of unspent funding that you are supposed to use to continue the licensing process. But more resources will be required, so I think it's fair to ask the question:

Knowing that there are additional steps and they will cost money, why would you not request additional funds in your budget?

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission recently completed the Safety Evaluation Report that said Yucca Mountain met all of the safety requirements through ''the period of geologic stability.''

The commission and the Environmental Protection Agency define the ''period of geologic stability'' as one million years. To continue to oppose Yucca Mountain because of radiation concerns is to ignore science—as well as the law.

The next steps on Yucca Mountain include completing a supplemental environmental impact statement and restarting the hearings before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, which were suspended in September 2011.

Money is available for these activities, and I want to hear why there is no request to use it.

Federal law requires that nuclear power plants be built safely, but the law doesn't say it should be so hard and expensive to build and operate reactors that you can't do it.

A 2013 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies found that up to 25 of our 99 nuclear reactors could close by 2020.

The decision to close a reactor could be due to a number of factors, including the low price of natural gas, and the wasteful wind production tax credit, which is so generous that in some markets wind producers can literally give their electricity away and still make a profit.

But the decision to close a reactor can also have to do with excessive and unnecessary regulations. I want to work with the commission to address this.

Over the next several decades, most of our 99 nuclear reactors will go through the commission's license renewal process to extend their licenses, which is critical to the future of nuclear power. I want to make sure that the commission is prepared for this additional work.

I also want to make sure the commission has devoted the appropriate resources to the licensing process to keep new reactors—like Watts Bar 2 in Tennessee—on time and on budget.

I have proposed that we build 100 new reactors, which may seem excessive, but not if

about 20 percent of our current capacity from coal goes offline by 2020 as projected by the Energy Information Administration. If this capacity were replaced entirely by nuclear power it would require building another 48 new, 1,250-megawatt reactors—which, by the way, would reduce our carbon emissions from electricity by another 14 percent. Add the reactors we may need to replace in the coming decades due to aging and other factors, and my proposal for 100 may not seem so high.

Additionally, the commission needs to move forward with new small modular reactors.

This subcommittee has provided funding to help small modular reactors get through the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's licensing process. I'd like to get your views on what you need to continue your efforts.

One of the challenges for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is to ensure that the agency is running effectively and focusing staff on the right goals.

In fiscal year 2000, Congress appropriated about $470 million for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The budget request this year is more than $1 billion.

Much of the increase was due to the significant number of new reactor licenses that were anticipated—however most were never actually submitted. So, it is fair to ask whether this additional funding is being used for unnecessary regulation.

The best way to understand the importance of nuclear power is to look at the stories of three countries: Japan, Germany and the United Arab Emirates.

Japan and Germany have recently experienced what happens when a major manufacturing country loses its nuclear capacity. In Japan, the cost of generating electricity has increased 56 percent and Germany has among the highest household electricity rates in the European Union—both because they moved away from nuclear power.

The United Arab Emirates has shown what a country can do when a country decides to take advantage of nuclear power. By 2020, the Emirates will have completed four reactors that will provide nearly 25 percent of its annual electricity.

It will take building more nuclear reactors to avoid the path of Japan and Germany, and today's hearing is an important step to making sure the United States does what it must to unleash nuclear power.

I look forward to working with the commission and our Ranking Member, Senator Feinstein, who I will now recognize for an opening statement.

CUBA'S CULTURE OF POVERTY CONUNDRUM

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I submit for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the following article regarding the early years of the Castro regime, the policies of which created a culture of poverty in Cuba, and converted a previously developing country into an underdeveloped, closed society.

The author, Professor Roland Alum, is a Garden State constituent, a longtime participant in civic activities, and has been a personal friend for three decades. He is a respected anthropologist and author whose writings have appeared in both major newspapers and academic journals.

This article, which appeared in Panoramas, an electronic journal at the University of Pittsburgh, touches upon sensitive topics apropos to the current U.S.-Cuba relationship.

I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Panoramas, Feb. 14, 2015]

THE CUBAN CULTURE OF POVERTY CONUNDRUM

(By Roland Armando Alum)

INTRODUCTION

I propose here to re-examine certain aspects of life in ''Socialist Cuba,'' principally the so-called culture of poverty, as gauged relatively early in the Castro brothers regime by two U.S. socio-cultural anthropologists, the legendary Oscar Lewis and his protégée/associate Douglas Butterworth, whose research project 4.5 decades ago was surrounded by controversy and enigmas.

Unquestionably, the Fidel and Raúl Castro ''Revolutionary Government'' enjoyed an extraordinary initial popularity in 1959. Yet, the enthusiasm vanished as the duo hijacked the liberal-inspired anti-Batista rebellion that had been largely advanced by the then expanding middle-classes. Instead of delivering the promised ''pan con libertad'' (bread with liberty), the Castro siblings converted Cuba into a socio-spiritually and fiscally bankrupt, Marxist-Stalinist dystopia in which both, bread and liberty are scarce (Botín, 2010; Horowitz, 2008; Moore, 2008).

Cuba was the last Ibero-American colony to attain independence (1902); yet, by the 1950s, the island-nation was a leader in the Americas in numerous quality-of-life indicators. This record was reached notwithstanding instability and governmental corruption during the republican era (1902–58), including the 1952–58 bloody authoritarian dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. However, under the (now anachronistic octogenarian) Castros, Cuba became an impoverished, Orwellian closed society beleaguered by unproductivity, rampant corruption, humiliating rationing, human rights abuses, and—understandably—unprecedented mass emigration (Díaz-Briquets & Pérez-López, 2006; Horowitz, 2008).

CUBA'S CULTURE OF POVERTY CONUNDRUM

The Lewis and Butterworth project in 1969–70 is still, oddly, among the little known accounts of the early effects of the Castro family's regimentation. Supported by a Ford Foundation's nearly $300,000 grant, the professors intended to test Lewis's theory of the ''culture of poverty'' (or rather, sub-culture of poverty). They had innocently hypothesized that a culture of poverty (hereafter CoP) would not exist in a Marxist-oriented society, as they presupposed that the socially alienating conditions that engender it could develop among the poor solely in capitalist economies. Influenced by Marxism, Lewis in particular had cleverly problematized the commonalities of the poor's elusive quandary in well-known prior studies across different societies, notably among Mexicans and Puerto Ricans.

While poverty is defined in relative terms, the CoP was conceptualized as an amorphous corpus of socially transmitted self-defeating beliefs and interrelated values, such as: abandonment, alcoholism, authoritarianism, deficient work ethic, domestic abuse, fatalism, homophobia/machismo, hopelessness, illegitimacy, instant, gratification/present-time orientation, low social-civic consciousness, mother-centered families, sexism/misogyny, suspicion of authorities while holding expectations on government dependency, and so forth.

This ''psychology of the . . . oppressed . . . poor'' is considered a key obstacle to achieving vertical socio-economic mobility even in fluid social-class, more open societies, such as the U.S. Not all poor individuals develop a CoP, but being poor is a sine qua non condition.

Ever since its early stages as a separate discipline in the mid–1800s, anthropology's cornerstone has been the concept of ''culture.'' A century later, the notion drifted to everyday language; to wit, statements such as ''a culture of corruption'' became common in the media in reference to mindsets in government and corporations. I prefer the interpretation of culture by my own Pitt co-mentor, ''Jack'' Roberts (1964): ''a system for storing and retrieving information,'' which fits with the Lewis-Butterworth approach.

With initial high-level governmental welcome, one of the Lewis-Butterworth investigations entailed comprehensive interviews of former Havana slum-dwellers resettled in new buildings. In the research project's fourth book, The People of Buena Ventura, Butterworth (1980) admitted with disenchantment that his research project found sufficient social symptoms that met the CoP criteria, thus disproving the initial hypothesis expecting an absence of the CoP under socialism.

THE PROJECT'S SIGNIFICANCE

The Lewis-Butterworth ethnographic (descriptive, qualitative) work has various additional implications. It shed light for an evaluation of the Guevarist ''New Socialist Man'' archetype. Similarly, it informed an understanding of the dynamics that led to the spectacular 1980 Mariel boat exodus, when over 120,000 Cubans (some 1.2% of Cuba's population) ''voted with their feet.'' Ironically, the regime and its insensitive fans abroad still refer to the raggedy refugees with disdainful discourse as ''escoria'' (scum) and with the Marxist slur ''lumpen proletariat.'' Significantly, most Marielistas were born and/or enculturated under socialism, i.e., they personified the presumed ''New Man.'' Many of them, moreover, had been military conscripts, and/or had served time in the infamous gulag-type ''U.M.A.P.'' forced-labor camps created for political dissidents (particularly intellectuals and artists), Beatles' fans, gays, the unemployed, long-haired bohemians/hippies, Trotskyites, would-be emigrants (considered ''traitors''), and religious people (including Jehovah's Witnesses and Afro-Cuban folk-cults' practitioners), etc. (Núñez-Cedeño, et al., 1985). In fact, the Marielistas encompassed also an over-representation of Afro-Cubans, the demographic sector traditionally viewed as most vulnerable, and thus, among the expected prime beneficiaries of socialist redistribution.

Certainly, there were always poor Cubans—of all phenotypes—and conceivably, some version of the CoP existed pre–1959; but in my exchanges with Butterworth, he reconfirmed another remarkable finding. While acknowledging the social shortcomings of pre-revolutionary times, he could not document (for ex., through the collection of oral life-histories), a case for a pervasive, pre-revolutionary Lewisian CoP.

This in situ scrutiny of daily life fairly early in the Castros era corroborates previous and subsequent accounts by many Cubanologists and the much vilified and ever-expanding exile community. There exists a widespread CoP in Socialist Cuba, though not necessarily as a survivor of the ancien régime, but—as Butterworth deduced—a consequence of the nouveau régime. The authorities must have suspected, or ascertained through surveillance, about the prospective conclusions, given that the anthropologists were suddenly expelled from the country. They were accused of being U.S. spies, most of their research material was confiscated, and some ''informants'' (interviewees) were arrested and/or harassed.

Additionally, their Cuban statistician, Álvaro Ínsua, was imprisoned.

Comfortably from abroad, academic and media enthusiasts of the Castros' ''dynasty'' customarily replicate party-line clichés in their penchant to ''launder'' the dictatorship's excesses and the centralized economy's dysfunctions by blaming external factors. Topping the excuses is the ending of the defunct COMECON's subsidies circa 1990. Some apologists—notably a few anthropology colleagues—even absurdly refer to the 1959–90 epoch as a ''utopia,'' while the government labeled the current calamitous post-1990 years the ''Special Period.''

Yet, the undertaking by Lewis & Butterworth, who were initially eagerly simpatico to the Castros, provided remarkable revelations that regime's defenders conveniently still continue to overlook. It showed that life for average Cubans toward the end of the regime's first decade—long before the Special Period—was already beset with corruption, consumer scarcities, and time-wasting food-lines. All this is characteristic of what is branded ''economies of shortage,'' standard for Soviet-modeled societies (Eberstadt, 1988; Ghodsee, 2011; Halperin, 1981; Verdery 1996).

Likewise, Butterworth portrayed how ordinary Cubans—''los de a pie'' (those on foot)—were by then engaging in what nowadays we call ''everyday forms of resistance,'' a social weapon of subjugated people anywhere. As also depicted by other observers and Cuban former participant-resisters (now exiled, my own informants or ''cultural consultants''), Butterworth reported how Cubans were already undermining the hegemonic police-state through taboo actions, such as absenteeism, black-marketeering, briberies, pilfering, and even vandalism. Apparently, this project remains the only conventional testing of the CoP in a totalitarian socialist country, although numerous researchers have chronicled the pitiable quality of life under such socio-political systems (Eberstadt, 1988; Halperin, 1981).

Indeed, the Cuban reality of widespread misery—except for the privileged top one-percent (now an elitist gerontocracy)—as well as of indignities and hushed quotidian defiance, evokes narratives about similar, though faraway communist ''experiments'' that collapsed a quarter-century ago. Among these comparable accounts are ethnologist Verdery's (1996) descriptions of despot Ceauşescu's Romania and Ghodsee's (2011) Bulgarian ethnographic vignettes.

EPILOGUE

A number of experts have been reporting about certain kinds of behavioral traits among Cubans, both islanders and recent émigrés, which may reflect CoP patterns (Botín, 2010; Horowitz, 2008). This is not surprising, as the CoP worsened with time as impoverishment augmented (Hirschfeld, 2008).

One can surmise that, despite its human and material toll, the Castros regime not only failed to solve traditional social problems, but exacerbated at least some of them, and moreover created new ones (Díaz-Briquets & Pérez-López, 2006; Eberstadt, 1988). Much of this was already manifested in the 1960s (Edwards, 1973; Halperin, 1981), as reflected in the Lewis-Butterworth venture.

Lewis died, heart-broken, at age 56 in December 1970 upon his repatriation. Butterworth also took ill—especially emotionally—dying in 1986 (at 56 too). The Ínsuas were abandoned in Cuba to their own lot. Álvaro languished in jail for six years; in 1980 he was ''allowed'' to leave for Costa Rica with wife Greta (who had also worked for the project), and son Manolo. They reached the U.S. soon thereafter, coinciding with the arrival of the Mariel expatriates and Butterworth's book publication. After a brief staying in northern New Jersey, where I assisted them, they settled in Miami.

In assessing the legacy of the Lewis-Butterworth project on Cuba's culture of poverty, there remain several intriguing puzzles pending exploration. Hopefully, someday Álvaro and Greta will write their own elucidating memoirs.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO BILL BREWER

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Bill Brewer on his retirement after serving the great State of Nevada for over 30 years. It gives me great pleasure to recognize his years of hard work and dedication to enhancing the lives of many across rural Nevada.

Mr. Brewer stands as a shining example of someone who has devoted his life to serving his State and his local community. After earning his degree from Oklahoma State University, Mr. Brewer started working in the housing industry for the Farmers Home Administration, FmHA. In 1994, he became the first housing program director for the new Nevada State office of FmHA. This was later named the State office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA, Rural Development. During his tenure as program director for the USDA, Mr. Brewer invested more than $1 billion in rural Nevada, assisting hundreds of families and seniors in home ownership and affordable rental housing. Mr. Brewer spent recent years continuing his work in public service as leader of the senior management team of Nevada Rural Housing Authority, working to make goals of the organization a reality. His positive legacy in the rural Nevada housing industry will be felt for years to come.

His unwavering commitment to the State is noble and has not gone without notice. Mr. Brewer was appointed to the Nevada Housing Division Advisory Committee and the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Committee as a result of his accomplishments. His hard work earned him the County Supervisor of the Year for Nevada and the State Director's Going the Extra Mile Award in 2011. His accolades are well deserved.

It is not only Mr. Brewer's commitment to his local community in the housing sector that places him amongst the most notable in his community but also his devotion to charitable service. Mr. Brewer has served on the board of directors for the Nevada Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America for 10 years and is a longtime member of the organization. In 2004, he received the Boy Scouts Silver Beaver Award in recognition of his service and was awarded the President's Volunteer Service Award in 2009.

I am grateful for his dedication to the people of Nevada. He exemplifies the highest standards of leadership and community service and should be proud of his long and meaningful career. Today, I ask that all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Mr. Brewer on his retirement, and I give my deepest appreciation for all that he has done to make Nevada a better place. I offer him my best wishes for many successful and fulfilling years to come.•

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:16 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 7. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the World War II members of the Doolittle Tokyo Raiders.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 284. An act 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.

H.R. 639. An act 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.

H.R. 647. An act to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 648. An act to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 876. An act 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.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 803(a) of the Congressional Recognition for Excellence in Arts Education Act (2 U.S.C. 803(a)), the Minority Leader appoints the following member on the part of the House of Representatives to the Congressional Award Board: Mr. Romero Brown of Acworth, Georgia.

The message also announced that pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1011c, and the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Speaker appoints the following individuals on the part of the House of Representatives 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, Alabama, Dr. Kathleen Sullivan Alioto of New York, New York, and Mr. Ralph A. Wolff of Oakland, California.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 284. An act 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; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 639. An act 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; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 647. An act to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 648. An act to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 876. An act 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; to the Committee on Finance.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. COATS, from the Joint Economic Committee:

Special Report entitled ''2015 Economic Report of the President'' (Rept. No. 114–5).

By Mr. BURR, from the Select Committee on Intelligence, without amendment:

S. 754. An original bill to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes.

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. PORTMAN:

S. 749. A bill to require dynamic scoring of major legislation; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 750. A bill to achieve border security on certain Federal lands along the Southern border; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. COATS, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COTTON, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 751. A bill to improve the establishment of any lower ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. TESTER, Mr. CORKER, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. VITTER, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. KIRK, Mr. HELLER, Mr. SCOTT, and Mr. MORAN):

S. 752. A bill to establish a scorekeeping rule to ensure that increases in guarantee fees of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac shall not be used to offset provisions that increase the deficit; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. UDALL, and Mr. COONS):

S. 753. A bill to amend the method by which the Social Security Administration determines the validity of marriages under title II of the Social Security Act; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BURR:

S. 754. An original bill to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; from the Select Committee on Intelligence; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself and Mr. CORKER):

S. 755. A bill to designate as wilderness certain public land in the Cherokee National Forest in the State of Tennessee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 756. A bill to require a report on accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself and Mr. BURR):

S. 757. A bill to modify the prohibition on recognition by United States courts of certain rights relating to certain marks, trade names, or commercial names; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 758. A bill to establish an Interagency Trade Enforcement Center in the Office of the United States Trade Representative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 759. A bill to establish procedures for the expedited consideration by Congress of the recommendations set forth in the Cuts, Consolidations, and Savings report prepared by the Office of Management and Budget; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 760. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to authorize a bipartisan majority of Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission to hold nonpublic collaborative discussions; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 761. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to designate certain medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs as health professional shortage areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASEY, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 762. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish an innovation in surface transportation program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 763. A bill to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 764. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 765. A bill to appropriately determine the budgetary effects of energy savings performance contracts and utility energy service contracts; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 766. A bill to limit the retrieval of data from vehicle event data recorders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 767. A bill to eliminate the payroll tax for individuals who have attained retirement age, to amend title II of the Social Security Act to remove the limitation upon the amount of outside income which an individual may earn while receiving benefits under such title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. Res. 102. A resolution requiring authorizing committees to hold annual hearings on Government Accountability Office investigative reports on the identification, consolidation, and elimination of duplicative Government programs; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. BOOZMAN):

S. Con. Res. 10. A concurrent resolution supporting the designation of the year of 2015 as the ''International Year of Soils'' and supporting locally led soil conservation; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 15

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) were added as cosponsors of S. 15, a bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to recognize the authority of States to regulate oil and gas operations and promote American energy security, development, and job creation, and for other purposes.

S. 142

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 142, 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.

S. 153

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr.

KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 153, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to authorize additional visas for well-educated aliens to live and work in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 257

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 257, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to physician supervision of therapeutic hospital outpatient services.

S. 269

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 269, a bill to expand sanctions imposed with respect to Iran and to impose additional sanctions with respect to Iran, and for other purposes.

S. 275

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 275, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of home as a site of care for infusion therapy under the Medicare program.

S. 301

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) 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 New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 308, a bill to reauthorize 21st century community learning centers, and for other purposes.

S. 314

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 314, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services.

S. 332

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 332, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 335

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 335, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve 529 plans.

S. 338

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 338, a bill to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

S. 388

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 388, a bill to amend the Animal Welfare Act to require humane treatment of animals by Federal Government facilities.

S. 418

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 418, a bill to support and encourage the health and well-being of elementary school and secondary school students by enhancing school physical education and health education.

S. 423

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) were added as cosponsors of S. 423, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 430

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 430, a bill to prohibit the marketing of electronic cigarettes to children, and for other purposes.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to end discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in public schools, and for other purposes.

S. 483

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 483, a bill to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

S. 502

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 502, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to sunset the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force after three years.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) 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. 559

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 559, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Education from engaging in regulatory overreach with regard to institutional eligibility under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 577

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 577, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to eliminate the corn ethanol mandate for renewable fuel.

S. 578

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors 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 New York (Mr. SCHUMER) 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. 599

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 599, a bill to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project.

S. 615

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) were added as cosponsors of S. 615, a bill to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 626

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 626, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes.

S. 634

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Colorado

(Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 634, a bill to prohibit the Federal Emergency Management Agency from recouping certain assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 637

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) 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. 650

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 650, a bill to extend the positive train control system implementation deadline, and for other purposes.

S. 667

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 667, a bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children.

S. 674

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 674, a bill to expand programs with respect to women's health.

S. 683

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 683, a bill to extend the principle of federalism to State drug policy, provide access to medical marijuana, and enable research into the medicinal properties of marijuana.

S. 697

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 697, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to reauthorize and modernize that Act, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 297

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 297 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 name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor 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 Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 758. A bill to establish an Interagency Trade Enforcement Center in the Office of the United States Trade Representative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to discuss the importance of international trade and the enforcement of international trade agreements.

We talk a lot about international trade in this Chamber and frame it in terms of opening new markets with new trade agreements. But as the distinguished Presiding Officer understands, while it is important to ensure future agreements are fair for businesses and workers, we should also be devoting more time to the 290 trade agreements we already have and ask ourselves; are we doing all we can to ensure we are enforcing these trade agreements on behalf of American businesses and workers who are affected by trade agreements, on behalf of communities that are affected by trade agreements?

I do not think we are, despite strong efforts by the Obama administration. I say that because this particular report—which I have in my hand, which is very heavy—is a report from the U.S. Trade Representative that has 384 pages detailing all of the trade barriers we face around the globe. Those are 384 reasons why we need to do more to fight for our manufacturers, our farmers, our innovators, our workers—everyone employed in all of the industries that are affected by trade barriers.

So today, Senator GRAHAM and I are introducing the Trade Enforcement Act, which would make permanent the Interagency Trade Enforcement Center at the USTR.

The Center was created in 2012 by Executive order. I appreciate that very much. Senator GRAHAM and I have been working for a number of years to get a trade enforcement office, and I appreciate that President Obama put in place by Executive order this new Center with responsibilities to coordinate the enforcement powers of multiple Federal agencies.

It has already demonstrated its value in helping our Nation win major trade enforcement cases. We just need to make it permanent.

Around the same time as the Center's creation, China began imposing illegal duties on American cars and SUVs in defiance of World Trade Organization rules. These duties threatened the jobs of America's 850,000 automobile workers and had a direct impact on more than $5 billion of U.S. auto exports.

With the help of the Interagency Trade Enforcement Center, the U.S. Trade Representative challenged this practice by China at the WTO. The WTO agreed with the United States that China's duties breached numerous international trade rules, and last June the duties were terminated. They ended.

Another case, Argentina was restricting imports of U.S. goods—blocking energy products, electronics and machinery, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, cars and parts—billions of dollars in potential sales. The Center helped to challenge that practice by Argentina, and, again, the WTO ruled in favor of the United States.

The Center helped to challenge China's practice of imposing duties on exports of rare Earth materials—so important, again, to our basic technology and manufacturing. In fact, in that case, the United States won. The Center helped to challenge India's ban on U.S. agricultural products, and we won again.

So what we are learning is that when the U.S. Trade Representative works with the Interagency Trade Enforcement Center—with an entity that is laser-focused on enforcing trade laws—to challenge unfair trade practices around the world, the United States wins.

We can continue winning if only we devote more time and more attention to enforcing the rules in our existing trade agreements. Again, we have a lot of work that needs to be done with all the trade barriers stopping us from having the opportunities to the markets that would allow us to export our goods.

For example, the USTR's report on nontariff trade barriers highlights how China provides export subsidies to its auto parts manufacturers so they can sell their parts to other countries at below market value and still turn a profit. This makes it impossible for our parts manufacturers—many of them small businesses—to compete in those markets.

In a letter I wrote to the President—which I was pleased to have 188 Members of Congress sign—I asked the administration to take action. I was very pleased when the USTR announced later that year that the United States was formally challenging China's illegal practices on autos and auto parts. Without the investigation and the technical work done by the Interagency Trade Enforcement Center, that challenge would not have been possible.

We have a free-trade agreement with Korea. Yet that nation continues to erect new trade barriers that make it more difficult for U.S. automakers to do business there. Even today, despite best efforts to open things up, Korea is one of the most closed auto markets in the world.

Our legislation is based on the fact that our enforcement needs to go further and faster, and we need to support it. We need to give the USTR the resources it needs to take swift, decisive action to crack down on unfair trade practices. I very much appreciate the work that is being done by that Center, and they are showing what happens when we are focused, when we as a country are focused on those things that our businesses and workers need in terms of eliminating unfair trade practices.

But I think it is very important that this Interagency Trade Enforcement Center become permanent, and that is what the bill that Senator GRAHAM and I are introducing would do.

Our bill would also establish a Chief Trade Enforcement Officer to lead the Center so we have one person being held accountable on enforcement who would be accountable to the Senate and to the American people.

We also do something that I think is very important that will help manufacturing. Right now we have at the USTR a Chief Agricultural Negotiator. I support that. They are somebody helping to lead our efforts in agricultural policy. But we know to have a strong economy, it is about making things and growing things, and the making things part of it does not have a chief negotiator. That is why we in our bill create a Chief Manufacturing Negotiator to focus squarely on the interests of manufacturers in our country. That will clearly send a message that when we talk about growing the middle class, growing the economy, we are going to be laser-focused on manufacturing, as well as on agriculture.

We know that for every $1 billion in goods we export, we support 5,800 American jobs. By passing the Trade Enforcement Act, we will remove more trade barriers, meaning we will export more goods and create more American jobs, and we all want to create jobs and grow the economy.

So I am looking forward to working with my colleagues in the months ahead to ensure that in this global marketplace where we find ourselves, there is, in fact, a level playing field and we have an agency and individuals who are laser-focused on making sure we have fair trade.

In the end, our goal should be to export our products, not our jobs. That is what Senator GRAHAM's and my bill would do.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 763. A bill to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am pleased to introduce the Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act with Senator MURRAY. Timely and effective trauma care is critical to ensuring lifesaving interventions for those who have serious injuries.

Nationally, trauma is the leading cause of death in the United States for individuals aged 44 and younger. According to the National Trauma Institute, trauma accounts for 41 million emergency room visits and 2.3 million hospital admissions across the country each year. The nation's trauma and emergency medical systems are designed to respond quickly and efficiently to get seriously injured individuals to the appropriate trauma center hospital within the ''golden hour,'' the time period when medical intervention is most effective in saving lives and preserving function. Achieving this standard of access requires maintenance and careful coordination between organized systems of trauma care.

The Trauma Systems and Regionalization of Emergency Care Reauthorization Act builds on my previous efforts to improve trauma care, which is an essential component of our care system. Last year, the President signed into law legislation I introduced, the Improving Trauma Care Act, which includes burn injuries in the definition of trauma care. Previously, the statutory definitions of trauma were inconsistent and outdated. Most notably, the law defined trauma in a way that excluded burn injuries, preventing burn centers from being able to apply for funding made available under trauma and emergency care programs. The Improving Trauma Care Act updated the Federal definition of trauma to include burns, a change that more appropriately reflects the relationship between burns and other traumatic injuries.

This was an important step, but more must be done. The legislation we are introducing today would reauthorize two important grant programs: Trauma Care Systems Planning Grants, which support State and rural development of trauma systems, and Regionalization of Emergency Care Systems Pilot Projects, which provide funds to design, implement, and evaluate innovative models of regionalized emergency care. The bill would also direct States to update their model trauma care plan with the input of relevant stakeholders. These critical programs support emergency care in communities across the country.

I urge our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in cosponsoring this legislation and working toward its expeditious passage.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 102—REQUIRING AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES TO HOLD ANNUAL HEARINGS ON GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS ON THE IDENTIFICATION, CONSOLIDATION, AND ELIMINATION OF DUPLICATIVE GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. PETERS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 102

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This resolution may be cited as the ''Congressional Oversight to Start Taxpayer Savings Resolution'' or the ''COST Savings Resolution''.

SEC. 2. REQUIRING COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORTS.

(a) DUPLICATION REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Comptroller General of the United States transmits each annual report to Congress identifying programs, agencies, offices, and initiatives with duplicative goals and activities within the Government under section 21 of the joint resolution entitled ''Joint Resolution increasing the statutory limit on the public debt'' (Public Law 111–139; 31 U.S.C. 712 note), each standing committee of the Senate (except the Committee on Appropriations) with jurisdiction over any such program, agency, office, or initiative covered by that report shall conduct hearings on the recommendations for consolidation and elimination of such program, agency, office, or initiative.

(b) HIGH RISK LIST.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the Comptroller General of the United States publishes a High Risk List, or any successor thereto, each standing committee of the Senate (except the Committee on Appropriations) with jurisdiction over any agency or program area on the High Risk List shall conduct hearings on the vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement, or need for transformation, of the agency or program area.

(c) JOINT HEARINGS.—For any program, agency, office, initiative, or program area over which more than 1 standing committee of the Senate (except the Committee on Appropriations) has jurisdiction, to the extent determined beneficial and appropriate by the Chairmen of the committees, the committees may hold joint hearings under subsection (a) or (b).

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 10—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF THE YEAR OF 2015 AS THE ''INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SOILS'' AND SUPPORTING LOCALLY LED SOIL CONSERVATION

Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

S. CON. RES. 10

Whereas many of the international partners of the United States are designating 2015 as the ''International Year of Soils'';

Whereas soil is vitally important for food security and essential ecosystem functions;

Whereas soil conservation efforts in the United States are often locally led;

Whereas 2015 also marks the 80th anniversary of the signing of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (16 U.S.C. 590a et seq.) on April 27, 1935;

Whereas soils, as the foundation for agricultural production, essential ecosystem functions, and food security, are key to sustaining life on Earth;

Whereas soils and the science of soils contribute to improved water quality, food safety and security, healthy ecosystems, and human health; and

Whereas soil, plant, animal, and human health are intricately linked; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) supports the designation of 2015 as the ''International Year of Soils'';

(2) encourages the public to participate in activities that celebrate the importance of soils to the current and future well-being of the United States; and

(3) supports conservation of the soils of the United States, through—

(A) partnership with local soil and water conservation districts; and

(B) landowner participation in—

(i) the conservation reserve program established under subchapter B of chapter 1 of

subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831 et seq.);

(ii) the environmental quality incentives program established under chapter 4 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3839aa et seq.);

(iii) the conservation stewardship program established under subchapter B of chapter 2 of subtitle D of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3838D et seq.);

(iv) the agricultural conservation easement program established under subtitle H of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3865 et seq.);

(v) the regional conservation partnership program established under subtitle I of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3871 et seq.); and

(vi) the small watershed rehabilitation program established under section 14 of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (16 U.S.C. 1012).

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 317. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 307 submitted by Mr. TILLIS and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 318. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 291 submitted by Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) and intended to be proposed to the bill S. 178, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 317. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 307 submitted by Mr. TILLIS and intended to be proposed 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 1, strike line 5, and all that follows through page 2, line 6, and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—If a covered 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 the covered alien or relief from removal provided pursuant to policies implemented under, or substantially similar to policies implemented under, an Executive action set out under subsection (c); and

(2) place the covered alien in expedited proceedings for removal from the United States after the covered alien completes any term of imprisonment for such a conviction.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED ALIEN.—The term ''covered alien''—

(A) means an alien present in the United States; and

(B) does not include an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

(2) LAWFULLY ADMITTED FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCE.—The term ''lawfully admitted for permanent residence'' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

SA 318. Mr. TOOMEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 291 submitted by Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN) and intended to be proposed 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 1, line 6, strike the period and insert ''or the 'Jeremy Bell Act'.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a Subcommittee hearing entitled ''TSA Oversight and Examination of the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Request.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Building a Competitive U.S. International Tax System.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''America's Health IT Transformation: Translating the Promise of Electronic Health Records Into Better Care.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. 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 17, 2015, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Securing the Southwest Border: Perspectives from Beyond the Beltway.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Immigration Reforms Needed to Protect Skilled American Workers.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, WILDLIFE, AND WATER

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Water of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 17, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Deepening Political and Economic Crisis in Venezuela: Implications for U.S. Interests and the Western Hemisphere.''

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Benji McMurray, a detailee to the Antitrust Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, be granted floor privileges for the duration of this Congress.

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

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to grant floor privileges to a member of my staff, Derek Brown, through the end of the day.

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

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday,

March 18; 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 be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that the time be equally divided, with the Democrats controlling the first half and the majority controlling the second half; finally, following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 178.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:33 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 18, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO WADSWORTH, OHIO

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 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 100TH EAGLE SCOUT OF TROOP 67

HON. REID J. RIBBLE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of Patrick McCormick. Mr. McCormick has selflessly dedicated much of his life to Boy Scout Troop 67. Since founding the Troop in 1966, Mr. McCormick has mentored 100 Eagle Scouts. An Eagle Scout himself, Mr. McCormick is a role model for each and every member of Boy Scout Troop 67.

I need not go into detail of the importance Eagle Scouts have played in our country's history with men such as Neil Armstrong and President Gerald Ford. Under the leadership of Patrick McCormick, Troop 67 has ten Eagle Scouts whom are veterans of the United States of America's Armed Forces. One is a Boy Scouts of America District Scout Executive, one is a minister, thirty-two Scouts that have earned their Eagle Scout Award are now registered as Assistant Scoutmasters and twenty-five have earned their Eagle Scout Palms. The Eagle Scouts, throughout their community service, have identified projects and built the necessary relationships to move those projects forward. These Eagle projects enhance the communities in which they are performed, and provide a road map of encouragement to the scouts that follow in their footsteps.

I commend Mr. McCormick for his many years of service, dedication and mentorship to the young men of this nation. It is men like Mr. McCormick that inspire and engage the youth of our country to grow and do great things.

IN MEMORIAM OF CONGRESSMAN DONALD ''DON'' HOLST CLAUSEN

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I honor the memory of former Congressman Donald ''Don'' Holst Clausen, who passed away on February 7, 2015, at the age of 91. Mr. Clausen, a native of Humboldt County, California attended several colleges, including St. Mary's College. From there, he joined the V5 Naval Aviation Cadet Program and enlisted in World War II. His service in aviation during the war carried over to starting a flight school and ambulance service at the Del Norte airport.

Mr. Clausen served on the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors from 1955 to 1962. He was elected to Congress in 1963 following the death of Congressman Clement Woodnutt Miller. During his time in the U.S. House of Representatives, he worked on the formation and expansion of Redwood National Park, and was an ardent supporter of the Klamath, Eel and Russian Rivers. He also worked to establish a 200-mile fishing boundary to prevent the exploitation of ocean fisheries by foreign fleets.

Following his defeat for reelection in 1982, Mr. Clausen was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to be director of special projects for the Federal Aviation Administration, in which he served until 1990.

It is with deep respect that we mourn the passing of Mr. Don Clausen and extend condolences to his daughters Dawn Marie Baumgartner and Bev Mendenhall. His presence will be sorely missed.

HONORING MR. WILLIE THOMAS GRAY

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great community leader, Mr. Willie Thomas Gray.

Mr. Gray is a native of the Citronelle area in north Mobile County, where he graduated from Citronelle High School. He is the owner and publisher of two weekly newspapers in the area: The Call News and the Washington County News. Under his leadership, the papers have consistently received various press association awards. He is also an active member of the Alabama Press Association and the National Newspaper Association.

After his local chamber of commerce went inactive a number of years ago, Willie Gray stepped up to the plate. He arranged meetings of local business, civic, church, and education leaders to promote the continuation of civic involvement and formed the Citronelle Business Association. Today, Mr. Gray remains active in economic development efforts in the community. His work has included the execution of a professional study, including following-up on the results and planning for development based on its findings.

Mr. Gray has also taken an active role in the betterment of the north Mobile County schools. As a foremost advocate for education, he worked with the Mobile County Public School System to move ahead with construction of a new Citronelle High School and Calcedeaver Elementary School and an extensive renovation of historic Rosa A. Lott Middle School. The renovations and new constructions were critical, as some of the buildings were over 100 years old.

Mr. Speaker, we need more people like Willie Gray in our nation. His commitment to the local schools, businesses, and civic organizations serves as a bright example of community involvement. I look forward to a continued partnership with Mr. Gray as we work towards the common goal of making Southwest Alabama a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO ON BEING NAMED THE 2014 TOP MICROPOLITAN COMMUNITY IN THE UNITED STATES

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to recognize the City of Findlay, which is located in Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Findlay was recently named the 2014

Top Micropolitan Community in the United States by Site Selection magazine, the official publication of the Global FDI Association and the Industrial Asset Management Council.

The magazine ranked 576 of the nation's micropolitan areas, cities with populations ranging from 10,000 to 50,000 that cover at least one county. While Findlay has ranked well for many years, placing fourth in 2013, this is the first time the city has topped the list.

The City of Findlay has focused its efforts on economic development within the community, and this year's recognition is a testament to the collaboration among local, county and state leaders, the Findlay-Hancock County Economic Development office and the city's community partners. Their efforts continue to make Findlay a great place to live, work, and raise a family. Findlay's future remains bright for the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the City of Findlay, Ohio, on being named the 2014 Top Micropolitan Community in the United States. I am extremely proud of the growth and investment that have occurred in Findlay over the past year, and am excited about the potential this development brings to the city's residents and businesses who are proud to call Findlay home.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF MR. ALEXANDER E. ''AL'' TEODOSIO

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mr. Alexander E. ''Al'' Teodosio, 90, who passed away on Tuesday, February 10, in the presence of his loving family.

Al dedicated his life to spending time with his family and friends, showing compassion to others, and while serving his country in the armed forces. Al honorably served during World War II as a Private First Class in the Army Air Corps Squadron in the Pacific Theater and demonstrated tremendous strength and courage throughout his tenure. After his service Al returned to the states and became a widely respected attorney and practiced for many years in the city of Akron, Ohio with his late brother, Ernie. In 1950, Al married the love of his life Anna and the two shared over 64 years of love and happiness together. Regardless of his official title, Al aimed to make his community a better place to call home; and he undoubtedly succeeded. From 1976 to 1990, he served as Chairman of the Summit County Democratic Party, and made it a priority to inspire and mentor other local public servants.

Al was preceded in death by his loving parents; dear siblings; son, Alan; and granddaughter, Andrea. He is survived by his loving wife Anna Marie; children, Mary Anne, Thomas, Carol Anne, Robert, Alex; grandchildren, Christine, Kathleen, Joseph, Christopher, David, Lexi, Nicholas, Joseph, Ellen, and Alice. Perhaps the most fitting tribute to Al was written by his own children commemorating the Teodosio's 60th wedding anniversary in 2010. ''Thank you mom and dad,'' it read, ''for teaching us the meaning of love, commitment, and family.'' My dear friend Al helped to make the world a brighter place and he will be dearly missed.

A TRIBUTE TO SANDRA CARAVELLA—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 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, Sandra Caravella of Atwater Village, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Born and raised in the Atwater Village area of Los Angeles, Ms. Caravella attended Atwater Elementary School, Irving Junior High School and John Marshall High School. With the exception of a few years when she and her husband, Joe, also an Atwater Village native, resided in Michigan, Sandra has been a lifetime resident of Atwater Village, where she and Joe raised their family. While a young mother, Sandra volunteered at her sons' school, Atwater Avenue Elementary School as a teacher's aide, and became involved in the Parent Teacher Association. When her youngest son was six years old, she took a part time job at the Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau working as a registration supervisor at conventions, seminars and trade shows, where she remained for over two decades.

Well regarded in her community, Ms. Caravella is a passionate and dedicated volunteer. She is a founding member and current Board member of the Friends of Atwater Village (FAV), whose first venture was to successfully save the historic Van de Kamp Bakery building. As a FAV Board member, Sandra has been instrumental in attaining grants for community beautification projects that include murals illustrating the area's history, flower containers, and a decorative gate at the Los Angeles River and Acresite Street. With three other FAV Board members, she produced calendars featuring local history and a book entitled: Images of America: Atwater Village. Ms. Caravella is a member of the Atwater Village Chamber of Commerce, was the chamber's project manager of the sign committee, and serves on the Tree Lighting and River Committees for the Atwater Village Neighborhood Council.

Married for nearly half a century, Sandra and her husband, Joe, have two sons, Jeff and Brian, two grandsons, Vincenzo and Nico, all of whom live in Atwater Village.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Sandra Caravella.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK SANFORD

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I was absent for votes on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, due to my attendance at the funeral of my close friend, John Rainey. By any account he lived an extraordinary life based on the lives he touched, the difference he made and the degree to which he was a great friend to all those blessed to call him just that. I was one of those so fortunate, and accordingly I will miss him dearly. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

Roll call no. 116: Previous Question on H. Res. 138—Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1029—EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 and consideration of H.R. 1030—Secret Science Reform Act of 2015: Yea

Roll call no. 117: Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 1029—EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015 and consideration of H.R. 1030—Secret Science Reform Act of 2015: Yea

Roll call no. 118: H.R. 1191—Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act: Yea

Roll call no. 119: McKinley Amendment: Yea

Roll call no. 120: Motion to recommit H.R. 1029 with instructions: Nay

Roll call no. 121: H.R. 1029—EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015: Yea

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

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 16, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this year, we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It is an historic piece of legislation that was signed with the pride, humility and blood of brave men and women whose courage has watered the soil of our nation's democracy. For decades, it has been revered as a pillar of America's transformative society. It represented the promise of our forefathers.

Yet, fifty years after its passage, the laws' promises are unfulfilled. And, reflective of the nation's climate during the civil rights era, we are witnessing divisive political forces rally to resurrect the abhorrent practices of racial discrimination and disenfranchisement.

Fifty years after the passage of the Voting Rights Act, minorities across the country are fighting against state voter i.d. laws for the right to vote. Despite the Supreme Court's erroneous holding that ''[o]ur country has changed,'' and there is no longer a need for federal preclearance for changes in voting laws, minorities are facing increased barriers to the ballot box.

While there have certainly been great progress, we still have a long way to go. In the 1960's, our nation was marked by moments of crises, war, poverty and mass social

injustices. Fifty years later, our nation bears the same markings. We met the challenges then. It is time we rise to that challenge once more. Despite the current climate, when it appears that we are fighting a lost cause, we must remember that it is our patriotic duty to continue to fight. We must fight to honor the legacy of those who fought for us. Not only is it our duty to vote—it is also our constitutional right: one that should be protected and restored by Congress.

TRIBUTE TO DR. MARIE PULLIN

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one woman, Dr. Marie Pullin, who gave of herself in order for others to stand; and

Whereas, her legacy of dedicated service to enrich the children and others in her community through her volunteerism, creative ability and unwavering advocacy for the youth, the elderly, the poor and the arts are present in DeKalb County, Georgia for all to see; and

Whereas, this remarkable, positive woman with a beautiful smile gave of herself, her heart and her talent; never asking for fame or fortune but only to uplift, expose and inspire those in need; and

Whereas, she led by example from behind the scenes, as well as front and center for the state of Georgia, DeKalb County and the City of Atlanta, multiple ministries, homeowner associations, the Atlanta Edgewood-Kirkwood Neighborhood Center; and in her beloved church, Israel Baptist Church; and

Whereas, this virtuous Proverbs 31 woman was a mother, a wife, a daughter, a friend, a warrior, a matriarch, and a woman of great integrity; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional recognition on Dr. Marie Pullin for her leadership, friendship and 50 years of service to all of the citizens in Georgia and throughout the Nation; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr., do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Dr. Marie Pullin of DeKalb County, Georgia is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Honor" Dr. Marie Pullin, U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 14th day of March, 2015.

IN RECOGNITION OF RUTH HYMAN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Ruth Hyman as she is honored by the Visiting Nurse Association Health Group at their Ruth Hyman Spiritual Support in the Jewish Tradition Hospice Program Tree of Life Donor Wall Dedication.

A lifelong resident of Long Branch, New Jersey, Ruth Hyman continues her philanthropic endeavors to improve the well-being of New Jersey's residents. As the recipient of a generous donation by Ms. Hyman, the Visiting Nurse Association Health Group has named its hospice program's special services for Judaic pastoral care in her honor. The Ruth Hyman Spiritual Support in the Jewish Tradition program will continue to provide important spiritual and pastoral care and comfort to individuals and their families. The Visiting Nurse Association Health Group's mission to make the community a better place reflects Ms. Hyman's passion for helping others.

The largest non-profit visiting nurse association in New Jersey, the Visiting Nurse Association Health Group provides an invaluable service to our communities through compassionate home health care and support services. Its skilled health aides continue to meet the needs of over 120,000 individuals in the comfort and security of their homes each year.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in thanking Ruth Hyman and the Visiting Nurse Association Health Group for their immeasurable contributions to our community.

IN RECOGNITION OF MONSIGNOR JOHN BENDIK, RECIPIENT OF THE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM THE GREATER PITTSTON FRIENDLY SONS OF SAINT PATRICK

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Monsignor John Bendik, who will receive the Achievement Award from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

Monsignor Bendik was ordained on May 27, 1967, by Bishop J. Carroll McCormick, after studying at St. Meinrad Seminary and School of Theology in Indiana. His first assignment was to St. Matthew's Parish in East Stroudsburg. He taught at Notre Dame High School and served as Director of Campus Ministry at East Stroudsburg University. In 1970, he was assigned full-time to serve the University students where he developed an ecumenical and inter-faith United Campus Ministry.

In 1981, Monsignor Bendik was assigned as Chaplain at Misericordia University in Dallas where he organized student, faculty, and staff programs to outreach to the needy. His first assignment as a pastor was in 1986 at the parish of Our Lady of the Snows in Clarks Summit. Today, Monsignor Bendik is the pastor of St. John the Evangelist in Pittston.

In addition to serving as the current pastor for St. John's, Monsignor Bendik is also on a variety of boards within the community. He is the Dean for the priests and deacons of Northern Luzerne County. Monsignor Bendik and his parishioners also operate Care and Concern Ministries. Care and Concern provides the Greater Pittston Area with a free health clinic and a food pantry.

It is an honor to recognize Monsignor Bendik for his many accomplishments. I commend him for his service to our local communities throughout his career. I offer my deepest congratulation on receiving the Achievement Award from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

A TRIBUTE TO MINDY BOCKEWITZ

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Mindy Bockewitz for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

As a member of the Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co., Mindy created a program underwriting team that has grown to more than $17 million in premiums She sits as co-chair for the Education Leadership Initiative and has initiated a volunteer project at Nationwide for the company to donate catering and cafeteria leftovers to food pantries. In all aspects of her life Mindy is an example of the hard work and service that makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Mindy in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Mindy for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Mindy on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

TRIBUTE TO MR. SAMUEL BARBER

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one man, Samuel Barber, Jr., who has given so much to our state and nation; and

Whereas, Samuel Barber has been instrumental as a pioneer in the information technology industry with his talents, his high standards and innovating mind; and

Whereas, this giant of a man accomplished so much during his lifetime; he served our country honorably in the U.S. Navy for eleven years and was honored with the National Defense Service Medal; he was a successful entrepreneur with multiple businesses and he was recognized as Honorary Consul General for the Embassy of Ghana; and

Whereas, he was a strong community advocate, a motivator, a mentor, and a friend to all; he was dedicated to God, his church, his family and his community; and

Whereas, Samuel Barber was a husband, a father and a grandfather; he was our warrior, our patriarch, a man of great integrity who remained true to his childhood nurturing by his maternal grandparents in Alabama; and

Whereas, Samuel Barber was an ambassador of goodwill who will be truly missed; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia recognizes Samuel Barber as a citizen of great worth and so noted distinction; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that he is deemed worthy and deserving of this Congressional Honor by declaring Mr. Samuel Barber, Jr. U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 6th day of March, 2015.

A TRIBUTE TO LYNDA RESCIA—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 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, Lynda Rescia of Silver Lake, a unique neighborhood in Los Angeles, California.

Lynda Rescia was born in Ludlow, Massachusetts, and attended Ludlow High School. She went on to study Communications with a specialization in Film at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. When Lynda moved to Los Angeles, California, she worked for a few years in the film industry in editing, and then for a commercial house working on television commercials.

In 1984, Lynda married Michael Miller, who is a freelance photographer, and had a son, Byron, in 1986. Ms. Rescia continued to work freelance on commercials until the birth of her daughter, Haviland, in 1988. Soon after, Lynda went back to school part time to complete a degree in Child Development, and graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts and received her teaching credential in 1994.

Ms. Rescia has been passionate about education for many years. She worked in the Pasadena Unified School District and did substitute work for the Los Angeles Unified School District, before she was hired by Ivanhoe Elementary School as a kindergarten teacher in 1995. Since then, she has remained at Ivanhoe Elementary School spending most of her years as a primary teacher, then as a coach/coordinator, and currently as Principal. Under her leadership, the school, which is well-known for its high level of parent involvement, was honored as a "California Distinguished School" in 2014, and has maintained its glorious reputation for academic excellence. In addition to dedicating herself to Ivanhoe Elementary School, Lynda has volunteered with The Great Los Angeles River CleanUp.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Lynda Rescia.

TRIBUTE TO NUVISION FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

HON. MIMI WALTERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to recognize NuVision Federal Credit Union, a financial institution based in Orange County, California, for 80 years of outstanding service to their members and for their organization's philanthropic support of the communities in which they operate. I would also like to recognize Roger Ballard, who has provided exemplary leadership as Chief Executive Officer of NuVision Federal Credit Union since 2004.

NuVision Federal Credit Union is one of Southern California's leading credit unions with over $1.3 billion in assets and 87,000 members. Headquartered in Huntington Beach, California, NuVision Federal Credit Union was founded in 1935 to serve employees of Douglas Aircraft Company. Additions to the NuVision family have resulted in a diverse group of sponsor companies in their field of membership in industries including aerospace, utilities, municipal, retail, automotive, housing, engineering, and healthcare. NuVision continues to serve aerospace employees from Boeing, employees of Sempra Energy/The Gas Company, and employees of Tesoro.

NuVision Federal Credit Union has been very active in giving back to the communities they serve. In fact, NuVision Federal Credit Union employees and members have donated over $75,000 since 2010 to support the Children's Hospitals of Orange County and Los Angeles, and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. The credit union also participates in numerous philanthropic activities every year such as adopting military families for the holidays, sponsoring toy drives in their branches for Toys for Tots, providing backpacks and school supplies for underprivileged children, and raising money for the victims of natural disasters.

As a not-for-profit financial cooperative, NuVision remains proudly owned by the members it serves. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the members and employees of NuVision Federal Credit Union for their strong history of success in the community, and I wish them the best in their future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO JARAD BERNSTEIN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Jarad Bernstein for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Jarad is the Director of Public Relations and Media Management at Drake University. Jarad previously worked in San Francisco in various public relations positions, however he found the community was not as enriching as he would have liked. He visited Des Moines, Iowa, and was welcomed by the Midwestern charm and the community involvement that he had been missing in San Francisco. Not to mention his future wife, Lilliana, was in the area as well. Since arriving, Jarad's community service has flourished. He now serves as

the chairman for the Jewish Community Relations Commission, and has served as treasurer of the Central Iowa chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Jarad in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Jarad for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Jarad on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

RECOGNIZING FATHER HAROLD RAHM

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today to recognize Jesuit Father Harold Rahm, whom holds a commendable record of service to the El Paso community.

Father Rahm arrived in El Paso, Texas in July 1952 and served at Sacred Heart Parish until 1964. He was often seen traveling around the streets of South El Paso on his bicycle and was named, "the Bicycle Padre." Father Rahm used this modest technique to reach out to the youth of the Segundo Barrio in efforts to deter them from joining youth gangs.

During his fourteen years in El Paso, Father Rahm established organizations such as Our Lady's Youth Center, the Guadalupe Employment Office, the Guadalupe Way of Life Homes for young people and adults, and Camp Juan Diego for children who could not afford to go to summer camp. Father Rahm played an instrumental role in pacifying youth gang warfare in the 1950's by encouraging teens to spend their time in the youth center and resolving their violence through safe interaction and exercise.

Father Rahm also established the Guadalupe Employment Office in 1953, the Guadalupe Thrift Store in 1954, the Tepeyac Credit Union, and advocated for decent housing for South El Paso residents.

In trying to reach people that were unable to attend mass, Father Rahm would often celebrate mass in people's backyards and take breakfast to the elderly on his bicycle. Because of his devout actions, 5th Avenue was renamed Father Rahm Avenue in his honor. Father Rahm's legacy lives on through inspired El Pasoans that have carried on his work.

I thank Father Rahm for being an honorable man of God to our community and to the world through his notable service. Father Rahm represents the ambition, dedication, perseverance and resilience that is so indicative of the many great El Pasoans I have the distinct privilege to represent.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. NICHOLAS J. IVANS

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I along with Mr. COSTA rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Nicholas J. Ivans, who passed away on February 15, 2015.

Mr. Ivans was born in Hanford, California on February 17, 1924 to Peter Ivancovich and Danitza Ninkovich, immigrants from Bozna-Heregovina. He attended Hanford High and Visalia Junior College before he was drafted into the United States Armed Services during World War II. Mr. Ivans was a member of the H Company, 101st Regiment of the 26th Yankee Division and saw combat duty in France, Belgium, Luxemberg, Germany, Austria, and Czechoslavakia.

After the war, Mr. Ivans returned to the United States and attended California State University, Fresno for his undergraduate degree and the University of Southern California's (USC) Pharmacy School for his graduate degree. While at USC, Mr. Ivans met Edna Logan. The two married in 1949 and would have three of their own children and five foster children.

Mr. and Mrs. Ivans returned to the Central Valley after they received their Doctor of Pharmacy degrees. Not long after their return, Mr. Ivans purchased Tomer Drug Store in Avenal, California, launching his career as Avenal's community pharmacist.

Throughout his life, Mr. Ivans was a dedicated member of his community. He was involved in the Avenal Rotary Club and the Avenal Chamber of Commerce, where he served multiple terms as President. He was responsible for several improvements and additions to Avenal, including house to house mail delivery in unincorporated communities, a lighting district in an area with no street lights, and a state prison.

Mr. Ivans passed away just two days short of his 91st birthday on February 15, 2015. He touched the lives of many and will be dearly missed by his family, friends, and community.

Mr. Speaker, we ask our colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join us in commemorating the life of Nicholas J. Ivans.

TRIBUTE TO MS. XERNONA CLAYTON

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, many years ago a virtuous woman of God accepted her calling to serve the citizens across our nation and the international community; and

Whereas, Ms. Xernona Clayton began her career in service working diligently to assist in the Civil Rights Movement alongside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., she has served as the first Southern African American to host a daily prime time talk show, "The Xernona Clayton Show"; she served as the Corporate Vice President for Urban Affairs at Turner Broadcasting; she is the President and CEO of the Trumpet Awards Foundation wherein she is the Creator and Executive Producer of the Trumpet Awards honoring individuals that give of themselves to make the world better; Ms. Clayton continues to assist individuals and families across the world through education and service; and

Whereas, this phenomenal Proverbs 31 woman has shared her time and talents, giving the citizens of our district a friend to help those in need, a fearless leader and a servant to all wanting to ensure that the system works for everyone; and

Whereas, Ms. Xernona Clayton is a cornerstone in our community that has enhanced the lives of thousands for the betterment of our district and nation; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Ms. Xernona Clayton for her outstanding leadership and service to our district and to congratulate her for an exemplary life of leadership and service to all; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim March 14, 2015 as Ms. Xernona Clayton Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 14th day of March, 2015.

NO SUCH THING AS AN HONOR KILLING

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, right now, this very moment, a woman in Pakistan is hiding from her husband in a squat brick house.

She is covered from head to toe, only showing her eyes.

She lives in constant fear, every second of the day.

Why is she hiding?

Because her husband is trying to kill her.

An honor killing, it is deemed.

And sadly she is not alone.

Honor killings in Pakistan are a common practice.

When it is believed a woman has brought dishonor to her family or gone against their will, she is murdered.

But there is nothing honorable in hacking, beating or stoning a woman—a wife, a mother, a sister—to death.

The existing laws do not protect women from this unthinkable crime, because the idea is supported by the local community.

No woman should have to live in constant fear of the man she married, because Mr. Speaker, there is no such thing as an honor killing.

And that's just the way it is.

A TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE BARTON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Katherine

Barton for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

I would like to start by extending my gratitude to Katherine for her tour in Iraq and her service in the Iowa National Guard. Her leadership and selflessness to her country have continued in Iowa, with a focus on veterans. With her support, Iowa Workforce Development, the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Iowa National Guard and other state organizations worked out the framework of the Home Base Iowa program, which helps veterans find jobs in Iowa.

Katherine also impacts state policy as the Iowa National Guard's government relations officer, which occasionally brings her to the halls of Congress. Katherine's commitment to service, community and country is a prime example of service and Iowa work ethic that makes our state deeply proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Katherine in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Katherine for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Katherine on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

RECOGNIZING KENSINGTON VIDEO

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on February 28, 2015, a San Diego institution closed its doors. After more than 30 years in business the curtain came down on Kensington Video.

Kensington Video premiered in 1984 with Winnie and Rich Hanford and their children, Guy and Pam, rolling out the red carpet for its customers.

Since then, their video library has grown to an astounding 70,000 titles—perhaps one of the largest in the country.

Among the stacks of VHS, Beta, and DVDs, you could find not only the latest blockbusters but also that rare, special-interest film or foreign-language movie.

Amazingly, they never computerized. They just knew where every film title was, like seasoned shopkeepers familiar with their stock.

If the movie you wanted was not in their library, they would track it down for you.

It was that commitment to film and their customers that had people coming from miles away to Kensington Video.

Like a classic black and white movie, Kensington Video had the feel of a classic American small business. Customers came for the people behind the counter as much as they came for the films on the shelf.

They came to rent a movie and also get the latest news and gossip of what was happening in the neighborhood.

I was a proud member of Kensington Video and just as proud of my low membership number—74.

In 1948, mystery writer Raymond Chandler, who was also a Hollywood screenwriter, wrote: "Not only is the motion picture an art, but it is the one entirely new art that has been evolved on this planet for hundreds of years."

Kensington Video was the curator of that art for San Diego.

I hope the House of Representatives will join me in recognizing and thanking Kensington Video for years of service to the neighborhood of Kensington and city of San Diego.

TRIBUTE TO MR. HUGH R. WILLIAMS

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one man . . . who has given of himself in order for others to stand; and

Whereas, U.S. Air Force retired TSG. Hugh R. Williams III served our nation with honor and valor during his tours in Vietnam, Korea, Guam and Germany; and

Whereas, Mr. Williams never asked for fame or fortune, nor found a job too small or too big; but gave of himself, his time, his talent and his life to uplift those in need by demonstrating unwavering commitment to protecting and serving the citizens of the United States of America; and

Whereas, he was a husband, a father, a son and a friend; he was also our warrior, a man of great integrity who remained true to the uplifting and service to our nation; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia recognizes Mr. Hugh R. Williams as a citizen of great worth and so noted distinction; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Mr. Hugh R. Williams is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Honor" by declaring Mr. Hugh R. Williams III, U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 2nd day of February, 2015.

IN RECOGNITION OF KATHLEEN CRAMPSIE FOR RECEIVING THE 2015 PVIAA SHAMROCK AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kathleen Crampsie. On March 17, 2015, Kathy will receive the Shamrock Award during the Panther Valley Irish American Association's 67th Annual Banquet. Kathy is a well-known musician throughout the Panther Valley. She uses her musical talent to bring joy to the people whether it is at church services, nursing homes, or public events. She also is a mentor of young men and women aspiring to musical careers.

Kathy began her music career, in 1977 when she volunteered her time to play guitar at her parish church, St. Joseph Catholic in Summit Hill. After joining, Kathy started the church's guitar group, which became known as "Kathy's Angels." Mrs. Crampsie became an active and leading participant in the St. Joseph Catholic Church choir and its music program. She also started a children's choir that has performed at area nursing homes around the holidays. The children's choir even had the opportunity to sing the national anthem at a Philadelphia Phillies game.

Kathy's service to the community does not stop at music. She volunteers as a CCD for the Catholic community of the Panther Valley. As the secretary of the Summit Hill Lions Club, Kathy coordinates the organization's eye glass program. In the past, she has coached cheerleading at Panther Valley High School, Our Lady of the Valley School, and for the Summit Hill Knee Hi Association. Kathy also coached girls softball for Summit Hill and volleyball for Our Lady of the Valley.

Kathy has been married to Bob Crampsie for four decades, and the couple has raised four children and been blessed with eight grandchildren.

I congratulate Mrs. Crampsie on receiving the Panther Valley Irish American Association's Shamrock Award, and I commend her for all the selfless work she has done for her community.

IN HONOR OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SELMA TO MONTGOMERY MARCH ON THE STEPS OF THE ALABAMA STATE CAPITOL, MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following:

REMARKS BY PEGGY WALLACE KENNEDY

Montgomery, Alabama, a city that bears the scars of struggle and the nobility of change. A city that sits on the soil of shared sorrows for those that suffered and died for equality. A place of repose. Monuments of stone that connect us to each other. A place of hope and promise. A place to lay our grief down and shoulder the burden of moving beyond the sunset of despair to the place we call home.

All of us come to this moment and to this place on the road of our own life's personal journey. We are diverse, both in our experiences and our aspirations and our dreams. But we are united in the common belief that a vision for a Just America is worth the saving.

Stepping away from a painful past has not always been easy, but it has always been right. None of us can be held responsible for the circumstances of our birth, but each one of us will be held responsible for who we have become.

When my son Burns was young, my husband and I took him to the Martin Luther King Historic Site in Atlanta. As we moved through the exhibits we came across the photographs of fire hoses in Birmingham, the 16th Street Baptist Church, Governor Wallace standing in the Schoolhouse Door and the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Burns stood still as the truth of his family's past washed over him. He turned to me and asked, 'Why did Paw Paw' do those things to other people? I realized that at that moment I was at a crossroad in my life and the life of my son. The mantle had passed, and it was now up to me to do for Burns what my father never did for me. It was the first step in my journey of building a legacy of my own. I knelt down beside my son, drew him close and said, 'Paw Paw never told me why he did those things, but I know that he was wrong. So maybe it will just have to be up to me and you to help make things right.'

Standing here before you today is yet another day for the fulfillment of the promise that I made to my son. For today and for all the tomorrows to come there are opportunities for all of us to raise the call for justice in our lifetime.

Montgomery, Alabama, Dexter Avenue and the State Capitol are enshrined in the annals of American history. A historic place for historic times. But for me, it is much more personal, for it brings to mind the events that shaped my life.

It was here that I attended four inaugurations of my father and one of my mother.

It was here that I heard my father say the words ''segregation now, segregation tomorrow and segregation forever.''

It was here that my father fought to support a culture of exclusion, riding on the wings of fear rather than seeking justice on the wings of eagles.

It was here that my mother Governor Lurleen Wallace lay in state following her death at the age of 41 while thousands of Alabamians both white and African American stood in line for hours to pay their last respects.

It was here that my father met Vivian Malone for the second time and told her that she was an icon of the civil right movement.

It was at the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Church that my father went to ask for forgiveness for his racist past. A moment that could not rewrite his personal history but an opportunity brought about by my father's own suffering that allowed him to see the hurt of history in the eyes of African American men and women who had been denied the right to live the American Dream.

But on March the 25th of 1965, as Ralph Abernathy, Juanita Abernathy, Martin Luther King and thousands more gathered in the shadow of this Capitol, there was never an opportunity to address their concerns or state their grievances to the one person who could have changed the course of American History then and there. For Governor Wallace watched through a window in the privacy of his office, while others persevered and changed the history of America without him.

Today, we must not allow others to make the right choices for us. We must have courage each day to stand up for equality and the rights of all Americans. We must lead by example and live our lives with inspiration, always aspiring to make the choices that lead us to higher ground, that guides us to understanding and purpose of not just who we are but who we can become. An opportunity for each of you, an obligation for all of us, to see others, feel others and celebrate others, respecting their humanity for who they are.

Working each day to inspire the nobility that lies in the heart of each of us, Martin Luther King taught that there is power in all of us to reach out, to support and stand firm in the belief that all of our lives count for something. There is no better time than now for Americans to hold hands, rather than holding down, the inherent rights of the common man.

One can never measure the true worth of a mended heart that beats again because someone cared. How many more anniversaries of the struggle for civil rights can we celebrate by looking over our shoulder rather than standing shoulder to shoulder to face the challenges that lay ahead? How can Americans reach for higher ground if we do not inspire others with what we do? We cannot expect the next generation of Americans to do something to change the world, if we aspire to do nothing to protect liberty and recognize our individual obligations to service.

How can we teach future generations about positive social change if we see injustice and turn our backs? For injustice knows no death. It rises like a dark mist on the horizon, laying low in the hearts of those that are unwilling to accept the notion of unconditional love.

We must promise that when we say all men are created equal, it means something, protects something and encourages us to embrace the belief that the diversity among us has nothing to do with equality, but has everything to do with strength. Tolerance must be more than what we believe, it must be what we live and leading by example is what we must do. Tolerance does not always mean agreement, but tolerance always requires understanding and compassion for others.

Very few of us will have monuments built to honor us after we are gone, but ALL OF US can do monumental things each day to help America be better. Those moments in Selma yesterday will stand as a testament to all of our lives. For there is power in moving forward, there is joy in an unburdened heart and there is strength in stepping away from beneath the shadows of your lives.

I sometimes wonder what my mother and father would think of their daughter that stands here today, and my mind's eye returns to a wood framed house on Eufaula Street in Clayton, Alabama, when life was uncomplicated and happiness was something you lived not something you just hoped for. And my father would smile at me and say ''little girl, you're doing just fine, I sure am proud of you.''

But for today, I am most thankful for the life and inspiration of Congressman John Lewis.

Congressman Lewis, in March of 2009 you held my hand and walked with me across the Edmund Pettus Bridge; the very bridge where, as a young man, you were beaten by Alabama State Troopers. That walk with you helped me understand the power of forgiveness and gave me the courage to speak with my own voice. Since that time I have looked for an opportunity to return, in some small measure, the gift of love and understanding you gave to me.

Fifty years ago, you stood here in front of your State Capitol and sought an opportunity as a citizen of Alabama to be recognized and heard by your Governor and he refused. But today, as his daughter and as a person of my own, I want to do for you what my father should have done and recognize you for your humanity and for your dignity as a child of God, as a person of goodwill and character and as a fellow Alabamian and say ''Welcome Home.''

TRIBUTE TO MS. DORIS WELLS

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, Ms. Doris Wells' service to DeKalb County can be seen in the programs instituted in the Public Library System in our district; and

Whereas, her dedicated service touched the lives of many in our district from the moment she was hired as the first African American employee for the DeKalb County Library System in 1974, she has innovated the service of the Wesley Chapel-William C. Brown Library by introducing programs such as the Kwanzaa Awareness Festival and the Jubilee of Reading Adult Book Club Conference; and

Whereas, this remarkable, positive woman gave of herself, her time and her talent; educating and assisting those in need; and

Whereas, she led by example as the manager of the Scott Candler Library and the Wesley Chapel-William C. Brown Library; she was dedicated to her family, community, her church Clifton United Methodist Church and her beloved Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; and

Whereas, this virtuous Proverbs 31 woman was a mother, a daughter, a friend, a warrior, a matriarch, and a woman of great integrity; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional recognition on Ms. Doris Wells for her leadership, friendship and service to all of the citizens in Georgia and throughout the Nation; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr., do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Ms. Doris Wells of DeKalb County, Georgia is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Honor": Ms. Doris Wells, U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 4th day of March, 2015.

A TRIBUTE TO NICK ACKERMAN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Nick Ackerman for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Nick has the determination and drive to be successful in all that he does. At the American

Prosthetics & Orthotics Inc., Nick works as a technician, where he is passionate in providing prosthetic limbs for those in need. Nick's commitment to his work is evident in his philanthropic activities. As a member of the Amputee Golf Association he assists annually in a golf event to raise money for charity. Nick also organizes a Wounded Warrior softball game for veterans of our military. In all aspects of his life, Nick gives his full effort, it is that effort and dedication that makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Nick in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Nick on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, on February 27, 2015, I was unable to vote on roll call votes 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, and 105. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on Ordering the Previous Question for H. Res. 129, "yea" on H. Res. 129, "yea" on the Motion to Request a Conference on H.R. 240, "nay" on Approving the Journal, "yea" on H.J. Res. 35, and "nay" on a Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 240.

Mr. Speaker, on March 16, 2015, I was unable to vote on roll call votes 113, 114, and 115. Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on H.R. 647, "yea" on H.R. 648, and "yea" on H.R. 876.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. NANCY McDARMENT

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Nancy McDarment on her retirement after 40 years of working for the Tule River Tribe and its members.

Ms. McDarment was born on March 2, 1947 to Joe Vera and Bonnie Kambick. She has been married to her husband, Willie McDarment, for over thirty years and is blessed with four children, eight grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Around 1968, Ms. McDarment began her service to the Tule River Tribe in a position with the Tule River Indian Health Center. In September 1974, she went on to work for the Tule River Tribal Council, where she would spend the rest of her career in a variety of different positions. She began as a secretary for the Tule River Tribe, before going on to serve as the Contract and Grant Manager for many years with intermittent terms as both the Secretary of the Tule River Tribal Council and the Acting Tribal Administrator.

After a final two year term as Secretary of the Council and forty years of service to the Tule River Tribe, Ms. McDarment is retiring.

The Tule River Tribe has been extremely fortunate to have had someone as talented and dedicated as Ms. McDarment working on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Nancy McDarment for her 40 years of dedicated service to the Tule River Tribe and congratulating her on her retirement.

LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARDSMEN REMEMBERED

HON. GARRET GRAVES

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the lives and service of eleven Guardsmen and Marines who were lost to us on March 10, 2015, when their UH–60M Black Hawk helicopter crashed off the coast of Florida during a training exercise.

The lives of these brave service personnel, who perished while serving our country, are remembered by my colleagues Congressman WALTER JONES of North Carolina and the North Carolina delegation, the state which is home to those Marines who trained at Camp Lejeune, and Congressman JEFF MILLER of Florida and the Florida delegation, the location of the sad incident.

I am joined by the Louisiana delegation on the House floor today to share with our colleagues the memory of our Louisiana Guardsmen, to stand silently in a moment of prayer, and to state for the record the poignant words of Louisiana Adjutant General, Major General Glenn Curtis, who eloquently memorialized the honorable service of our Louisiana Guardsmen in his March 16, 2015, statement, which is submitted for the RECORD herein:

Four Louisiana National Guardsmen from the 1st Assault Helicopter Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment who died in a training accident, March 10, have been identified.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 George Wayne Griffin Jr, 37; Chief Warrant Officer 4 George David Strother, 44; Staff Sgt. Lance Bergeron, 40; and Staff Sgt. Thomas Florich, 26; died when a UH–60M Black Hawk they were riding on crashed into the Santa Rosa Sound, Florida.

"These Guardsmen represent the best of us," said Maj. Gen. Glenn H. Curtis, the adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard. "These are brave men, true men. These Heroes' names will forever be etched on our hearts and in our minds."

Griffin, of Delhi, joined the Louisiana National Guard in 1994. He deployed to Iraq in 2004–2005 and again in 2008–2009. He also served during state deployments during Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Isaac as well as in support of Operations River Guardian and Deepwater Horizon.

Griffin commissioned as a warrant officer in 1999 before going on to become the battalion standardization pilot with over 6,000 flight hours, including more than 1,000 combat hours.

"G Wayne Griffin was born to be an Army Aviator," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Reggie Lane, commander of Detachment 38, Operational Support Airlift Command. "As one of the most talented and respected Warrant Officers in the Louisiana National Guard, he had a tremendous passion for flying, and a God-given natural ability to fly both helicopters and airplanes and to teach others to be the best aviators and crewmembers that they could be.

"He was a great friend and brother to all. With his loss, there will be a void that may never be filled."

Griffin is survived by his wife, four children and father.

Strother, of Alexandria, served in the Louisiana National Guard from 1988–2007, and again from 2009 until his death. He deployed to Iraq in 2004–2005, Afghanistan in 2011 and Kosovo in 2014. He also served during state deployments for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Isaac.

Strother commissioned as a warrant officer in 1994 before going on to become an instructor pilot with over 2,400 flight hours, including more than 700 combat hours.

"To describe Dave Strother as a big personality would not be accurate. He was more like a force of nature that could best be observed and marveled at, never opposed or altered," said Maj. Andre Jeansonne, commander, F Co., 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment. "His huge heart touched the lives of all he met."

Strother is survived by his wife, son and step-daughter, and mother.

Bergeron, of Thibodaux, enlisted into the U.S. Marine Corps in 1998 before joining the LANG in 2001 as a Black Hawk repairer. His extensive experience as a qualified enlisted flight instructor, graduate of the aircraft crewmember standardization instructor course, aircraft maintainer course, and warrior leader course made Bergeron a crew chief others aspired to be, according to members of his unit.

The combat veteran deployed to Iraq twice, in 2004–2005 and 2008–2009. Bergeron also served during state deployments for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Isaac and Operation River Guardian.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Brian Marquez, platoon sergeant, A Co., 1–244th AHB, Bergeron was one of the most qualified crew chiefs in the Guard, with more than 1,300 flight hours, including 377 combat hours.

"Lance was one of the most dedicated crew chiefs that I have ever had the pleasure of serving with during my leadership," Marquez said. "As the senior most standardization crew chief instructor in the Battalion, he was a subject matter expert in his job who exhibited an excitement of learning new skills and educating new unit members on the UH–60 aircraft, pilots and crew chiefs alike.

"Lance was a very family oriented father and husband, and he impacted many in the ranks. He will be greatly missed."

Bergeron is survived by his wife, two children and his parents.

Staff Sgt. Thomas Florich, of Fairfax County, Virginia, enlisted in the LANG in 2007 as a Black Hawk repairer. He was posthumously promoted from sergeant to staff sergeant.

Florich served during state deployments for Operation Deepwater Horizon and Hurricane Isaac. He earned more than 125 flight hours and was a graduate of the warrior leader course.

"Tom was full of life, and his personality could light the room," said Marquez. "He was 'family' with unit members and felt at home working with his brothers in Alpha Company. His dedication to duty and loyalty was without equal, always ready to accept any mission and extra duty in order to help the unit meet the mission. He will be greatly missed by the unit and the flight facility."

Florich is survived by his wife, father and stepmother.

''These are not ordinary men. They were extraordinary people, as well as amazing aviators and crew chiefs,'' said Lt. Col. John L. Bonnette II, commander of the 1–244th. When I say they were heroes, I mean it many times over. They risked their lives under difficult conditions flying in combat, and during national emergencies, to ensure our security and help save thousands of people. I don't have the words to sum up their lives in a few sentences. You just can't.

''Our whole aviation family is reeling from this loss, the hole that is left is enormous. They were part of the fabric of this unit, the difference they made with everyone they served with will be a lasting legacy. Personally flying with all of them was a privilege and honor—I am a better person for having known them.''

These aviators had a camaraderie that was second to none in the military.

''This crew was made up of larger-than-life men who had a passion for Army Aviation that was so evident in the dedication that they had towards their profession,'' said Col. Patrick R. Bossetta, commander of the State Aviation Command. I know this as I have personally flown with each one of them. They were driven by their intense desire to selflessly serve their country, fellow Soldiers and Marines.

''Whether flying in combat or during national emergencies, this crew arose everyday with a fever to serve and keep safe the citizens of this great Nation. While their families and our aviation community are heartbroken and immensely suffering over their tragic loss, these heroic men would want us to catch their fever to honorably serve the citizens of this Nation and continue to grow.''

''These brave men died doing something they loved. May we all be so lucky, and may they always fly high,'' said Curtis.

The Louisiana Army National Guard was participating in a routine night-time training exercise with the Marine 2nd Special Operations Battalion. The Black Hawk carrying the four aircrew and seven Marines crashed into the Santa Rosa Sound in Navarre, Florida, March 10.

Griffin's awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal (2nd Award), Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (6th Award), National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with two Campaign Stars, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal (2nd Award), Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Silver Hour Glass and M Device, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (2nd Award), Army Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon (4th Award), Louisiana War Cross (2nd Award), Louisiana Emergency Service Medal (3rd Award), Louisiana General Excellence Ribbon and Louisiana Longevity Ribbon. He had earned the Combat Action Badge, Senior Army Aviator Badge and Basic Aviation Badge.

Strother's awards and decorations include the Air Medal (3rd Award), Army Commendation Medal (3rd Award), Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (7th Award), National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with Campaign Star, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Silver Hourglass and M Device, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (3rd Award), NATO Medal, Louisiana War Cross (3rd Award), Louisiana Cold War Victory Ribbon, Louisiana Emergency Service Medal (3rd Award), Louisiana General Excellence Ribbon and Louisiana Longevity Ribbon (4th Award). He had earned the Combat Action Badge and Master Aviator Badge.

Bergeron's awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal (3rd Award), Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (3rd Award), National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with 2 Campaign Stars, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal (2nd Award), Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Bronze Hour Glass and M Device, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (2nd Award), Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (Navy), Louisiana War Cross (2nd Award), Louisiana Emergency Service Medal (3rd Award), Louisiana General Excellence Ribbon (3rd Award) and Louisiana Longevity Ribbon (2nd Award). He had also earned the Combat Action Badge and Senior Aviation Badge.

Florich's awards include the Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (2nd Award), National Defense Service Medal, Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon, Coast Guard Special Operations Service Ribbon, Louisiana Emergency Service Ribbon (2nd Award), Louisiana General Excellence Ribbon and Louisiana Longevity Ribbon. He had also earned the Basic Aviation Badge.

TRIBUTE TO WHITE'S CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, White's Chapel United Methodist Church has been and continues to be a beacon of light to our district for the past one hundred forty-five years; and

Whereas, Pastor Lillian Owens and the members of the White's Chapel United Methodist Church family today continues to uplift and inspire those in our district; and

Whereas, the White's Chapel United Methodist Church family has been and continues to be a place where citizens are touched spiritually, mentally and physically through outreach ministries and community partnership to aid in building up our district; and

Whereas, this remarkable and tenacious Church of God has given hope to the hopeless, fed the needy and empowered our community for the past one hundred forty-five (145) years, being organized in 1870 after Captain White donated two acres of land to a small group of former slaves in order for them to continue to worship together as a congregation; and

Whereas, White's Chapel has produced many spiritual warriors, people of compassion, people of great courage, fearless leaders and servants to all, but most of all visionaries who have shared not only with their Church, but with Rockdale County their passion to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize the White's Chapel United Methodist Church family for their leadership and service to our District on this the 145th Anniversary of their founding; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim March 1, 2015 as White's Chapel United Methodist Church Day in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 1st day of March, 2015.

A TRIBUTE TO ANNETTE ADAMS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Annette Adams for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Annette Adams currently works for Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co., and she has certainly left her mark. She has founded Women Aiming for Success in 2012, to create a passion for women to aspire to leadership roles. She has served as a Greater Des Moines Partnership Diversity Council member, as well as, serving as a mentor for Nationwide's Emerging Leaders Program. Annette is a leader and an example of the hard work and service that makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Annette in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Annette for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Annette on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OCEAN CHAPTER OF DRIFTERS, INC.

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Ocean Chapter of Drifters, Inc. as its members gather to commemorate its 40th anniversary at a luncheon on March 14, 2015. This milestone and its commitment to service is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Sponsored by the Montclair Chapter, the Ocean Chapter of Drifters, Inc. was founded by Marilyn Joyce of Morganville, New Jersey, who was also one of the eight charter members. Forty years later, there are thirteen members of the Ocean Chapter, including four of the charter members, Ms. Joyce, Marjorie Clark, Mary Inge and Yvonne Russell.

Since its inception, the Ocean Chapter of Drifters, Inc. has provided opportunities for women to engage in charitable and civic involvement to enrich the lives of others. In this endeavor, its members work closely with various agencies, organizations and individuals such as Meridian Health, the Special Olympics, Monmouth University and I.C.C.C. Monmouth County Head Start. The Ocean Chapter of Drifters, Inc. also aims to improve the well-being of seniors and promote opportunities for youth, through special programs and scholarships for graduating high school seniors.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating the Ocean Chapter of Drifters, Inc. on its 40th anniversary and thanking its members for their dedication to volunteerism and community involvement.

RECOGNIZING RICHARD FISHER ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pleasure to recognize Mr. Richard Fisher of Dallas, Texas.

Mr. Fisher has served as president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas since 2005. He will be retiring this month after ten years of tireless service. During his tenure, Mr. Fisher aimed to create sensible solutions to the economic problems of Dallas residents.

Molded from humble beginnings, Richard Fisher is no stranger to hard work. He is a first generation American, who persevered to earn an economics degree from Harvard University and an MBA from Stanford University.

Throughout his career, Mr. Fisher has built quite an impressive resume. He began his career on Wall Street working at investment bank, Brown Brothers Harriman & Co in 1975. He specialized in fixed income and foreign exchange markets. From there, he went on to become an assistant to the secretary of Treasury during the Carter Administration. He later returned to Brown Brothers to found their Texas operations, which was based in the city of Dallas.

He later returned to public service as a trailblazer for expanded trade agreements. From 1997 to 2011, Richard Fisher served as deputy trade representative where he oversaw the implementation of NAFTA and various trade agreements of Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Chile and Singapore. He was a senior negotiator for the bilateral accords for China's and Taiwan's accession to the World Trade Organization.

More than forty years ago, Richard Fisher married the love of his life, Nancy Collins, the daughter of the late U.S. Congressman Jim Collins. They are the parents to three children. In the future, Mr. Fisher hopes to someday reenter the financial world in the hopes of spreading financial literacy throughout South Dallas.

Mr. Speaker, Richard Fisher is truly a phenomenal leader. A man fueled by dedication and committed to public service, Mr. Fisher has set the bar high for his successor. He is the 2006 recipient of the Service to Democracy Award and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Medal for Public Service from the American Assembly. He was inducted into the Dallas Business Hall of Fame in 2009 and received the Woodrow Wilson Award for Public Service in 2014. I stand today to honor Mr. Richard Fisher and to thank him for his work in service to the people of Dallas and to everyone within and beyond our borders who benefit from his economic vision and exemplary public service.

A TRIBUTE TO ASHLEY DANIELSON

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Ashley Danielson for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honour based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honourees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Ashley has the determination and drive to be successful in anything she does, and her exemplary work with the Trilix Marketing Group is a testament to that. As a project manager with Trilix, Ashley is passionate about going the extra mile for her clients. Ashley is active and passionate about serving organizations that help children and animals, and was also a member of this year's Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute class. In all aspects of her life, Ashley is an example of the hard work and service that makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ashley in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Ashley on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

TRIBUTE TO REV. DR. GEORGE MOORE

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one man, Rev. Dr. George W. Moore who has given so much of himself in order for others to stand; and

Whereas, his work is present across our nation for all to see; the retired pastor of Saint Philip AME Church in DeKalb County, Georgia, who was instrumental in spreading the gospel and enriching the lives of many in the Atlanta area and beyond; and

Whereas, this giant of a man accomplished so much during his time on earth; he was a Master Pastor, a business owner, a community advocate and a friend to all; and

Whereas, he gave of himself, his time, his talent and his life to uplift those in need never expecting fame or fortune; his calling was to be a motivator and to inspire others throughout the community by spreading the gospel and leading by example; and

Whereas, Rev. Dr. George W. Moore led by doing both behind the scenes and on the front lines; he was an ambassador of goodwill who will be truly missed; and

Whereas, Rev. Dr. George W. Moore was a husband, a father, a grandfather, and a friend; he was our warrior, our patriarch, a man of great integrity who remained true to his divine mission until his end; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia recognizes Rev. Dr. George W. Moore as a citizen of great worth and so noted distinction; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that he is deemed worthy and deserving of this Congressional Honor by declaring Rev. Dr. George W. Moore, U.S. Citizen of Distinction in the 4th Congressional District of Georgia.

Proclaimed, this 13th day of February, 2015.

IN RECOGNITION OF THOMAS J. REILLY, SR., THE GREATER PITTSON FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Thomas J. Reilly, Sr., who will be named Man of the Year by the Greater Pittston, Pennsylvania Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

Mr. Reilly is chairman of Reilly Associates, an engineering firm that operates in Pennsylvania and New York. With more than 50 years of experience, Reilly has built a reputation as a leader in civil engineering. Early in his career, he worked on stabilizing large dams for the Pennsylvania Gas and Water Company. When Hurricane Agnes hit in 1972, Reilly worked to restore infrastructure and rebuild roads throughout Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Mr. Reilly replaced highway bridges, designed the six mile-long Casey Highway, and constructed a new wastewater treatment plant serving the Wyoming Valley that processes 50 million gallons of wastewater a day. Mr. Reilly's work in recent years includes a flood control system in the Keyser Valley and Green Ridge sections of Scranton; infrastructure for the Center Point Commerce and Trade Park; improved water quality through the separation of storm and sanitary sewer lines in West Pittston and Pittston; and plans for the revitalization of Pittston's Main Street.

Mr. Reilly is a parishioner of St. John the Evangelist and serves on the Church's finance council. He has volunteered his expertise on many of his parish's construction projects. He is also a member of the Knights of Columbus. Reilly previously served as the president of the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce and the Pittston Kiwanis Club, and as a trustee of his alma mater, Scranton Preparatory School.

It is a distinct privilege to honor Thomas Reilly on receiving the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons Man of the Year Award, and I commend him on his lifetime of public and community service.

U.S. MUST DO EVERYTHING TO CONTAIN RADICAL ISLAM

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it was a cold winter morning in Paris just before lunchtime. Two masked men armed with AK–47s approached a woman standing outside the door of the Charlie Hebdo office, forcing her to let them inside. Once inside the doors, they gunned down the security guard in the lobby and ran up to the second floor shouting, ''Where is Charb? Where is Charb?'' Charb was the nickname for the newspaper's editor, Mr. Charbonnier. After reaching their target, they executed him and 10 others. They exited the building shouting, ''Allah Akbar'' or ''God is the Greatest.''

They killed a police officer outside, fled the scene and continued to yell: ''We have revenged the Prophet Muhammad!'' before getting in their car and speeding away. Over the next two days, the French government conducted a massive manhunt for the two masked gunmen. The brothers were on the run for two days until January 9th when police cornered them in a standoff near the Paris' airport where they held one hostage. Later that day, police rescued the hostage and the terrorists were killed, going out just like they wanted in a massive firefight as ''martyrs''.

The two men responsible for the initial attack were Cherif and Said Kouachi, brothers with a long history of terrorist connections. A decade ago, Cherif and Said were involved in a Paris jihadi outfit that worked to send French Muslim men to Iraq to fight Americans.

Cherif tried to go to Iraq but never made it because French law enforcement arrested him before he could leave the country.

In his trial, Cherif said he dreamed of attacking Jewish targets in France before deciding to try to fight in Iraq. Having already spent 3 years in pre-trial detention, Cherif was released. While in detention, Cherif befriended Djamel Beghal, a French-Algerian champion of jihad who was jailed in 2001 for planning an attack on the American Embassy in Paris. Cherif was also connected to a 2010 plot to break out an Algerian Islamist from prison who was in jail for being connected with a 1995 wave of bombings in the Paris Métro and on regional trains.

Perhaps the most dangerous friend the Kouachi brothers made along the way was the late Anwar al-Awlaki—the American born leader of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula. It has now been confirmed that Kouachi met with al-Awklaki in 2011 and that al-Awlaki financed the attack that was apparently in the works years ago.

Hours before he met his maker, one of the Kouachi brothers, called in to a French TV station to brag about his terrorist connections: ''We are just telling you that we are the defenders of the prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and that I, Cherif Kouachi, was sent by al-Qaida in Yemen. . . . And that I went there and that it's imam Al-Awlaki that financed me.'' Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, has also claimed responsibility for the attack.

We have heard this story before. Young, vulnerable people across the globe are recruited to travel overseas where they are befriended and brainwashed by radical Islamic jihadists who preach hate and murder. Their terrorist mentors indoctrinate and infect them with the cancer of radical Islam and send them back to their home country to inflict terror and kill. The seeds of violent extremism are planted all over the world and the attacks come whether it is days (or in this case years) later.

Lately, we have seen this in America where terrorist groups like the Islamic State (ISIS) have targeted and recruited disillusioned young people primarily through the Internet and social media. This is one of the most overlooked weak spots in our national security today.

American passport holders who travel overseas to fight with the Islamic State are not going to come back to open coffee shops; they are coming back to kill. We cannot let them come back at all. That is why I have reintroduced the FTO Passport Revocation Act.

This legislation would authorize the revocation or denial of passports and passport cards to individuals affiliated with foreign terrorist organizations.

The Benedict Arnold traitors who have turned against America and joined the ranks of foreign radical terrorist armies should lose all rights afforded to our citizens.

This bill will help law enforcement locate these individuals by preventing them from traveling internationally so that they can be captured and brought to justice.

Most important, this legislation will prevent turned Americans from entering the United States under the radar and undetected. As we saw in France, sleeper cells that are well-financed by groups in the Middle East have a longstanding order to attack whenever the time is right. We need to act before, not after, they come back to the United States.

The French prime minister said it best: ''We're fighting a war, not a war against a religion, not a war of civilizations, but to defend our values, which are universal. It's a war against terrorism and radical Islamism, against everything that aims to shatter solidarity, liberty, brotherhood.''

The Paris attacks are a reminder that the cancer of radical Islam stretches far beyond the borders of the Middle East. The United States must do everything in its power to contain it outside our borders before the fight once again comes to us.

And that's just the way it is.

A TRIBUTE TO BRAD DUFFY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Brad Duffy for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Brad has the determination and drive to be successful in anything he does, and his exemplary work with Per Mar Security Services is a testament to that. As President of Security Officer Services, Brad is passionate about hard work and dedication, and is active within volunteer organizations in the community. He specifically volunteers with the Greater Des Moines Committee and Youth Home of Mid-America. Along with his wife, Alison, they volunteer their time to InnerVisions Healthcare; a West Des Moines based non-profit organization. In all aspects of his life, Brad is an example of the hard work and service that makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Brad in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Brad for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Brad on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

IN RECOGNITION OF MAYOR MICHAEL B. RYAN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Honorable Michael B. Ryan on his retirement as Mayor of Lake Como, New Jersey. As a mayor, union member and

United States Army Veteran, Mayor Ryan embodies the American spirit and his contributions are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Mayor Ryan has been an outstanding public servant and labor advocate for both New Jersey and his home state of California. Mayor Ryan's introduction to labor and politics began in his native California, but he continued his efforts upon moving to New Jersey after marrying his wife, Marlene Brown. Mayor Ryan dedicated many years to leading his community as a council member, council president and mayor. Although retiring from elected office, Mayor Ryan remains active in local and state politics. For nearly 20 years, he has been Democratic Municipal Chairman of South Belmar and Lake Como. He has also been elected to the New Jersey State Democratic Committee and previously served as President of the south Belmar Democratic Club. Mayor Ryan is also committed to protecting labor rights, currently serving as Secretary Treasurer of the Monmouth and Ocean Counties Central Labor Council AFL–CIO and as a member of Teamsters-GCIU 612M.

In addition to his work in the public and labor sectors, Mayor Ryan is an Account Representative at Dimensional Management Corporation and is an active member of the community, volunteering at Camp Zehnder YMCA, serving as an usher at St. Rose Church and as a member of the Friendly Sons of the Shillelagh of the Jersey Shore and the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Mayor Michael Ryan on his retirement. It is my hope that my colleagues will join me in thanking him for his leadership and service to the Borough of Lake Como.

TRIBUTE TO MS. JULIA SNELL

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one woman who has given of herself to her family, church, community, and nation; and

Whereas, Mrs. Julia Ann Holt Wilson Snell's good works are present across our nation, as an exemplary wife, aunt, neighbor, community worker, business owner and friend; and

Whereas, this giant of a woman, was reared in Buena Vista, Alabama, born July 1, 1907, to the late Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Irene Holt; and

Whereas, Mrs. Julia Ann Holt Wilson Snell was a virtuous woman, a woman of great integrity who remained true to the uplifting of her community and family which in turn uplifted others; and

Whereas, she was an exemplary matriarch, serving as a compass and wise counselor while bringing great joy to our district, her family and friends; and

Whereas, Mrs. Julia Aim Holt Wilson Snell loved her family, encouraged all of those around her to make a difference in her 107 years and blessed the lives of many in the states of Alabama, California, the Fourth Congressional District of Georgia and in her beloved church, Beulah Missionary Baptist Church where she was a faithful member; and

Whereas, this remarkable woman gave of herself, never asking for fame or fortune as she became a quiet storm, a spark that starts a flame; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional Recognition on Mrs. Julia Ann Holt Wilson Snell for her leadership, friendship and service to all of the citizens across the United States; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr., do hereby attest to the 114th Congress that Mrs. Julia Ann Holt Wilson Snell, of DeKalb County, Georgia is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Recognition," Mrs. Julia Ann Holt Wilson Snell, U.S. Citizen of Distinction.

Proclaimed, this 31st day of January, 2015.

HONORING THE WORK OF THE TOGETHER CENTER

HON. SUZAN K. DelBENE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Together Center in Redmond, Washington. This month, they will be celebrating their 25th anniversary.

For the past quarter-century, Together Center has worked as a coalition of several agencies, providing services and resources such as shelter, counseling, child care, mental health services, and medical and dental care. Together Center has an incredible impact on the lives of more than 40,000 individuals in East King County every year.

Together Center has become an integral part of the community, supporting individuals and other organizations by connecting them in a convenient and efficient manner. Individuals may address a variety of needs on one of Together Center's three campuses, which conveniently house 20 agencies.

I greatly appreciate the work Together Center does to lower the barriers to getting critical help that many people need, such as medical care or temporary shelter.

I want to thank Together Center for their steadfast commitment to our local community, and congratulate them on their impressive record of achievement since 1990.

A TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINA FERNANDEZ-MORROW

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Christina Fernandez-Morrow for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Christina has the determination and drive to be successful in anything she does, and her exemplary work with the Latina Leadership Initiative of Greater Des Moines is a testament to that. As executive director she uses her abilities to communicate with people from different cultures to advance both women and the Latino community. She dedicates her time to numerous organizations that elevate and advance the Latino community, especially as one of the founding board members of the Latino Heritage Festival. In all aspects of her life Christina is an example of the hard work and service that makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Christina in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Christina for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Christina on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 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 $18,152,428,120,668.55. We've added $7,525,551,071,755.47 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.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. JOHN F. CALLAHAN, RECIPIENT OF THE SWINGLE AWARD FROM THE GREATER PITTSTON FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. John F. Callahan, who will receive the 2015 Swingle Award from the Greater Pittston, Pennsylvania Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick.

A native of Pittston, Dr. Callahan is a son of the late John A. Callahan and Catherine McNulty. He attended Scranton Prep High School and graduated from The University of Scranton. Before practicing medicine, Dr. Callahan was a school teacher, and he continued to teach medical students after becoming a doctor. Upon graduating from the Pennsylvania College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Callahan operated a family practice in Pittston

and worked as an emergency room physician at the Pittston Hospital and Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center.

Dr. Callahan was instrumental in establishing the Care and Concern Free Clinic in Pittston. The clinic provides medical services to those who are underinsured or without insurance. In addition to medical care, the clinic offers dental care, psychiatric counseling, children's clothing and toys, and food.

Dr. Callahan was president of the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association (POMA) from 1998 to 1999. In 2000, he was named Physician of the Year by POMA. He also served on the POMA board for eight years. Dr. Callahan has acquired several other awards and recognitions from varying organizations throughout his career.

It is an honor to recognize Dr. John Callahan for his many accomplishments. I commend him for his service to our community, and I offer my deepest congratulation on receiving the Swingle Award from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

A TRIBUTE TO DREW BUHROW

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Drew Buhrow for being named a 2015 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2015 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Drew is Assistant Director of IT at Principal Financial Group, managing a multimillion-dollar budget and more than 40 information technology professionals. His career is demanding, but Drew looks to give back to his community at every opportunity. Drew is a volunteer leader at the St. John the Apostle Parish in Norwalk. He also volunteers for the IT Leadership Forum Charity Open, which raises money for college scholarships for qualifying students. Drew spends any additional free time following sports and he actively directs the Norwalk Twin Rivers baseball program. Drew's leadership skills and deep commitment to his community makes our state proud.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Drew in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud him for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Drew on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2015 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

TRIBUTE TO MR. EDWARD L. KEYTON

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, Minister Edward L. Keyton is celebrating thirty-four (34) years in ministry this year and has provided stellar leadership to his church on an international level; and

Whereas, Minister Edward L. Keyton, under the guidance of God has pioneered and sustained the Church of Christ at Bouldercrest as Senior Evangelist, he has enhanced the church as an instrument in our community that uplifts the spiritual, physical and mental welfare of our citizens; and

Whereas, this remarkable and tenacious man of God has given hope to the hopeless, fed the hungry and is a beacon of light to those in need; and

Whereas, Minister Edward L. Keyton is a spiritual warrior, a man of compassion, a fearless leader and a servant to all, but most of all a visionary who has shared not only with his church, but with our district and the world his passion to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Minister Edward L. Keyton as he celebrates thirty-four years in ministry and to salute him as he retires from ministerial leadership; A true Man of Excellence; now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr. do hereby proclaim April 17, 2015 as Minister Edward L. Keyton Day in the 4th Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 17th day of March, 2015.

HONORING NOAH COUGHLAN'S RUN 4 RARE

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2015

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I, along with Rare Disease Caucus Co-Chairs Congressman LEONARD LANCE and Congressman JOSEPH CROWLEY, and Rare Disease Caucus Members Congresswoman DORIS MATSUI and Congressman GUS BILIRAKIS, submit the following Resolution:

Whereas, rare diseases affect nearly 30,000,000 people in the United States and 350 million people worldwide, and therefore touch every State and Congressional district in America;

Whereas, Noah Coughlan from Vacaville, California, is set to complete his third "Run 4 Rare" journey across the United States of America on July 4th, 2015 to raise awareness for rare diseases, making him the third and youngest person to complete this achievement;

Whereas, the first steps of this journey were inspired by Catie and Annie Allio, two young girls born with Batten Disease, a rare disease that is heritable and which results in neurological degeneration that leads to death;

Whereas, rare diseases and disorders affect small patient populations in the United States of generally less than 200,000 individuals, and there are approximately 7,000 rare diseases identified in the United States at this time;

Whereas, millions of Americans have rare diseases for which there is no approved treatment, and people with rare diseases continue to face obstacles in accessing accurate diagnoses, sufficient treatment options, appropriate medical care expertise, and equitable reimbursement;

Whereas, the Orphan Drug Act and the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act have helped to drive innovative and patient-centered advancements in research and treatment for rare diseases, yet there is much to be done;

Whereas, for the 10,000 total known diseases, there are treatments for only 500, and new drug development currently takes around 14 years and over $2 billion, causing 95 percent of drugs development efforts to fail before a product is brought to market;

Whereas, Noah completed the first Run 4 Rare in 2011, a 2,500-mile journey from California to Florida that spanned over four months and brought together families and supporters across the country;

Whereas, Noah completed the second Run 4 Rare in 2013, a 3,100-mile journey from California to Massachusetts that spanned 105 days and carried the hope and momentum of the movement over nine mountain ranges, across three deserts, and through 17 states;

Whereas, Noah's third Run 4 Rare began at the Statue of Liberty on February 28, 2015 in honor of Rare Disease Day, and will be a 3,000-mile journey spanning 14 states;

Whereas, Noah carries with him an American flag flown in Iraq given to him by the United States Air Force courtesy of Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, California, representing the resilience of rare disease patients, the bravery they exhibit in the face of adversity, and the freedom they seek through awareness and treatments;

Whereas, the Run 4 Rare effort symbolizes unity and hope across the United States for all Americans suffering from rare diseases, and all Americans who stand with them: therefore, be it

Resolved, that we the undersigned (1) support the spirit and message of Noah Coughlan's Run 4 Rare; (2) express solidarity with the rare disease community by committing to the development, advancement, and completion of a bipartisan 21'' Century Cures Initiative to help accelerate the discovery, development, and delivery of promising new diagnostic tools, treatments, and cures for patients; and (3) support a national and global commitment to raising awareness, advancing solutions, and celebrating the resilience and bravery of individuals with rare diseases and disorders worldwide.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1559–S1590.

Measures Introduced: Nineteen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 749–767, S. Res. 102, and S. Con. Res. 10. **Page S1585**

Measures Reported:

Special Report entitled ''2015 Economic Report of the President''. (S. Rept. No. 114–5)

S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats. **Page S1585**

Measures Considered:

Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking, taking action on the following amendments and motions proposed thereto: **Pages S1561–75, S1589–90**

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. **Pages S1561–75, S1589–90**

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. **Pages S1561–75, S1589–90**

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.

Pages S1561–75, S1589–90

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 55 yeas to 43 nays (Vote No. 72), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, Senate rejected the motion to close further debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill. **Pages S1563–64**

Senator McConnell entered a motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill. **Page S1564**

By 55 yeas to 43 nays (Vote No. 73), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, Senate rejected the motion to close further debate on the bill. **Page S1564**

Senator McConnell entered a motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the bill. **Page S1564**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Thursday, March 19, 2015.

Page S1575

A motion was entered to close further debate on the bill, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur upon disposition of the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill. **Page S1575**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 10:30 a.m., on Wednesday, March 18, 2015. **Pages S1589–90**

Messages from the House: **Page S1584**

Measures Referred: **Page S1585**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1585–87**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions:

Pages S1587–89

Additional Statements: **Page S1584**

Amendments Submitted: **Page S1589**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1589**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S1589**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—73) **Page S1564**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 6:33 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on pages S1589–90.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Department of Agriculture, after receiving testimony from Thomas Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture.

APPROPRIATIONS: MILITARY SERVICES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the military services, after receiving testimony from Lieutenant General David D. Halverson, Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management, and Commanding General, Installation Management Command, Erin Kern, Director, Shore Readiness Division, United States Navy, David R. Clifton, Deputy Assistant Deputy Commandant, Facilities, Installations and Logistics Department, and Deputy Commander, Marine Corps Installations Command, United States Marine Corps, and Brigadier General Timothy S. Green, USAF, Air Force Director of Civil Engineers, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Installations and Mission Support, all of the Department of Defense.

APPROPRIATIONS: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS AND ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Legislative Branch concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol, after receiving testimony from James Billington, Librarian of Congress, Robert Newlen, Chief of Staff, Mark Sweeney, Associate Librarian for Library Services, Maria Pallante, Register of Copyrights, Mary Mazanec, Director of Congressional Research Service, Elizabeth Scheffler, Acting Chief Information Officer, and Karen Keninger, Director of National Library Service Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, all of the Library of Congress; and Stephen T. Ayers, Architect of the Capitol.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee received 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 from Admiral Cecil D. Haney, USN, Commander, United States Strategic Command, Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Commander, United States Cyber Command, Director, National Security Agency, and Chief, Central Security Services, and General John E. Hyten, USAF, Commander, Air Force Space Command, all of the Department of Defense.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION BUDGET

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security concluded an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2016 for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), after receiving testimony from Melvin Carraway, Acting Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION RELATED TO THE ELECTRIC GRID

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the state of technological innovation related to the electric grid, after receiving testimony from Peter Littlewood, Director, Argonne National Laboratory, and Jeffrey Taft, Chief Architect for Electric Grid Transformation, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, both of the Department of Energy; Lisa Edgar, Florida Public Service Commission Commissioner, Tallahassee, on behalf of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners; Michael Howard, Electric Power Research Institute, Washington, D.C.; and Lisa M. Barton, American Electric Power, Gahanna, Ohio.

BIPARTISAN SPORTSMEN'S ACT

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife concluded a hearing to examine S. 659, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, after receiving testimony from Jeff Crane, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, Washington, D.C.; Dale Hall, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Memphis, Tennessee; and Wayne Pacelle, The Humane Society of the United States, New Haven, Connecticut.

BUILDING A COMPETITIVE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TAX SYSTEM

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine building a competitive United States international tax system, after receiving testimony from Pamela F. Olson, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, Washington, D.C.; Anthony Smith, Thermo Fisher

Scientific Inc., Waltham, Massachusetts; Rosanne Altshuler, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey; and Stephen E. Shay, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS IN VENEZUELA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues concluded a hearing to examine the deepening political and economic crisis in Venezuela, focusing on implications for United States interests and the Western Hemisphere, after receiving testimony from Edward Alexander Lee, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs; John E. Smith, Acting Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury; Douglas Farah, IBI Consultants LLC, Takoma Park, Maryland; Santiago A. Canton, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Washington, D.C.; and Christopher Sabatini, Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, New York, New York.

SECURING THE SOUTHWEST BORDER

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine securing the Southwest border, focusing on perspectives from beyond the beltway, after receiving testimony from Chris Cabrera, National Border Patrol Council, Kingsville, Texas; Mark J. Dannels, Cochise County Sheriff, Bisbee, Arizona; Howard G. Buffett, The Howard G. Buffett Foundation, Decatur, Illinois; and Monica Weisberg-Stewart, Texas Border Coalition Committee on Border Security and Immigration, and Othal Brand, Jr., both of McAllen, Texas.

AMERICA'S HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMATION

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee concluded a hearing to examine America's health information technology (IT) transformation, focusing on translating the promise of electronic health records into better care, after receiving testimony from Julia Adler-Milstein, University of Michigan School of Public Health, Ann Arbor; Robert Wergin, American Academy of Family Physicians, Milford, Nebraska; Peter DeVault, Epic, Madison, Wisconsin; and Angela Kennedy, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine immigration reform, focusing on the American worker, after receiving testimony from Richard L. Trumka, AFL–CIO, Ronil Hira, Howard University, and Benjamin Johnson, American Immigration Council, all of Washington, D.C.; Bjorn Billhardt, Enspire, Austin, Texas; John M. Miano, Washington Alliance of Technology Workers, Bellevue; Hal Salzman, Rutgers University E.J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy J.J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, New Brunswick, New Jersey; and Jack B. Palmer Jr., Montgomery, Alabama.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee met in closed session to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters from officials of the intelligence community.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 30 public bills, H.R. 1385–1414; and 2 resolutions, H.J. Res. 38; and H. Res. 153, were introduced.

Pages H1720–21

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H1723**

Reports Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 152, providing for the consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 132) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (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 (H. Rept. 114–45). **Page H1720**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Holding to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1665**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:11 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H1666**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Jon Randles Victory Life Church, Lubbock, Texas. **Page H1666**

EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2015: The House passed H.R. 1029, to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications and public participation, by a recorded vote of 236 ayes to 181 noes, Roll No. 121. **Pages H1678–94**

Rejected the Peters motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 179 ayes to 237 noes, Roll No. 120. **Pages H1691–93**

Pursuant to the Rule, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Science, Space and Technology now printed in the bill, the amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–10, shall be considered as read. **Pages H1685–86**

Agreed to:

Grayson amendment (No. 1 printed in part A of H. Rept 114–37) that prohibits an EPA Science Advisory Board member from participating in any advisory action for which there is evidence that the action may involve a specific party in which the member has an interest; **Pages H1686–87**

Polis amendment (No. 3 printed in part A of H. Rept 114–37) that requires the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to solicit nominations for Advisory Board membership from (1) Institutions of Higher Education and (2) research institutions based in work relevant to that of the Board; and **Page H1688**

McKinley amendment (No. 2 printed in part A of H. Rept. 114–37) that prohibits an individual from sitting on the Board if they are currently receiving EPA contracts or grants; and then would prohibit them from being allowed to apply for, 3 years after serving as a Board member, for any EPA contracts or grants, by a recorded vote of 242 ayes to 175 noes, Roll No. 119. **Pages H1687–88, H1691**

Rejected:

Bonamici substitute amendment (No. 4 printed in part A of H. Rept. 114–37) that improves the selection of members for EPA's Science Advisory Board by increasing transparency and ensuring balance among board participants; promotes public participation in the Board's review process. **Pages H1688–91**

H. Res. 138, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1029) and (H.R. 1030), was agreed to by a recorded vote of 236 ayes to 180 noes, Roll No. 117, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 232 yeas to 181 nays, Roll No. 116. **Pages H1670–77**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on Monday, March 16th.

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, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 415 yeas with none voting "nay", Roll No. 118. **Pages H1677–78**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Schock, wherein he resigned from the Committees on Ways and Means, the Budget, and House Administration. **Page H1716**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H1670.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1676–77, H1677, H1677–78, H1691, H1692–93, and H1693–94. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Committee Meetings

"WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES" PROPOSED RULE AND ITS IMPACT ON RURAL AMERICA

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Conservation and Forestry held a hearing to review the definition of "waters of the United States" proposed rule and its impact on rural America. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Fish and Wildlife Service budget. Testimony was heard from Dan Ashe, Director, Fish and Wildlife Service; and Chris Nolan, Budget Officer, Fish and Wildlife Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—FOOD, NUTRITION, AND CONSUMER SERVICES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Department of Agriculture Food, Nutrition, and

Consumer Services budget. Testimony was heard from Kevin Concannon, Under Secretary, Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services; Audrey Rowe, Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service; Angela Tagtow, Director, Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion; and Donald Bice, Associate Director, Office of Budget and Program Analysis.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on National Guard and Reserve budget. Testimony was heard from General Frank J. Grass, Chief, National Guard Bureau; Lieutenant General Stanley E. ''Sid'' Clarke III, Director, Air National Guard; Major General Judd H. Lyons, Acting Director, Army National Guard; and Lieutenant General Jeffrey W. Talley, Chief, United States Army Reserve.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, APPLIED ENERGY PROGRAMS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on Department of Energy, Applied Energy Programs budget. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Energy officials: Franklin Orr, Under Secretary, Science and Energy; David Danielson, Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy; John Kotek, Deputy Principal, Assistant Secretary; Christopher Smith, Assistant Secretary, Fossil Energy; and Patricia Hoffman, Assistant Secretary, Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability.

APPROPRIATIONS—SECRET SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a hearing on Secret Service budget. Testimony was heard from Joseph Clancy, Director, Secret Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing on Department of Labor budget. Testimony was heard from Thomas Perez, Secretary, Department of Labor.

APPROPRIATIONS—FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Federal Aviation Administration budget. Testimony was heard from Michael Huerta, Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies held a hearing on National Science Foundation budget. Testimony was heard from France A. Cordova, Director, National Science Foundation.

APPROPRIATIONS—GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on General Services Administration budget. Testimony was heard from Denise Turner Roth, Acting Administrator, General Services Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, OFFICE OF SCIENCE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on Department of Energy, Office of Science budget. Testimony was heard from Franklin Orr, Under Secretary, Science and Energy, Department of Energy; and Patricia M. Dehmer, Deputy Director, Science Programs, Department of Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a hearing on National Park Service budget. Testimony was heard from Jon Jarvis, Director, National Park Service; and Bruce Sheaffer, Comptroller, National Park Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held a hearing on U.S. Agency for International Development budget. Testimony was heard from Alfonso E. Lenhardt, Acting Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development.

THE FISCAL YEAR 2016 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BUDGET REQUEST FROM THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Military Departments''. Testimony was heard from John M. McHugh, Secretary of the Army; General Raymond T. Odierno, USA, Chief of Staff of the Army; Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy; Admiral Michelle Howard, USN, Vice Chief of Naval Operations;

General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC, Commandant of the Marine Corps; Deborah Lee James, Secretary of the Air Force; and General Mark A. Welsh III, USAF, Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

ASSURING ASSURED ACCESS TO SPACE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Strategic Forces held a hearing entitled ''Assuring Assured Access to Space''. Testimony was heard from Katrina G. McFarland, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Department of Defense; William A. LaPlante, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Department of Defense; General John E. Hyten, USAF, Commander, Air Force Space Command; Major General Howard J. ''Mitch'' Mitchell, USAF (Retired), Chairman, USAF-Chartered RD–180 Availability Risk Mitigation Study; and public witnesses.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing entitled ''Strengthening America's Higher Education System''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EPA'S PROPOSED 111(d) RULE FOR EXISTING POWER PLANTS: LEGAL AND COST ISSUES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Energy and Power held a hearing entitled ''EPA's Proposed 111(d) Rule for Existing Power Plants: Legal and Cost Issues''. Testimony was heard from Art Graham, Chairman, Florida Public Service Commission; Kelly Speakes-Backman, Commissioner, Maryland Public Service Commission; Craig Butler, Director, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; and Donald van der Vaart, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; and public witnesses.

THE ANNUAL TESTIMONY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY ON THE STATE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The Annual Testimony of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the International Financial System''. Testimony was heard from Jacob J. Lew, Secretary, Department of the Treasury.

THE FY 2016 BUDGET REQUEST: ASSESSING U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE EFFECTIVENESS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The FY 2016 Budget Request: Assessing U.S. Foreign Assistance Effectiveness''. Testimony was heard from Alfonso E. Lenhardt, Acting Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development; and a public witness.

NATIONAL SECURITY BENEFITS OF TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH ASIA AND EUROPE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''National Security Benefits of Trade Agreements with Asia and Europe''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

COMBATING TERRORIST TRAVEL: DOES THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM KEEP OUR NATION SAFE?

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled ''Combating Terrorist Travel: Does the Visa Waiver Program Keep Our Nation Safe?''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice held a hearing on H.R. 758, the ''Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act of 2015''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE SPENDING PRIORITIES AND MISSIONS OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IN THE PRESIDENT'S FY 2016 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Spending Priorities and Missions of the National Park Service in the President's FY 2016 Budget Proposal''. Testimony was heard from Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service.

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

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a 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''. Testimony was heard from Abby Hopper, Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; Vice Admiral Brian Salerno (USCG, Retired), Director, Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement; and Gregory

Gould, Director, Office of Natural Resources Revenue.

FCC: PROCESS AND TRANSPARENCY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''FCC: Process and Transparency''. Testimony was heard from Tom Wheeler, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission.

THE FISCAL COSTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S EXECUTIVE ACTIONS ON IMMIGRATION

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security; and Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules, held a joint hearing entitled ''The Fiscal Costs of the President's Executive Actions on Immigration''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RELATING TO REPRESENTATION CASE PROCEDURES; HOUSE RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR THE EXPENSES OF CERTAIN COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a 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. The committee granted, by record vote of 5–4, a closed rule for H. Res. 132. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the resolution. The rule provides that the amendment printed in the Rules Committee report shall be considered as adopted and the resolution, as amended, shall be considered as read and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule provides one motion to recommit without instructions. The rule also grants a closed rule for S.J. Res. 8. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. The rule provides one motion to commit. Testimony was heard from Chairman Miller of Michigan, Chairman Kline, and Representatives Brady of Pennsylvania and Scott of Virginia.

REALITY CHECK: THE IMPACT AND ACHIEVABILITY OF EPA'S PROPOSED OZONE STANDARDS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Reality Check: The Impact and Achievability of EPA's Proposed Ozone Standards''. Testimony was heard from Eldon Heaston, Executive Director, Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District; and public witnesses.

CONTRACTING AND THE INDUSTRIAL BASE II: BUNDLING, GOALING, AND THE OFFICE OF HEARINGS AND APPEALS

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce held a hearing entitled ''Contracting and the Industrial Base II: Bundling, Goaling, and the Office of Hearings and Appeals''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION BILL: LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR U.S. ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOB CREATION PART II

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill: Laying the Foundation for U.S. Economic Growth and Job Creation Part II''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

A REVIEW OF HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEWEST GENERATION OF VETERANS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing entitled ''A Review of Higher Education Opportunities for the Newest Generation of Veterans''. Testimony was heard from Major General Robert M. Worley II, USAF (Retired), Director, Education Service, Veterans Benefit Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; and public witnesses.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY BY FUNDING WHAT WORKS: USING EVIDENCE TO HELP LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES GET AHEAD

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing entitled ''Expanding Opportunity by Funding What Works: Using

Evidence to Help Low-Income Individuals and Families Get Ahead''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ONGOING INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Ongoing Intelligence Activities''. This hearing was closed.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Forest Service, 10 a.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Missile Defense Agency, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

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, 9:30 a.m., SR–222.

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.

Committee on the Budget: business meeting to markup the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, 2:30 p.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, 2:30 p.m., SR–253.

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, 9:30 a.m., SD–406.

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'', 2:30 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine the impact of patent litigation practices on the American economy, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation from multiple veterans service organizations, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, hearing on the importance of trade to U.S. agriculture, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing for public and outside witnesses, 9 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

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.

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.

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.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, hearing on Department of Energy, Environmental Management budget, 10:00 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, hearing on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration budget, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on Internal Revenue Service budget, 11 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, hearing on related agencies budget, 2 p.m., 2358–C Rayburn.

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, hearing on Department of Treasury International Programs budget, 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, 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.

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.

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.

Committee on the Budget, 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, 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, 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.

Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, hearing on the ''Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2015'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Preserving Consumer Choice and Financial Independence'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, 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.

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.

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.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency, hearing entitled ''Unmanned Aerial System Threats: Exploring Security Implications and Mitigation Technologies'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, 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.

Committee on Natural Resources, 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.

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.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Information Technology, hearing entitled ''Cybersecurity: The Evolving Nature of Cyber Threats Facing the Private Sector'', 1 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled ''Federal Workforce Tax Accountability'', 1 p.m., 2247 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Tangled in Red Tape: New Challenges for Small Manufacturers'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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 Ways and Means, 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., 1310 Longworth.

Joint Meetings

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, 2 p.m., 2175, Rayburn Building.

Joint Economic Committee: to hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President 2015, 2:30 p.m., SD–562.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 18

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond one hour), Senate will continue consideration of S. 178, Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, March 18

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Program for Wednesday: Consideration of H.R. 1030—Secret Science Reform Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule).

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