United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015 No. 46

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 18, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CRESENT HARDY 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.

GAZA'S WATER SHORTAGE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, amidst the troubling picture coming out of the Israeli elections, there was some good news from the Middle East for a change. The Israeli Government announced that it would double the amount of water it sells to Gaza from 5 million to 10 million cubic meters annually. This is positive momentum we must build upon because, while it is an important step, the quantity is insufficient to prevent a humanitarian disaster looming for Gaza and the region.

The tunnels that were dug by Hamas from Gaza into Israel were not the only things underground that should generate public concern. Without rapid action, the drinking water beneath Gaza, or the lack thereof, poses a threat to the region that is as severe or worse than Hamas' tunnels. That is because the coastal aquifer, the only source of drinking water for 1.8 million Gazans, is near collapse, as soon as 2016.

Like the cities of Los Angeles or Tel Aviv, Gaza cannot currently meet its water needs from within its boundaries. That dynamic is compounded by the fact that Gaza's population is rapidly increasing and now consumes three times the amount of water that is naturally replenished from rainwater.

The massive amount of water withdrawn from the aquifer over the last several decades has allowed salty Mediterranean seawater to contaminate the drinking water at an ever-increasing rate. A 2012 United Nations report said that 90 percent of the coastal aquifer salinity levels were too great for drinking purposes. Today that figure is 95 percent. By the end of 2016, the entire aquifer will be unfit for human consumption. And unless action is taken, by 2020, that damage will be irreversible.

To make matters worse, Gaza does not have large and modern sewage treatment plants and operations. The sewage from 1.8 million Gazans further pollutes the groundwater and risks the outbreak of pandemic diseases like cholera and typhoid. Sewage remains untreated as 90,000 cubic meters of raw sewage, flows into the Mediterranean every day.

Israeli intelligence knew about and warned about Hamas' tunnels long before they were used, but Israeli politicians chose not to take their counsel.

Environmental and water experts have been warning for many years about the imminent collapse of Gaza's coastal aquifer, but too many politicians everywhere have failed to respond.

While we don't want to minimize Israel's important move to authorize additional water into Gaza, we shouldn't overstate its impact in averting the region's looming water crisis.

What is going to happen if thousands of Gazans actually rush to the fences, trying to get to Egypt or Israel for water? What happens if the water crisis broadens the appeal of Hamas' malice in Gaza?

Look at the recent history in Syria, where the collapse of civil order and the civil war was precipitated by persistent drought that drove people from the countryside into the city. Such dire outcomes in Gaza could be avoided if additional and immediate long-term measures were employed.

Based on the existing infrastructure, Israel has the potential to double—overnight—the quantity of water supplied to Gaza. A wastewater treatment plant recently built under the management of the World Bank in Gaza could reduce by a third the amount of untreated wastewater that pollutes both the groundwater and the beaches of Israel and Gaza.

It is clearly in Israel's interest to facilitate the private-public partnerships that lead to greater energy independence and assist the Palestinian Water Authority.

Strengthening the Palestinian Authority by increasing the flow of water into Gaza and dealing with the sanitation crisis weakens Hamas and highlights their inability to provide public services.

Last night's election was deeply troubling for the future of Israeli politics and a two-state solution, long the policy of the United States and, until recently, the leadership of Israel.

But taking action on water and sanitation is a small, critical, important

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step that everyone can support and will benefit Israelis and Palestinians alike. I hope this will be an important focus for those of us in Congress as we look at our aid packages going forward.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF WYNONA HAYDON

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Wynona Haydon, a beloved woman who recently passed away into the loving arms of our Lord.

Wynona married Julian Woodrow Haydon after graduating from high school, and then she began her career as an assistant with the Department of Defense. Throughout her 36-year career, she held positions at the Pentagon and at Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point in North Carolina. There, she met General James Doolittle, General Omar Bradley, and General Dwight D. Eisenhower. She helped usher in the postwar era, alongside many other military officers and personnel.

Mr. Speaker, Wynona was proud to be an American, and she was equally proud of being a North Carolinian.

Someone once said of Wynona that she was ''made of the stuff that makes life worth living.'' Though known only by those lucky enough to come within her orbit, Wynona lived a life of honesty and hard work, and instilled those traits in her son, her grandson, and her many nieces and nephews.

She was a loving and successful mother and grandmother, a smiling joy and inspiration to her friends and those who came in contact with her. In short, Wynona Haydon lived a long and contributing life which brightened the lives of many others, including mine.

My thoughts and prayers are with her family and the members of Temple Baptist Church, who are mourning the loss of a beloved woman.

REPUBLICANS DECLARE WAR ON POOR WORKING FAMILIES

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, with the release of yesterday's budget, it is official: Republicans have declared war on poor working families in this country. I am deeply disappointed, but I can't say that I am all that surprised.

Yesterday's House budget once again slashes safety net programs that provide critical assistance to low- and middle-income families while offering big tax breaks to the superwealthy. I have seen this movie before. I didn't like it the first time, and I sure don't like it now.

Following in the footsteps of the recent Ryan budgets, Chairman PRICE's budget guts the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, the Nation's premier antihunger program. Like Republican budgets of past years, this year's budget converts SNAP into a block grant for States.

Mr. Speaker, this would end SNAP as we know it. Previous estimates of the impact of block granting SNAP show that it will result in about $130 billion in cuts to the program. A cut of that magnitude to SNAP would have serious harmful consequences to the 46 million Americans who relied on SNAP last year to put food on their tables.

This is the same budget that includes a number of other devastating funding cuts to programs that support children, families, and seniors. The Republican budget would end the Medicare guarantees, block grant Medicaid, and repeal the Affordable Care Act, which has helped 16.4 million Americans gain affordable, high-quality health insurance.

The Republican budget also includes reconciliation instructions to the Agriculture Committee, requiring additional cuts to programs within the committee's jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't support last year's farm bill because it included an $8.6 billion cut to SNAP, but the Agriculture Committee finished its work on a reauthorization bill. It is done. We should not be reopening the farm bill in this budget process.

It is bad enough that SNAP has been cut by nearly $20 billion in recent years, with cuts coming in both the farm bill and with the expiration of the ARRA provisions that resulted in an across-the-board cut for all SNAP beneficiaries. Every single one of those who were on SNAP received a cut. We certainly should not be making hunger worse by cutting our premier antihunger program even further.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans' fixation with attacking SNAP just doesn't make sense. SNAP is one of the most effective and efficient of all Federal programs. Its error rate is at an all-time low, and that includes underpayments as well as overpayments. And in recent years, USDA has successfully cracked down on trafficking of SNAP benefits.

The purpose of SNAP is to feed hungry people, which it does. SNAP is a program that works. Without SNAP, hunger would be much worse in this country.

We know from recent CBO estimates that SNAP spending and caseloads have already begun to decline and will continue to do so as our economy continues to recover from the Great Recession. We also know that SNAP is not contributing to our long-term deficit. According to CBO, its share of the economy will continue to decline.

Mr. Speaker, we should not be balancing the Federal budget on the backs of the working poor, period. Cutting food assistance and making hunger worse in this country will not solve our fiscal challenges. SNAP is not the problem.

For Republicans, cuts to programs for low-income Americans might rally their base, but it won't solve our budget challenges. Poor and working families did not cause our fiscal problems. But time and time again, programs that help them survive tough times and provide them with opportunities to get out of poverty are always targeted for drastic cuts.

And what is especially troubling to me is that the poorest and most vulnerable Americans continue to be the target of false and often mean-spirited rhetoric in this Chamber. It is time for that to stop.

Instead of cutting SNAP, we should be strengthening the program. We should be increasing the benefits so it enables struggling individuals and families to afford more healthy foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables. The current SNAP benefit is already woefully inadequate, about $1.40 per person per meal, and many families run out of food 3 weeks into the month because the benefit level already is so low.

We also should be working to address one of the biggest flaws in our social safety net, the so-called food stamp cliff, where someone gets a job and loses their benefits but still earns so little that they end up worse off and are back to struggling to put food on their table.

Mr. Speaker, we know that budgets are not just about priorities. They are moral documents that represent a vision for this country.

The vision laid out by Republicans in yesterday's budget is deeply troubling. We should be striving to make the lives of every American better. We should be striving to end hunger now. Unfortunately, the Republican budget does neither of those things. Instead, it makes hunger worse in this country. And that, to be blunt, is shameful.

UKRAINE

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

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to address Russia and its aggression in Ukraine.

Ukraine is ultimately a story of a ruler whose goal is to stifle opposition and turn away from a failing economy, corruption, and authoritarianism in his own country by creating the semblance of economic stability and popular support for his rule.

The United States and its allies must strive to ensure that the story of oppression and authoritarianism is not allowed to continue.

□ 1015

Putin is aiming to distract the focus of the West from his regime and his failing economy in Russia by directing the Russian people to an external enemy which has the potential to become a model of Western democracy, and that country is Ukraine.

Just over a year ago, not even a week after the end of the Sochi Olympics

which President Putin staged for a record $50 billion to boost his popularity in Russia and in the world, Putin quickly shed the garb of a successful master of ceremonies and sent his troops to reclaim and illegally annex Crimea, then trump up a referendum in an attempt to justify this annexation.

With his immediate mobilization of the Russian military to try to tamp down calls for democracy in Ukraine, Putin planned to send a signal to Russian citizens and the world that he remained popular and strong in the face of growing calls from protesters in Ukraine for pro-Russian President Yanukovych to step down.

But Putin's goal to maintain his popularity through military force failed. Although Putin temporarily conjured up nationalist sentiment in Russia with his annexation of Ukraine, polls show that the majority of Russian citizens oppose sending Russian troops to fight in Ukraine, diminishing his popularity at home.

Meanwhile, Putin continued to ignore, with impunity, calls by the United States and Europe to reverse the illegal annexation of Crimea and remove Russian military forces. Not only did Putin refuse to withdraw forces from those countries or reverse Crimea's annexation, he armed pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine with Russian surface-to-air missiles, which downed a civilian airliner and killed nearly 300 passengers and crew, to the horror of the United States and Western Europe, just after the Sochi Olympics.

Less than 3 months ago on this floor, in early December 2014, I underlined my deep concerns, shared by my constituents, about Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova. I appreciate your overwhelming support of H. Res. 758 condemning Russian aggression as a violation of international law and a breach of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova.

However, as could be expected, Putin did not listen to us or our allies. Just a month later, in January of 2015, Russian troops reengaged with Ukrainian forces in the Donbass region of Ukraine, breaking the cease-fire protocol signed in Minsk in September of 2014.

Although the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany agreed to reinstate a cease-fire on February 12 of this year, Russian forces violated the agreement within days, attacking a railway hub in Ukraine and threatening other strategic cities. Russia's inability to honor a cease-fire underlines the importance of expanding the scope of U.S. military assistance to Ukraine, including the provision of lethal military weapons.

Putin and his advisers have consistently denied that economic sanctions have hurt Russia, adding that the drop in the price of oil has resulted in plunging Russia's GDP and lowering the standard of living in Russia.

In addition to suffering economically, Russians have enjoyed no freedom of expression under Putin's rule. Such denial of basic human freedoms await the citizens of Ukraine should Russian aggression continue.

The latest travesty proving Putin's stifling of dissent to his authoritarian rule is the ''unexplained'' gunning down of prominent and popular opposition leader Boris Nemtsov in front of the Kremlin just 36 hours before a rally he had planned to lead to protest corruption and direct military involvement in Ukraine. Not only was Nemtsov a threat to Putin, he was fearless. He exposed the truth of Putin's rule, his corrupt practices, and the fraudulent elections he held in 2011 and 2012 that allowed him to return to the presidency. Former Prime Minister Kasyanov stated that there was only one explanation for the murder: ''He was shot for telling the truth.''

The events over the past year have made clear our path forward. We must convince the administration to change U.S. policy toward Russia. Putin's aggression in Ukraine and violation of the most recent cease-fire are linked to the assassination and are directing people's attention away from Russian corruption and authoritarianism and toward an external threat of democracy.

Mr. Speaker, the United States must work to restore the country's territorial integrity and ensure Russian military forces are removed from sovereign nations. We must convince our President that Putin's continuation of a war in Ukraine is a desperate attempt to divert attention.

I also call on Russia to release Nadiya Savchenko, the Ukrainian Air Force pilot who remains a prisoner in Russia. And I call on the administration and Congress to fund lethal military assistance to the Ukrainian Government.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition of the anti-middle class budget introduced yesterday by the House Republicans.

I view a budget as a statement of priorities. Where we allocate our resources is a clear demonstration that we value our priorities as a nation. This budget moves the middle class backward, hurts families across my region, the State of Illinois, and in our Nation.

Their budget makes deep cuts to investments in education, such as Pell grants. I view education as a long-term down payment not only for the lives of individual students and families, but for the future of our country.

Last week, I toured the region of our State that I am privileged to represent, and I spoke with community college students about programs that help make college affordable and accessible to them. I spoke with a young lady named Annalea, who attends Spoon River College in Canton, Illinois.

Annalea is one of eight children in her family. She has been raised by a single mother. Her father was addicted to drugs and left their family in debt. She is a full-time community college student and also works 38 hours a week as a cashier at a local grocery store. Her family relies on her income to help make ends meet. She depends on Pell grants and student loans to finance her education, which she knows is a path for a better life ahead.

Annalea is studying psychology so she can one day work as a school psychologist and help other students with the same kind of problems that she has had to go through herself. She knows that access to education is a key pathway to success for her and other students in our region, throughout our State and throughout our Nation. She wants to give back to the community that has given her an opportunity to move beyond the circumstances in which she was born.

Mr. Speaker, we need to invest in students like Annalea and the future of our communities, not slash spending on our young people's futures. Let's stop pulling the rug from underneath our students and saddling them with a lifetime of debt. We need a budget that invests in working families and in the middle class and creates opportunity for all to succeed in today's economy.

That is why I am leading what I would call a commonsense approach to give more flexibility to Pell grant recipients so students can take advantage of this program year round. Many of those who would benefit most are nontraditional students who want to complete their courses faster so they can get back into the workforce and also with smaller student loan debt.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues, both Democrats and Republicans, to join with me and support our young people, our students, and the economic well-being of our communities by opposing these shortsighted cuts to investments in our young people.

THE LAND ACQUISITION TO CUT NATIONAL DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HARDY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on a bill that I have just introduced, my first as a Member of this body.

The Land Acquisition to cut the National Debt, or LAND Act, is a commonsense piece of legislation that would prohibit the Secretary of the Interior from using Federal dollars to purchase land, resulting in a net increase in acreage under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the Bureau of

Land Management, unless the Federal budget is balanced for the year in which the land would be purchased. The same would go for the Secretary of Agriculture. Unless the Federal budget for the given year is balanced, no net increase in the land acreage may be included in the National Forest system.

Now, Mr. Speaker, some in this body may wonder why I have chosen to take up this charge in the 114th Congress. For my friends on both sides of the aisle, many of whom may not be too familiar with life out West, let me give you some background.

Just before I arrived in Washington, the national debt was over $18 trillion. As a former small business owner, the Federal Government's spendthrift habits and utter disregard for the American taxpayer's hard-earned dollars continues to frustrate me today. Like countless Nevadans, it pains me to watch as we saddle our grandchildren with such an unsustainable debt burden, borrowing against the very future we are responsible for providing them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my father always said: Don't come to me with a problem unless you have a solution to fix it. I don't pretend to have all the answers on the biggest issues facing this government and this country, but I do bring the private sector, Western sensibility to tackling the problem before we get too far out of hand. That is why I am introducing the LAND Act.

Simply put, the bill tells the Federal Government that responsibly and efficiently managing the 640 million acres of land it already controls must be a higher priority than acquiring even more private, State, and tribal lands. Think about that number for a moment, Mr. Speaker: 640 million acres. That is roughly one-third of the United States. And on those acres that the Federal bureaucracy has kept within its iron grip, there is currently existing an estimated deferred maintenance backlog of $23 billion—that is with a B.

So what does that tell the American people, Mr. Speaker? It tells them that the Federal Government has bitten off more than it can chew, and it cannot be trusted to serve as a responsible steward of even more of our lands and resources.

Mr. Speaker, I am a Nevadan. The Federal Government controls more than 81 percent of my State, and I think I speak for most of my constituents when I say enough is enough. It boggles the mind to think that each of the 640 million acres the Federal Government controls is too valuable to be parted with in order to improve overall management, let alone the fact that the Feds want to acquire even more land on top of an already embarrassing maintenance backlog.

The Departments of the Interior and Agriculture like to tout how important land acquisition is for conserving species, providing spaces for recreation, and preserving culturally significant sites. My bill would allow them to continue to acquire land as a tool for these purposes, but it would require them to focus their efforts on lands that truly need oversight by turning over unnecessary land to those who are best able to manage it—the States.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. The Department would have the opportunity to net more acreage under the aforementioned agencies' jurisdictions under my bill. That is, so long as the Federal budget is balanced for the given year. I do not believe this is too much to ask. Where I come from, in the private sector, if you don't have a successful business plan and you don't budget well, you go out of business.

We all know that the BLM, Fish and Wildlife, and the Park Service aren't going out of business anytime soon, much to my chagrin, but at least we can force them to behave more like one on the land they currently control by ensuring that our tax dollars no longer go towards more land for these agencies.

At a time when our debt continues to soar, we can ill afford irresponsible budgets like the Interior's $13 billion request. We need to get our fiscal house in order, and we can help that process along by passing my bill. Let's allow State, local, and tribal governments to invest in developing their lands, creating jobs, and growing the economy instead of letting them fall in disrepair on the Federal Government's watch. Let's pass the LAND Act.

PUERTO RICO HOSPITAL MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT EQUITY ACT AND THE PUERTO RICO MEDICARE PART B EQUITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, today I am refiling two bills to eliminate disparities that Puerto Rico faces under the Federal Medicare program.

At the outset, I want to make clear that the only reason that I have to introduce these bills is because Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory. I look forward to the day when Puerto Rico becomes a U.S. State, when it is automatically treated fairly under Federal programs, and when the island's elected officials no longer need to implore Congress to treat our constituents the same as their fellow American citizens. That is why, 6 weeks ago, I introduced legislation that would provide for Puerto Rico's admission as a State once a majority of island voters affirm their desire for statehood in a federally sponsored vote. The bill already has 80 cosponsors and strong bipartisan support.

The first bill I am filing today involves Medicare part A, which covers inpatient hospital services. The Federal Government reimburses hospitals who admit Medicare patients under a system known as the inpatient prospective payment system. The payment made to the hospital is intended to cover the operating and capital costs that a hospital incurs in furnishing care. Each hospital is paid a base rate, which can then be adjusted upwards based on a variety of factors.

□ 1030

Every hospital in the States, whether in New York City or rural Alaska, is paid the same base rate, about $5,870. In Puerto Rico, however, hospitals are paid a base rate that is just over $5,000, about 14 percent lower than the base rate for stateside hospitals.

This adversely affects patient care in Puerto Rico and the financial stability of island hospitals. The American Hospital Association has endorsed my legislation to eliminate this unprincipled disparity, and I urge my colleagues in Congress to enact it into law.

The second bill I am filing today involves Medicare part B, which covers doctors' services and outpatient hospital services. Puerto Rico is the only U.S. jurisdiction where individuals who become eligible for part A are not automatically enrolled in part B, but rather must opt in to receive part B coverage.

Individuals who do not enroll in part B during the 7-month initial enrollment period, which begins several months before they turn 65 and ends several months after they turn 65, are required to pay a late enrollment penalty. The penalty is significant and lasts for as long as that individual receives Medicare.

This system has operated to Puerto Rico's detriment. There are tens of thousands of seniors on the island who enrolled late in part B, and each year, they pay millions of dollars in late penalties to the Federal Government.

There are also over 100,000 seniors in Puerto Rico who are enrolled in part A but not in part B. When those individuals seek to enroll in part B in the future, they, too, will be required to pay lifetime penalties.

I am working to address this issue on both the administrative and the legislative front. I persuaded the Federal Government to improve the written materials they make available to island seniors so that they are better informed about the part B enrollment period and the financial consequences of late enrollment.

In addition, I am refiling legislation today that would convert Puerto Rico from the Nation's only opt-in jurisdiction to an opt-out jurisdiction, just like every other U.S. State and territory.

My bill would also reduce the late penalties now being paid by Puerto Rico seniors who enrolled late and authorize a special enrollment period during which island seniors who do not have part B could enroll on favorable terms.

I urge my colleagues to support the bills I am filing today. Until the day that Puerto Rico becomes a State and is treated equally as a matter of course, I will continue to fight for fair treatment for my constituents under all Federal health programs.

The 3.5 million American citizens of Puerto Rico deserve no less.

CHRISTIANS ATTACKED IN PAKISTAN

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it seems now, more than any time in recent history, Christians around the world are being singled out and persecuted.

Most recently and unfortunately were occurrences in Pakistan, where two churches were targeted by suicide bombers. The two attacks that occurred resulted in the deaths of 14 people and injured at least 70.

The bombings were obviously coordinated as they occurred fairly close in proximity and time. One suicide bomber detonated inside one church, and the other was stopped at a security checkpoint and detonated when being tackled by a guard.

Pakistan, whose track record of protecting religious minority groups is spotty at best, has a history of attacks on Christians.

In an op-ed piece I wrote in The Washington Times in February, I discussed the suffering of Christians and other religious minorities around the world.

Last November, a mob of 1,200 in Pakistan lynched two Christians accused of burning a Koran, and a judge sentenced a Christian to death for blasphemy.

The State Department's International Religious Freedom Report for 2013 highlights Pakistan's inability to protect the religious minorities under its jurisdiction. The report speaks of Pakistan's enforcement of blasphemy laws that restrict religious freedom and are the symbols of religious intolerance.

While the government is vocal of its condemnation of attacks on Christians and other religious communities, it has not taken proper steps to ensure the attackers of such atrocities are brought to justice. Again, it seems to be that words matter more than actions to them. Pakistan is by far not the only country to possess such a dismal record of protecting Christians.

In my op-ed, I speak of China and North Korea as countries that target Christians. Across the Middle East and North Africa, Muslim terrorist organizations search out Christians and kill them in violent and graphic ways, only because the person chose to pray to a different God.

Fellow Americans, when you think about what I have just said, when you think about the freedom that we have here, the very essence of our religious freedom in America is the freedom for all to express their religious beliefs or express none at all; yet all over the world, countries such as Pakistan, Islamic extremist groups such as ISIS and others—who have no part in a civilized society and need to be banished and done away with in a civilized society—choose to horrendously kill someone for whom they pray and the faith that they have.

Explain to me how you are supposed to worship a God that says it is okay to behead 16 Christians or to blow up their church or desecrate their facilities. It is something that must be addressed.

You see, these atrocities should not just startle those of religious faith and of nonreligious faith as well; they should startle and shock the world to realize that this is something that must cease.

For me, it is personal. As a Christian, as one of faith, my faith is described to me as being one in Christ with other believers. For me, when one is beheaded, we are all persecuted, including those here in our comfort in America.

You see, religious freedom is not just something that we talk about in the comfort of America, but must be rung loud and true throughout the world.

You see, having a member of a common faith that is being decapitated, burned alive, impaled, or crucified, these are family members to me, but in the reality to the world, as the poet has once said: ''Any man's death diminishes me.''

What a tragedy it takes on when it takes the form of religious intolerance by people who want their own views believed.

You see, I desire now that the President seriously take into consideration the recommendation of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. It provides recommendations to Congress and the President about the lack of religious freedoms in other countries and advises the White House on nonlethal actions that can be taken against those countries.

Since 2002, they have recommended that Pakistan be named as a ''country of particular concern.'' The designation of ''country of particular concern'' allows the government to use nonmilitary policies to encourage a country to increase protection for religious minorities.

I strongly encourage the White House to consider looking into designating Pakistan as a ''country of particular concern.''

I ask the question to this administration and to the world: How many more Christians have to be blown up, how many more have to be beaten in prison, how many more have to have their heads taken off before we act?

When I deployed to Iraq, I saw the multitude of faiths and lack of faith. I have seen it come together and understand what we are fighting for. When we talk about those who act in the name of a God and are Islamic extremists who want nothing but to eradicate the rest of the people's beliefs, this is something that cannot be tolerated. I cringe when I think of this.

While I disagreed many times with the decisions made at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, I ask that this administration take this very seriously and consider religious freedom for all around the world.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to thank my good friend for raising an important issue about religious freedom. It certainly is critical.

As we look at some of the atrocities that are happening around the world, Mr. Speaker, I want to rise today to talk about the Armenian genocide that happened nearly 100 years ago. This year actually marks the 100th anniversary.

As the eyes of the world focus on ISIS and the brutal killings of innocent Christians in the Middle East, we must recognize the horrors of the past if we hope to avoid repeating them in the future.

Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, during which the Ottoman Turks systematically exterminated over 1.5 million Armenians and Christian minorities. This genocide is a fact and cannot be ignored. It is settled history.

Turkey, however, has never accepted the responsibility and has continued to hide behind its brutal tactics that shroud violations of human rights. Even as 11 of our NATO allies and 42 U.S. States have recognized Turkey's leading role in this atrocity, this body has yet to do so.

The continued campaign of denial sets a dangerous precedent that makes future atrocities, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, more likely. While ordering his military leaders to attack Poland, Adolf Hitler rationalized: ''Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?''

Mr. Speaker, if we deny that these atrocities exist, we actually perpetuate the potential that it may happen again. We must join the international community to speak with a unified voice against this genocide.

Our bipartisan Armenian Genocide Truth and Justice Resolution, H. Res. 154—just dropped—would send an unequivocal message that we will never forget those that were lost, nor will we tolerate human rights abuses of any kind.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the 100th anniversary—on April 24, to be specific—of the Armenian genocide. I call on our colleagues in the United States Congress to speak out by passing the Armenian Genocide Truth and Justice Resolution so that we can end the denial once and for all.

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 41 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Mark Gooden, Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church, Johnson City, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, I give You praise this morning for Your goodness and mercy, Your steadfast love, and Your wonderful grace. Holy is Your name.

I pray for these Congresswomen and -men who represent the people across this land. These faithful servants sought public office to make a difference. Help them to stay the course and to compromise when conscience allows, but stand strong in their convictions when they can do no less. For their work ahead, I pray that You grant them clarity of thought, wisdom, and understanding. Some here are hurting and grieving; please comfort them and give them peace.

I pray that You forgive us as a people when we react with hatred and not kindness, when we are quick to speak and slow to listen, when we seek not to be understood but to judge. Help us to remember what You require of us: that we act justly, that we love mercy, and that we walk humbly with You.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. BEATTY 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 DR. MARK GOODEN

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Mark Gooden of Johnson City, Tennessee, for his service today as a guest chaplain of the House of Representatives.

For more than 30 years, Dr. Gooden has served as a spiritual light to over half a dozen churches across Tennessee as a pastor and an elder. I have personally had the privilege of knowing him as the senior pastor of my home church, Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church, in my hometown of Johnson City, Tennessee.

Mark and his wife, Judy, have been a blessing in my life. Mark ministered my wife during her recent illness and prayed with my family minutes before she passed, and for this I will be eternally grateful.

I am proud to recognize Dr. Gooden today as a guest chaplain of the House of Representatives.

ELECTING A MEMBER TO A CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a resolution (H. Res. 155) electing a Member to a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives, and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 155

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET: Mr. Buchanan.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

MILITARY OATHS

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, our Constitution's very first amendment protects every individual's freedom of religion, but our servicemen and -women who protect our country with their lives are seeing that freedom under fire.

In 2013, the United States Air Force Academy made the phrase ''so help me God'' optional in the oath each cadet takes. And why did they do that? Because of one radical atheist group's demands.

Let me be clear: Americans have the freedom of religion—but not the freedom from religion. That is why I am introducing legislation that requires congressional approval before any change could be made to our military oaths.

Mr. Speaker, the moral foundation of our country is in serious danger if we allow radical groups to dictate whether or not we can freely express our religious beliefs. I think it is time to take a stand.

THE GOP BUDGET

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

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a GOP budget proposal that can be summed up in one phrase: work harder for less. The GOP leadership put forth a budget that does nothing to boost paychecks of hardworking Americans.

Students will see education cuts, and college will be less affordable. Mr. Speaker, this budget takes away the tools that allow people to climb the ladder of opportunity.

It attacks retirement for seniors; and seniors on Medicare will immediately pay more for preventive health services, and those with high prescription drug costs will see prices skyrocket. It will mean the end of the current Medicare guarantee, and millions of seniors can be hurt.

While Republican leadership pushes this misguided budget proposal that doesn't work for my district and doesn't work for the Nation, Democrats will continue pursuing policies that provide the tools hardworking families need to achieve economic security.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, 90 years ago today, the deadliest tornado in U.S. history passed through the southwestern Indiana towns of Griffin, Owensville, and Princeton. Named the Great Tri-State Tornado, the deadly cyclone traveled three States and 219 miles over 3.5 hours, causing 695 deaths, destroying family farms, and devastating cities.

This catastrophic event is an important reminder to Hoosier families: don't wait to get prepared. Make an emergency plan ahead of time. As we enter tornado season, take the time to stay informed.

Hoosiers can access information on what to expect and how to prepare through the Department of Homeland Security at the Federal level, the Indiana DHS, the Red Cross, my office, and other organizations.

Don't wait. Take the time to get prepared today.

THE COURAGE OF LARRY DARCEY

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, at the very beginning of my first term, I came across an article in a local newspaper about a constituent of mine named Larry Darcey.

Years after being exposed to nuclear components while working in a plant supporting the U.S. Navy in Attleboro, Massachusetts, Mr. Darcey was diagnosed with cancer in 1992. Facing the fear and uncertainty of his first cancer diagnosis, Mr. Darcey quickly found out that he was far from the only former employee at the plant with cancer. But he also learned that few of those employees were aware of the Federal compensation and medical payments that they deserved.

Over the past few years, he has helped over 200 of his former coworkers file compensation claims. His work and the tireless coverage of Rick Foster and the Attleboro Sun Chronicle have kept attention on this critical issue.

Guided by their efforts, I have worked with the Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration to provide former workers and their families with over $34 million—more than twice as much as had been paid out in the 13 years of the compensation program's existence. To many families, Mr. Speaker, that support has changed or even saved lives, and it is all thanks to Larry Darcey for raising his voice when he saw a gap in our system.

Thank you, Larry, for all you have done and all you do.

HAPPY 84TH BIRTHDAY, HOWARD COBLE

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

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Mr. Howard Coble on his 84th birthday, a living legend of North Carolina politics who faithfully served the Sixth District of North Carolina for 30 years.

From the very first day when he assumed office on January 3, 1985, and the nearly 11,000 days following, he was a pillar for outstanding constituent service. With his three decades in Congress, he became the longest-serving Republican in the history of North Carolina, and he was regarded as one of the friendliest Members of Congress and certainly the most fashionable.

But the title I believe he embodies is public servant. He spent a lifetime serving our great country and our State. Beyond Congress, he has served in a multitude of capacities for North Carolina, including as a State representative. Additionally, he is a Korean war veteran and spent more than two decades serving in the United States Coast Guard and the Reserves.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to succeed Mr. Howard Coble. On behalf of all the Sixth District and my colleagues in Congress, I thank you for your service and wish you a very happy 84th birthday.

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to legislation that is nothing short of an attack on workers, a bill that will harm the economic security of American families all over this country.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that economic growth is the key to strengthening the middle class, but only if we have fair rules in place that allow workers to share in that growth by negotiating for decent wages and benefits.

The National Labor Relations Board put forward a rule that ensures workers are treated fairly in the election process, that reduces bureaucratic red tape and ensures the right to collectively bargain is guaranteed.

Unfortunately, this body is considering legislation that would overturn that rule. It is wrong, and it is a waste of time.

If Congress wants to support business, we should pass legislation to repair our crumbling infrastructure so that folks can get their products to market, reform our Tax Code to make it easier for small businesses to compete, or invest in workforce development so that our kids are prepared to compete in a 21st century economy.

Mr. Speaker, there are Democrats who stand ready to work with you on an agenda that actually strengthens the middle class, but this resolution doesn't do that. I urge my colleagues to stand up for workers by voting down this resolution.

HONORING STAFF SERGEANT RYAN PITTS, AMERICAN HERO

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

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of New Hampshire's own, Staff Sergeant Ryan Pitts, an American hero and recipient of the Medal of Honor. As one of only nine living soldiers to be awarded this distinct honor, his is a shining example of this generation's sacrifice on our behalf.

Staff Sergeant Pitts demonstrated an incredible amount of courage, bravery, and honor as he fought to hold off a Taliban ambush during one of the bloodiest battles of the war in Afghanistan. Despite being attacked by more than 200 Taliban militants and sustaining injuries of his own, Pitts singlehandedly defended his platoon's observation post—his fight unwavering.

Every day our servicemembers like Staff Sergeant Pitts put themselves in harm's way to defend our liberties, our Nation, and our freedom, and for that we are forever grateful.

Mr. Speaker, during that very ambush, nine of his comrades made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. We shall not and we will not forget their bravery and sacrifice.

Since 1861, the Congressional Medal of Honor has been awarded to just over 3,400 of our Nation's bravest soldiers. It is my honor to recognize Staff Sergeant Pitts today.

□ 1215

HONORING JONATHAN MYRICK DANIELS

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

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the memory of a Granite Stater who played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement: Jonathan Myrick Daniels of Keene, New Hampshire.

During his studies at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Dr. Daniels' faith inspired him to travel to Alabama, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., had sought to help the fellow clergymembers in registering African Americans to vote.

Along with other students, including our esteemed colleague, Congressman JOHN LEWIS of Georgia, Jonathan spent the summer and spring advocating for civil rights, standing guard during the march from Selma to Montgomery, and even helping to integrate an Episcopal church in Selma.

While many of his fellow students ultimately traveled back north, Mr. Daniels chose to indefinitely remain in Alabama and continue to fight for equal rights.

Sadly, on August 20, 1965, Mr. Daniels was walking with fellow students when a sheriff's deputy happened upon the group and threatened them with his gun. Seeing the weapon pointed in their direction, Mr. Daniels placed himself in front of a 17-year-old girl and took the bullet that was meant for her. Friends of Jonathan had noted that he was ''willing and prepared to die to help others,'' and tragically, that is indeed what happened.

Jonathan Daniels would have been 76 years old this Friday. He left this world far too soon, and he died fighting for the values he held dear: justice, equality, and human dignity.

As we celebrate this year's 50th anniversary of the landmark Voting Rights Act, we honor the memory of Jonathan Daniels and those like him who fought for the essential rights of every American.

COMMENDING VENTURE HIVE AND THE LAB MIAMI FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOUTH FLORIDA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of two local south Florida innovative tech hubs: Venture Hive and LAB Miami.

Venture Hive is a business accelerator, and LAB Miami is a tech incubator, and both are local leaders working to help our community's entrepreneurs grow, create more jobs, and expand our economy.

Building on these lofty goals, Susan Amat, the founder of Venture Hive, has partnered with Miami-Dade County Public Schools to engage students in the business of innovation at an early age.

Meanwhile, Wifredo Fernandez, or ''Wifi,'' has worked to build a place known as the Ellis Island of Miami for tech entrepreneurs. Both of these wonderful places are examples for cities across our Nation to help strengthen our economy and spur innovation.

Congratulations—felicidades to Venture Hive and LAB Miami.

TRIBUTE TO CD1 FIREFIGHTERS

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the first responders and fire crews who put their lives on the line for more than 24 hours to fight the five-alarm mill fire in Providence last week.

Firefighters from across my district came to the scene to help, working through the night to contain the blaze that consumed the 90,000-square-foot building.

Thank you to the members of the Providence Fire Department and to fire crews at Central Falls Ladder, North Providence Engine, East Providence Engine, Pawtucket Engine and Ladder, North Providence Ladder, and Cumberland Ladder for your willingness to help the Providence Fire Department and your dedicated service to keep Rhode Islanders safe all throughout the year.

I would also like to thank the companies from the Second Congressional District who pitched in, Warwick Engine and Cranston Ladder and Johnston Engine and Ladder.

I applaud their service today and hope this reminds all of us of the heroic and important work that our firefighters and first responders do and of our responsibility to support them in every way that we can.

HONORING THE LIFE OF OFFICER BURKE J. RHOADS OF NICHOLASVILLE, KENTUCKY

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and note the recent passing of Officer Burke J. Rhoads of Nicholasville, Kentucky.

On March 11, Officer Rhoads was suddenly and tragically killed in a car accident while on duty as an officer with the Nicholasville Police Department. Officer Rhoads was 35 years old and is survived by his wife, Melissa Suzanne Mason Rhoads, and his three children, Jacquelyn, Bryan, and Kevin. Officer Rhoads was a U.S. Army veteran and served on the Nicholasville police force for 8 years.

We grieve the loss of this promoter of peace, advocate of laws, and sentry of safety and security in our community; however, we also celebrate and honor his life and his service.

Inscribed on the wall of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial are the words ''in valor there is hope.'' Officer Rhoads helped to bring his community hope in knowing that they were safer on his watch.

I thank Officer Rhoads for his service and devotion to our community.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, today, Americans are working more and earning less. The cost of college is rising, young people are in debt, and America's infrastructure is in decay.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican budget, however, does nothing to help struggling Americans. It gives tax breaks to the wealthy, ends the Medicare guarantee, makes it harder for Americans to buy a home, and cuts funding for education.

Our military leaders even testified that the Republican budget will put the lives of our men and women in uniform at risk.

Mr. Speaker, this is outrageous. The American people elected us. We owe it to them to pass a budget that addresses their needs, keeps them safe, and gives them the best opportunity possible to live the American Dream.

Let's focus on creating good-paying jobs, providing universal pre-K, and restoring food stamp programs that have helped many American families through these tough times. Let's ensure that our military has the resources they need to make sure that they can fight the fight that America wants.

Democrats will keep standing with the American people and do the job that we were elected to do on their behalf.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House Republicans rolled out next year's budget and laid out a clear plan to balance the budget in less than 10 years, cut $5.5 trillion in deficit spending, and fully repeal ObamaCare.

It will work to cut waste and create a lean and effective government that truly works for the people. Every day, hardworking taxpayers across our Nation are forced to balance their budgets. It is about time that the Federal Government does the same.

Over the last several years, we have seen reckless spending that is saddling future generations with massive amounts of debt. I want our children and grandchildren to have a better opportunity to succeed than we did, and on the current trajectory, that is just not possible.

Unlike the budget President Obama submitted to Congress, the House budget calls for a fairer, simpler Tax Code and promotes job creation and a healthy economy. It will work to cut red tape that is suffocating our private employers, and it creates a more transparent and accountable government.

It is time to put money back in the pockets of our hardworking American taxpayers, and this budget will do just that.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the latest budget proposal from House Republicans.

When Bill Clinton left office in 2001, our government was running a surplus and on track to pay down our national debt to zero by 2009.

Republicans then took control of the House, Senate, and Presidency, and we saw 8 years of Republican budgets that drove us into debt and wrecked our economy. By the time Democrats regained control in 2009, our economy was in collapse, and the deficit was over $1 trillion a year.

Republicans are now proposing to return to the very same policies that destroyed our economy in the first place: wars and military spending paid for on the backs of the middle class; tax cuts skewed to the wealthy that produce no jobs; and underinvestment in education, research, and infrastructure that are the lifeblood of our Nation's economic growth.

Once again, we are seeing a budget that would increase financial stress on the middle class and the Medicare guarantee and force seniors to pay more for health care and for prescription drugs.

We can and we must do better.

OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring our attention to an increasingly urgent problem: ocean acidification.

About 25 percent of manmade carbon dioxide emissions are absorbed by our oceans. This is the great carbon sink, which helps buffer the amount of CO_2 in our atmosphere. This absorption is making our waters more acidic, which has a damaging effect on the ability of shellfish to build their shells.

Ocean acidification has already cost the United States shellfish industry millions in lost profits and jobs. I am deeply concerned because the Chesapeake Bay has been identified as a main hotspot for rapid ocean acidification. Nitrogen pollution from agricultural and sewage runoff into the bay are key culprits exacerbating the effects of acidification.

The clearest solution to address this problem is to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide emissions entering our waters. Therefore, I ask my colleagues to stand with the Safe Climate Caucus in supporting efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

We need to support the EPA's proposed carbon rules for power plants, and we need to protect our ecosystems, and we need to protect the long-term viability of our coastal economies.

DETERGENT POISONING AND CHILD SAFETY ACT

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, this looks like it could be candy for kids, but it is not. These are detergent packs that we use in our dishwasher or in our washing machines.

Last year, the National Poison Data System received 17,230 calls involving children who are exposed to chemicals in these packs. They bite into them, or they squirt them into their eyes. These are concentrated packs, and so they do much more damage—in fact, even burning the esophagus. 769 of these children had to go to the hospital, and one child died.

I am introducing, along with Senator DICK DURBIN, the Detergent Poisoning and Child Safety Act to require that companies that produce these detergent packs provide more child-resistant packaging.

This is a consumer issue that should be addressed, and I urge my colleagues to join with me.

BRING BACK OUR GIRLS

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

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Hear ye, hear ye. Wake the town and tell the people that ISIS and Boko Haram are teaming up for terror. Boko Haram plus ISIS equals a ''marriage from hell,'' says CNN.

Mr. Speaker, Boko Haram has courted ISIS for months, but this is the first time that the intelligence community has acknowledged that ISIS has responded to the overtures in a way that could pave the road for the two to collaborate.

We cannot forget the people of Nigeria. We cannot forget our school girls who were kidnapped. We cannot forget those awful unions between ISIS and Boko Haram.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to tweet to keep the reports of corruption, election shenanigans, and sheer terror in the national spotlight.

Tweet #bringbackourgirls and #joinrepwilson.

Tweet, tweet, tweet.

IT'S MORNING IN AMERICA

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, while Congress was away last week, we had another strong jobs report. You might even say, as former President Reagan used to say, ''It's morning in America,'' in his famous ad.

In February, the economy added another 295,000 private sector jobs, and the unemployment rate edged down to 5.5 percent. That means that there have been 12 straight uninterrupted months of private sector job growth of over 200,000 jobs a month. That is the first time that has happened since 1977.

Inflation remains tame; gas prices are low; the dollar is strong, and by many measures, the economy's performance under the Obama administration has been stronger than the economy under former President Reagan.

Though I suspect that some may find it unusual to compare President Obama and President Reagan, their efforts are good news for the economy and good news for America.

□ 1230

REJECT HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, congressional Democrats are trying to move the country forward, but the House Republican budget is designed to turn back the clock.

Instead of trying to take a balanced approach to dealing with our Nation's fiscal problems, the House Republican budget seeks to balance itself on the backs of working families, middle class folks, senior citizens, young Americans, college students, the poor, the sick, and the afflicted. Instead of trying to promote progress for everyone, the House Republican budget seeks to enact policies designed to simply benefit the privileged few.

It is a regressive, a retrograde, and an irresponsible Republican budget, and it should be soundly rejected. It does not add a single middle class job. It does not increase a single middle class paycheck. It does not help a single middle class family send its child to college. Mr. Speaker, I am urging that the House soundly reject this reckless Republican budget.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE BOB GOODLATTE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LOUDERMILK) laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable BOB GOODLATTE, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, March 17, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that the Committee on the Judiciary has received a subpoena, issued by the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts, for documents in a civil case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel regarding the subpoena, I have determined that compliance is not consistent with the privileges and rights of the House.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

SECRET SCIENCE REFORM ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill, H.R. 1030.

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

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. 1030.

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

□ 1233

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. 1030) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible, with Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana 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 Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act, requires the Environmental Protection Agency to base its regulations on unbiased, publicly accessible science that can be verified. Why would anyone want to hide this information from the American people?

This is essentially the same bill that was introduced in the last Congress by the former Environment Subcommittee chairman, DAVID SCHWEIKERT, and it passed with bipartisan support last November.

We must make sure that Federal regulations are based on science that is available for independent review. Many Americans are unaware that some of the EPA's most expensive and burdensome regulations, such as its proposed ozone rules, are based on data that not even the EPA has seen. The EPA contracts out scientific research to third parties whom the EPA relies upon to justify its regulations, but if independent scientists ask for details, the Agency claims that it doesn't have the data, and so results cannot be verified.

This is ''trust me'' science, which should make us suspicious, and it clearly conflicts with this administration's promise to be the most transparent in history. This bill ensures that the decisions that affect every American are based on independently verified, unbiased scientific research instead of on secret data that is hidden behind closed doors.

The Secret Science Reform Act does not weaken privacy laws. In fact, it states that nothing in the bill will supersede privacy laws. It does not give the EPA any new authority to take private information and make it public. The Secret Science Reform Act simply prohibits the Agency from relying on nonpublic data that cannot be verified by independent scientists. The bill requires the EPA to use data that is available to the public when the Agency writes its regulations. This allows independent researchers to evaluate the studies that the EPA uses to justify its regulations. This is the scientific method.

How can we believe claims by the government about the costs and benefits of regulations if the science that allegedly justifies them cannot be verified by independent experts? What does the EPA want to hide?

This bill does not require the EPA to pay to disseminate the data it relies on publicly. Unfortunately, the CBO's old cost estimate on a previous bill ignores this point. If a third party has researched data that it believes the EPA should rely on in its rulemaking, that third party should make it publicly available so that the EPA and other scientists can check its work. There is nothing in the bill that compels the EPA to shoulder this cost, which is where the CBO went wrong in scoring the cost of this bill. The EPA has received over $8 billion this year. Billions of hard-earned taxpayer dollars have been spent by the EPA, and taxpayers deserve to know whether it went to good science or to politically correct science.

Today, we have an opportunity to set a new course and let the American people see the data. The EPA should use sound science based on public data, not secret data hidden from the American people. This bill also will help the EPA focus its resources on the best possible science. That, in turn, will ensure a healthier, happier, and more prosperous future for all Americans. The days of ''trust me'' science are over. An open government that is accountable to the people is essential to protect Americans from excessive government control. The EPA has a responsibility to be open and transparent with the people it serves and whose money it uses.

If you support the right of the people to see the EPA's data, then support this bill and help the administration keep its promise to be open and honest with the American people. In God we trust. All others, especially the EPA, must use public data, not secret science.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015.

First off, I would like to dispel the falsehood that the EPA relies on secret science. They do not. They rely upon tens of thousands of peer reviewed, publicly published research studies. The kind of science that Republicans call ''secret'' actually consists of research studies published in prestigious scientific journals like Science, the New England Journal of Medicine, the Annals of Epidemiology, the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, and many more.

Moreover, it is not a secret that the EPA uses these studies. In all of the regulatory actions the EPA takes, they publish exhaustive information about exactly what science the Agency is relying upon to establish the scientific underpinnings of the regulations. These are public documents that are easily located on the Internet.

So what is the secret?

What my Republican colleagues are calling ''secret'' is actually confidential, personal health information from research study participants. Some of this information is protected from disclosure by law, and other information is protected by agreements between the study participants and the researchers. The disclosure of this kind of information would be a major breach of faith with the hundreds of thousands of research participants who volunteer to enter these types of public health studies.

That said, I don't actually think that my Republican colleagues want this personal health information to be publicly disclosed. If they did want that, it would be terribly hypocritical since they have been repeatedly bashing the Obama Web site healthcare.gov for disclosing far less information to third-party vendors.

I think that the real motivation here is to prevent the EPA from using these public health studies altogether, because if the EPA cannot rely upon these public health studies, then it will be much more difficult for the EPA to justify its protections for public health. The effect of this is that certain public health regulations will be almost impossible to update regardless of what new things the health sciences tell us about pollution and its effects on public health.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is sad that today the Science Committee is on the floor of this House of Representatives putting forth a bill that will force a public health agency to ignore science. That is why some of our premier scientific organizations, such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Union of Concerned Scientists, the American Statistical Association, and others, have expressed their concerns about this bill. It would be nice, when we debate bills which are supposedly about science, if we actually listened to the concerns of the scientific community instead of ignoring them, as the majority has done here.

Likewise, some of the Nation's premier public health organizations, like the American Lung Association, the American Thoracic Society, and the American Public Health Association, among others, have come out in opposition to this bill.

Again, when dealing with issues of public health, it would be nice to occasionally listen to what the public health experts have to say instead of ignoring their voices, like the majority has done here.

Finally, a number of well-known environmental groups have registered opposition to this legislation, including the Natural Resources Defense Council, the League of Conservation Voters, and Greenpeace, among others. There was a time not too long ago when the views of these groups would have mattered to some of my Republican colleagues. Not too many years ago, the then-Republican chairman of the Science Committee, Sherry Boehlert, made clear that we need to be good stewards of the environment we are leaving for future generations.

I want to believe that some of my Republican colleagues still believe that. However, legislation like the bill before us today makes me fear that what

we are left with is a majority party which ignores science, ignores public health, and ignores environmental damage—all for the sake of polluting industries that have endorsed the majority's actions here today.

Now, I don't begrudge these companies for supporting legislation that helps their bottom lines. It is expected. What concerns me is that this Congress no longer looks at the industry's request with a critical eye. We simply rubberstamp them without any regard for our Nation's scientific experts, health experts, or environmental experts and their concerns.

Mr. Chairman, I include some of these letters in the RECORD today because Congress should care about these experts and what they have to say.

MARCH 16, 2015.

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.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
House Majority Whip,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTHY: As leading U.S. science, engineering, and academic institutions, we are writing to once again express our concerns regarding the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015 (H.R. 1030). We encourage you and your colleagues to take additional time to evaluate the unintended consequences of this bill before passing it on the House floor.

The research community is concerned about how some of the key terms in the bill could be interpreted or misinterpreted, especially terms such as ''materials,'' ''data,'' and ''reproducible.'' Would the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) be excluded from utilizing research that involved physical specimens or biological materials that are not easily accessible? How would the agency address research that combines both public and private data?

With respect to reproducibility of research, some scientific research, especially in areas of public health, involves longitudinal studies that are so large and of great duration that they could not realistically be reproduced. Rather, these studies are replicated utilizing statistical modeling. The same may be true for scientific data from a one-time event (e.g., Deepwater Horizon Gulf oil spill) where the data are gathered in real time. We could foresee a situation in which the EPA would be constrained from making a proposal or even disseminating public information in a timely fashion.

Finally, the legislation could impose additional uncompensated burdens of cost and effort on those recipients of federal research grants where the research results are expected to be ''relied on to support a covered action.'' The bill is not clear on whether it is the EPA's or the research institution's responsibility to cover the costs associated with sharing and archiving this information.

The Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) is working with federal agencies to establish access to data policies that relate ''to the dissemination and long-term stewardship of the results of unclassified research, including digital data and peer-reviewed scholarly publications.'' Agencies are beginning to issue their data access policies, and given the complexities associated with access to research data as outlined above we suggest that Congress wait to review the agency policies before imposing new statutory requirements.

American Anthropological Association, American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Chemical Society, American Geophysical Union, American Geosciences Institute, American Meteorological Society, American Society for Microbiology (ASM), American Society of Agronomy, American Society of Civil Engineers, Association of American Geographers, Association of American Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), Biophysical Society, Brown University, Consortium for Ocean Leadership, Consortium of Social Science Associations.

Cornell University, Crop Science Society of America, Duke University, Ecological Society of America, Entomological Society of America, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, National Council for Science and the Environment, Society for Conservation Biology, Soil Science Society of America, Stanford University, The Ohio State University, The University of Texas at Austin, University of California System, University of California, Riverside, University of Maryland, University of Michigan, University of Oregon, University of Pennsylvania.

FEBRUARY 25, 2015.

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

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Ranking Member, House Science, Space, and Technology Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH AND RANKING MEMBER JOHNSON, As president of the American Statistical Association, with 19,000 members, I write regarding the ''Secret Science Reform Act of 2015.'' We generally applaud the idea that researchers and federal agencies strive to make data available to others—under strict pledges to maintain confidentiality of data provided by individuals and establishments where necessary—and to encourage reproducible research. Access to data and reproducibility of research are crucially important for science to advance.

While the bill's intent is to make data more widely available, we have several concerns and urge the bill be revised significantly before further consideration. Our concerns include those voiced by others last year (especially the American Association for the Advancement of Science) that the bill's statements do not account for the complexities common to the scientific process on research that involves biological materials or physical specimens not easily accessible, combinations of public and private data, longitudinal data collected over many years that are difficult to reproduce, and data from one-time events that cannot be replicated. The bill as written could have far-reaching consequences that would ultimately hamper or undermine the scientific process generally and EPA's work specifically. We also agree with the point that it would be prudent to see the EPA's data access policy—in accordance with the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010—expected later this year before further action on the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015.

Our nation should be striving for transparency in government and, as noted above, data accessibility, but these goals also must be balanced with the necessity to protect individuals' and businesses' privacy. The bill's language of ''publicly available'' except when ''superseding any nondiscretionary statutory requirement'' acknowledges this balance, but that language is vague and may be insufficient to protect individuals and businesses. In particular, some data sets may not fall under ''prohibited by law,'' yet the data are still collected under a pledge to protect the identifiability and confidentiality of the reported values. For example, the government, as well as private and nonprofit sectors, routinely collects data—including private business information and private health information—under strict pledges to protect confidentiality. In some studies, this is backed up with penalties for violating those pledges. Such data should not be publicly available to every person who might ask for them. Rather, data subjects' confidentiality should be protected, for example by policies and procedures that provide data access to trusted users (i.e., approved users committed to appropriate protections of the confidentiality of study participants) while discouraging breaches of confidentiality and/or by data redaction techniques developed in the statistical and computer science communities. Under the current wording, a choice may have to be made between maintaining data confidentiality and issuing needed regulations.

To emphasize the challenges and importance of confidentiality protection, we note that simple but necessary de-identification methods—like stripping names and other personally identifiable information (PII)—often do not suffice to protect confidentiality. Statisticians and computer scientists have repeatedly shown that it is possible to link individuals to publicly available sources, even with PR removed. Thus, allowing unrestricted public access without appropriate controls could result in unintended disclosures. These could cause significant harm to the advancement of science and the federal government—especially the federal statistical system—as people may be less willing to provide their data if highly publicized breaches occur.

In short, any requirements for making data available should carefully consider the complexities, challenges, and potential ramifications. We hope you will address these concerns, which would require major modifications to the bill. We would be happy to be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

DAVID MORGANSTEIN,
President, American Statistical Association.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Before closing, I would simply note that the Congressional Budget Office has scored this bill.

To quote the CBO:

The CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 1030 would cost about $250 million a year for the next few years.

As we prepare to debate the budget resolution and fiscal policy next week, I cannot fathom why so-called fiscal conservatives could support a bill that will increase bureaucracy at the EPA at a cost of a quarter-billion dollars a year. For a whole host of reasons, this is a bad bill, and I strongly oppose this legislation.

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

□ 1245

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 30 seconds before yielding to the gentleman from Oklahoma.

I want to point out that this bill has been endorsed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Farm Bureau, Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, and The Center for Regulatory Solutions.

I want to call all Members' attention to the actual language of the bill itself. If they will look on page 2, they will find out that this bill does protect privacy, and it does so specifically. It prevents the EPA from releasing confidential information, and it clarifies that this bill does not supersede any privacy laws. In fact, the EPA Administrator, herself, wrote this in a recent letter:

The Agency's efforts ultimately resulted in the Center for Disease Control reaching the conclusion that all the research data could be provided without the need for de-identification, and further, the National Academy of Sciences has said the same thing. We are happy to stand with them.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BRIDENSTINE), who is also the chairman of the Subcommittee on Environment of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. BRIDENSTINE. Mr. Chairman, I thank our chairman for his leadership on this very important bill.

I think it is highly appropriate that we ask our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to actually read the bill. If they did, they would find out that it prevents the EPA from releasing any confidential information. It prevents the EPA from releasing any confidential information. The idea that you are using or that somebody on this floor would use confidential information, they are hiding behind that in an effort to hide the actual science.

My children are in elementary school. They are required to show their work. If they don't show their work, their integrity could be questioned, which would be appropriate, by the way. Mr. Chairman, is it too much to ask for the EPA to follow the same guidelines I give my children in elementary school? Show your work. We need to see it. This is an Agency, as the chairman noted, that is funded by taxpayers at a level of $8 billion a year. This is also an Agency that promulgates rules that cost the economy hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars every year, as well.

In my home State of Oklahoma, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with the Clean Power Plan going forward and now new regulations on ozone, we are looking at the cost of electricity going up. We are looking at the cost of doing business going up.

By the way, when the cost of electricity goes up, it doesn't hurt me; it hurts the poor. This is a war on the poor. If we are going to punish poor people in my district, I would like to see the science behind it. I think it is perfectly appropriate that we have perfect transparency as it relates to the science behind the EPA.

The Secret Science Reform Act is a very simple bill. It simply makes the EPA show its work, as my children do in elementary school. It is not truly sound science unless the results can be replicated, and this bill would allow others to test the results and to challenge the assumptions of the EPA.

If we are truly for good science, for sound science, we must pass this bill. I encourage my colleagues to vote for it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from the State of Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI), who is the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Environment.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Ms. JOHNSON for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015, a short bill, which I have read, with a long list of problems.

I want to start by applauding the sponsors of the bill for their focus on and goal of transparency. It is something our constituents care about and deserve. But transparency is something that we should accomplish through collaboration and with input from the scientific community. This bill, on the contrary, is opposed, for good reason, by research institutions and scientists from across the country.

Mr. Chairman, we received a lot of feedback from outside groups, and I am

going to place into the RECORD after my remarks some letters we have received from groups opposing H.R. 1030 from organizations like the American Association for Justice, Public Citizen, the National Physicians Alliance, the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology, and others.

Instead of working together to find a solution that increases transparency and access to federally funded research, the Secret Science Reform Act instead has the potential, in the long term, to compromise the health and well-being of Americans, and here is why: the Secret Science Reform Act, which looks simple on its face, will actually encumber, if not eradicate, the EPA's ability to perform its most fundamental duty: protecting Americans from significant risks to their health and to the environment.

Because H.R. 1030 would require that the EPA rely only on studies that are publicly available online in a manner that is sufficient for independent analysis and substantial reproduction of research results, the act will prevent the agency from considering the best and most relevant science.

The EPA relies on peer-reviewed science conducted by the brightest minds at our Nation's universities and other research organizations. Large cohort peer review studies, such as the American Cancer Society and Harvard Six Cities studies, which made an association between air pollution and mortality, are vital to the Agency's implementation of the Clean Air Act.

Let me be clear: the EPA does publicly disclose which studies it relies on to support its regulatory actions. For good reason, it doesn't make the raw data from these studies publicly available. This bill before us today, if adopted, would make it virtually impossible to use many reports and other sources of scientific data, such as those I mentioned earlier.

First, in many cases, the EPA cannot compel the release or disclosure of information of which it is not the custodian. Second, confidentiality requirements or other legal prohibitions on the sharing of certain types of data, like health information, would preclude studies from consideration simply because they conform to common ethical and legal standards.

Additionally, this act perpetuates the incorrect notion that the science relied on by the EPA is somehow hidden. This misconception is based on conflating the meanings of ''secret'' and ''confidential.'' One thing should be made very clear: none of the information used by the EPA is secret. Some information might be confidential—if it includes, for example, the personal health information of millions of Americans—as it should be.

My colleagues supporting this bill argue that the data could be de-identified to protect confidentiality and privacy and concerns about disclosure of personal health information are unfounded, but according to a letter from the American Statistical Association, de-identification methods like stripping names and other personally identifiable information do not often suffice to protect confidentiality. Statisticians and computer scientists have repeatedly shown how easy is to be reidentify an individual using social media and public records.

The Secret Science Reform Act will have chilling consequences for the EPA and for every American who wants to enjoy clean air and clean water. Let's bring back common sense and work together. I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to oppose this legislation and let the EPA go back to protecting the public health of all Americans.

FEBRUARY 24, 2015.

Hon. SUZANNE BONAMICI,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Environment, Committee on Science, Space and Technology, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BONAMICI: As the 114th Congress gets underway and your Committee considers its work ahead, I am writing on behalf of the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology to respectfully request a reevaluation of previously introduced and House-passed legislation regarding access to research data.

Last November, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4012, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2014, a bill that our Society strongly opposed. Had it become law, H.R. 4012 would have prevented the EPA from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments unless all underlying data were reproducible and made publicly available. In so doing, the legislation would have barred EPA from considering much of the best available science investigating the effects of the chemical, physical and microbial environment on human health, because many of the related findings are based on confidential data, such as private medical information. Neither H.R. 4012, nor its companion, S. 2613, were considered in the Senate.

Our members support the sharing of epidemiological data when its purpose is to advance scientific knowledge and when data sharing protects the confidentiality of study subjects. We have participated in some of the largest data sharing efforts to advance scientific knowledge, and our Society has promulgated transparent procedures that protect patient confidentiality for assuring unbiased reanalysis of epidemiological data sets. Moreover, our members are developing and have applied new approaches to data sharing that both increase transparency and protect confidential information, with the objective of promoting rigorous evaluation of study results by other analysts.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our work with you and how we are sharing data for reanalysis and the advancement of science, while also protecting subjects' confidentiality. Furthermore, should legislation similar to H.R. 4012 and S. 2613 be introduced in the 114th Congress, we would appreciate the opportunity to share our strong concerns over the bill's likely impact on the privacy of individual study participants and on the scientific enterprise and human health.

The International Society for Environmental Epidemiology is an international organization with members from more than 60 countries. Topics addressed by ISEE members include environmental exposures, health effects, methodology, environment-gene interactions, and ethics and law. We thank you for your time and look forward to working with Congress in the future.

Sincerely,

FRANCINE LADEN, SC.D.,
President, International Society for Environmental Epidemiology.

FEBRUARY 25, 2015.

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

Hon. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON,
Ranking Member, Committee on Science, Space and Technology, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR AND RANKING MEMBER: We are writing in strong opposition to H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015. The American Association for Justice (AAJ), formerly the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA) with members in United States, Canada and abroad, is the world's largest trial bar. It was established in 1946 to safeguard victims' rights, strengthen the civil justice system, promote injury prevention and foster public health and safety of numerous individuals who have been harmed by unsafe chemicals. AAJ is an advocate for strong chemical safety regulation and healthy environment, in combination with a strong civil justice system in order to protect the health and wellbeing of all Americans. In this capacity, AAJ robustly objects to the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015.

This legislation would severely limit the science that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) can consider while implementing public protections; upending numerous environmental statutes and longstanding Agency practices and is severely overbroad. In fact, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015 may make it impossible for the EPA to regulate at all. The EPA would no longer be able to use most health studies including peer-reviewed research as a result of the limitation on using data that is not ''publicly available''. Many accurate and reliable health studies contain personal health data that is currently and rightfully protected. Under the Secret Science Act, however, these studies would be erroneously excluded from use by the EPA, substantially narrowing the science the EPA may relay when considering public safeguards.

In addition, H.R. 1030 will also restrict the use of new and innovative science and well as long-term exposure studies. Oftentimes the newest and most innovative science and data may not be publically available. However, this shouldn't mean that the EPA is precluded from using it. Lastly, many of EPA's standards rely on long-term exposure studies that assess the link between diseases and pollutants; or on meta analyses that combine many different studies. If the Secret Science Act of 2015 becomes law these studies may also be barred from EPA use because they will be unable to be ''substantially reproduced''. The end result of this legislation is that the EPA will no longer be able to rely on the best science in order to protect American health and the environment.

We urge you to oppose the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015. This bill would seriously inhibit the EPA from protecting human health and the environment through its improper limitation on the use of sound science.

Sincerely,

LINDA LIPSEN,
Chief Executive Officer, American Association for Justice.

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.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds before yielding to the gentleman from Texas.

I would like to call Members' attention to page 1, line 12 of this bill. Again, it is only two pages long. I hope everybody will take the time to read it. Line 12 of the first page points out that the Administrator of the EPA shall use the best available science. Once again, the bill actually calls upon the Administrator to use the best available science.

The question is: Why does the EPA want to hide this science? Why does it want to hide this data? Why won't it let the American people see this data? That is the question of the hour.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015.

Last December, the EPA proposed a new regulation that is widely predicted to be the costliest regulation in U.S. history—I repeat, the costliest U.S. regulation in history. It would actually cost our economy $140 billion per year, according to the National Association of Manufacturers—manufacturers, you know, those who manufacture or make things.

I like to say the things that make America great are the things that America makes. Likewise, in these hard economic times, more Americans will make it in America when more things are made in America.

Therefore, regulations that hamper manufacturing should really be scrutinized, and regulations that have such a big impact on our economy should not be based on secret science in order to sell it to the American people. Unfortunately, the EPA has prevented outside researchers from accessing the data behind recent regulatory decisions. The public is just supposed to trust the EPA. Apparently, their policy is trust, but evade your eyes; we want a policy that says trust, but verify.

It is long past time that Congress increases transparency into the EPA's regulatory process. The Secret Science Reform Act would prohibit the EPA from proposing or finalizing regulations based upon science that is not transparent or available for independent review. Our constituents have a right to know whether EPA's regulations are based on sound science and have the stated benefits the Agency claims they have.

The legislation is simple, it is straightforward, and it is a message that government bureaucrats cannot propose costly regulations without the transparency that the American people deserve. We want more Americans and more American companies to make it in America.

I want to thank Chairman SMITH for bringing this important legislation to the floor today.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER), a scientist.

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Chairman, I am disappointed to be here once again speaking out against the Secret Science Reform Act. There are many problems that our Nation faces that we need to tackle—growing income inequity, a badly broken immigration system, and underinvestment in Federal research and development—so I am having a hard time understanding why congressional leaders think that this body, composed largely of lawyers and career politicians, should devote its attention to telling scientists how to conduct their research.

We have heard many of these same politicians declare proudly, ''I am not a scientist,'' as they excuse their ignorance on issues like climate change or the effectiveness of vaccines, yet they want to rewrite the rules for standards of research for EPA scientists.

As a scientist myself, as well as a manufacturer, one who started a business that now provides hundreds of manufacturing jobs in the United States and has kept those jobs in the Midwest and understands what is important for manufacturing to succeed in the United States, I always value the input of experts over political rhetoric.

So what have the experts said about the Secret Science Reform Act?

Today a letter was introduced into the RECORD from the American Association for the Advancement of Science, signed by 35 groups representing scientific organizations and research universities. In the letter, they state:

The research community is concerned about how some of the key terms in this bill could be interpreted or misinterpreted, especially terms such as ''materials,'' ''data,'' and ''reproducible.''

Would the Environmental Protection Agency be excluded from utilizing research that involved physical specimens or biological materials that are not easily accessible? How would the Agency address research that combines both public and private data?

These are all important questions that were not addressed when this bill was proposed last Congress and still remain unaddressed today. So I continue to stand alongside thousands of my colleagues in science in opposition to the Secret Science Reform Act. These are the standards that should be set by scientists and not by Washington politicians.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds before yielding to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. Chairman, I almost feel like we ought to take a 5-minute recess and allow everybody a chance to read the bill, which, again, is only two pages long.

There is nothing in this bill that tells scientists how to conduct their science. All the bill does is to say that the data should be publicly available and should be independently verified and let the American people see it—nothing more, nothing less. That is why, according to a public opinion poll, 90 percent of the American people support this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LOUDERMILK), who happens to be chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. I thank the chairman for the opportunity to speak on this very important bill.

Mr. Chair, as I stand in the Chamber here, this historic Chamber, all around the top of the wall here are engraved images of great lawgivers who have influenced this Nation and the great institutions of government we have. As the Prime Minister of Israel pointed out, Moses is in the back, who gave us the natural laws our Founders referred to, but over my right shoulder, just above the rostrum, is the image of Thomas Jefferson.

□ 1300

Thomas Jefferson wrote about another set of laws and rights that are given to us. He also wrote 27 grievances—27 violations—of either the natural law that Moses wrote about or the natural rights of men that he wrote about in the Declaration of Independence. These were grievances against the King of England for violations against the natural laws or the natural rights of men.

The 10th grievance, ironically, that he wrote about can also be seen as a warning to where we are today in this Nation. The 10th grievance says that:

The King has erected a multitude of new offices and sent hither swarms of officers to harass the people and eat out their substance.

What Jefferson was talking about was the multitude of regulations and regulatory agencies that the King of England had instituted here on the continent of North America.

Over the past decades, we have seen a rampant growth not only in the number of Federal agencies that have regulatory authority over Americans, but the scope of the regulations, that they have impacted our very lives. Every moment of your day is in some way impacted by regulation—and I argue overregulation—by the Federal Government.

As we speak here today, the EPA is considering a decrease in the amount of acceptable ozone in our atmosphere, which is questionable. Many scientists have said that that level of ozone that they are trying to achieve is unachievable. Even some of the most remote areas of our Nation would not even be able to achieve that. These are areas that don't have any type of industry or significant population.

The National Black Chamber of Commerce testified in a committee hearing the other day that this level of ozone in the regulation the EPA is trying to impose would have significant impact on the economy, especially small business owners and minority business owners. Most of their small businesses are in metropolitan areas. This overregulation is eating out the substance of Americans.

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council recently testified that the average American pays $14,974 in hidden taxes. These are taxes because of regulation by the Federal Government. That is $14,000 a year average Americans are spending out of their own pocket because of overregulation. Much of this is because of questionable science that is hidden and not transparent. That is 23 percent of their income.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

While this bill would not fix the overreach of this administration in their regulation, it will bring transparency—that the American people have a right to know that when their rights and their liberties are being restricted by government, that it is substantiated and it is sound science.

I fully support this measure. It is one of the most important ones, I believe, that we will do in this Congress.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, for the second time in a 6-month period, we are considering legislation specifically designed to delay implementation of EPA regulations and prevent the EPA from using the best available scientific data.

I know my friends on the other side of the aisle don't like the EPA, and they don't believe in sound science—they have made that very clear during the time that they have the majority—but this so-called Secret Science Reform Act is a dangerous attack on the EPA's ability to use the best available science to protect public health and our environment.

Peer reviewed scientific research from our world class universities informs EPA rulemaking. To limit access to this research—and open the doors to industry-manipulated data—is just plain wrong.

I have cosponsored an amendment offered by my good friend JOE KENNEDY to allow the EPA to continue relying upon peer reviewed scientific data. Boy, what a radical idea. This commonsense amendment will ensure the EPA has access to the valuable research necessary to make sound decisions about our public health and environment.

Mr. Chairman, there isn't ''secret science,'' just science that my Republican colleagues do not like. The contempt for science demonstrated by the Republican majority in this House is troublesome. Putting profits of a particular industry ahead of the safety and well-being of our citizens by rigging the data is dangerous.

People might wonder: Why are we debating this bill here today? Well, I would suggest you follow the money, follow where the political campaign contributions are going.

The notion that we, in this House, would disregard sound science and instead open the doors for profitmaking industries to come in and dictate what the rules and regulations are with regard to the safety and well-being of our citizens is just plain dangerous.

I urge my colleagues, at the very least, support the Kennedy amendment and defeat the underlying legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN), who is a hardworking member of the Science Committee.

Mr. BABIN. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, it is time to end the era of secret science within the Environmental Protection Agency. This bill before us, H.R. 1030, does just that.

As the Representative of a very diverse district in Texas with timber; agricultural interests; four ports, including the Port of Houston; and more petrochemical plants than any other in the United States, I rise in strong support of this bill.

I cosponsored this bill because I believe that the American people deserve a greater level of accountability from the EPA and less bureaucratic regulation and dodging the facts. Let the facts speak for themselves.

Transparency is one of the fundamental tenets of science. I have a biology degree. I have had plenty of science, chemistry, and physics—I am a

dentist—medicine. If they have the facts, there is no need to hide them.

The EPA spends about $8 billion a year in taxpayer money, and I believe that the taxpayers of the United States have a right to know just how their hard-earned money is being spent.

As new sets of data are created, I hope that this level of transparency will encourage researchers, companies, and nonprofits towards a greater level of openness.

The President committed that his administration would be the most transparent administration in history. Unfortunately, I believe this administration has fallen short of this goal. This bill is necessary to ensure that the American people have transparency in the Environmental Protection Agency.

When the EPA overreaches, it costs Americans their jobs by putting U.S. workers at a competitive disadvantage. We need transparency and accountability so that American workers and their families are protected.

Let's put an end to ''secret science.'' H.R. 1030 does exactly this, and I call on my colleagues to join me in voting for this bill.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK).

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, this will be the second time that I have cosponsored an amendment to the Secret Science Reform Act with Representatives KENNEDY and MCGOVERN.

I have spoken in opposition to this bill before, but so long as the House continues to consider antiscience legislation that endangers public health, I will continue to point out why it is dangerous.

As written, the Secret Science Reform Act prohibits the EPA from considering any science that is not publicly available in its rulemaking process. A great deal of important research, particularly related to public health, is based on sensitive personal information that this bill would exclude from consideration.

This limit poses an impossible choice for the EPA: disregard critical research—even when it has been subject to rigorous evaluation and peer review—or violate the privacy of volunteers.

Our amendment ensures that this will not happen. It simply provides that the EPA may rely on any peer reviewed scientific publication when making rules, even if all of the underlying data is not publicly available. This will protect the scientific integrity of the EPA's process without endangering the privacy of Americans who participate in scientific research.

Mr. Chairman, I include two letters in opposition to H.R. 1030 for the RECORD. One is from the Union of Concerned Scientists and the other is from a coalition of environmental organizations, including the Sierra Club and Clean Water Action.

UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS,
March 2, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The Union of Concerned Scientists, with 450,000 members and supporters throughout the country, strongly opposes H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015, scheduled for a vote in the House of Representatives this week. The legislation represents a solution in search of a problem, and would greatly impede the agency's mission to protect public health and the environment.

As you know, this bill is nearly identical to the bill that the Committee reported out last November. That bill received a veto threat from the Administration, which noted that it would prevent the Environmental Protection Agency from protecting public health and safety and the environment, ''if the data supporting [its] decisions cannot, for legitimate reasons, be made publicly available.''

It appears that the language changes in the 2015 version of this bill were made to obscure the drafters' true intent, making it more difficult to discern that it would cripple the ability of the EPA to regulate based on information supplied by industries that is designated confidential, or on public health and medical data where the privacy of patients must be protected.

The EPA already makes the data, methodology, and peer-reviewed research it relies on in its rule-making processes as transparent as possible. Moreover, the additional restrictions imposed by this proposed bill would make it almost impossible to base public protections on the best available scientific information. In particular, if enacted, the language appears to indicate that the agency would be inhibited by the following challenges:

The EPA wouldn't be able to use most health studies. The agency would likely be prevented from using any study that uses personal health data. The confidentiality of such data is usually protected by institutional review boards ORB); thus, the data could not be made publicly available as demanded. Since many EPA rules are health-based standards, this rule would severely restrict the ability of the agency to base rules on science.

The EPA wouldn't be able to draw from industry data sources. The agency would be prevented from using data provided by industry to the agency. Since information from industry sources is often not publicly available, a law requiring as such would prevent the agency from utilizing industry data, a source of information that often provides otherwise unknown data to inform EPA rulemaking.

The EPA wouldn't be able to use new and innovative science. New scientific methods and data may be restricted by intellectual property protections or industry trade secret exemptions. This proposed bill would limit EPA's ability to rely on the best available science including novel approaches that may not yet be publicly available.

Long-term and meta-analyses would be unavailable. Many of EPA's health-based standards rely on long-term exposure studies that assess the link between chronic diseases/mortality and pollutants; or on meta- analyses that include many different studies and locations to provide a more robust look at the science. In HR 4012, the provision that studies be conducted ''in a manner that is sufficient for independent analysis and substantial reproduction of research'' may prevent use of these vital studies by the EPA, as it is unclear whether such spatially and temporally comprehensive studies would be considered ''sufficient for substantial reproduction.''

I strongly urge you to oppose H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015. The proposed bill would inhibit the EPA's ability to carry out its science-based mission to protect human health and the environment. It does not deserve your or this Congress's support.

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

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.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the Kennedy amendment and ''no'' on the underlying bill.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), who is a former chairman of the Environment Subcommittee of the Science Committee.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. I thank Chairman SMITH for yielding, and to all my friends, I miss all of you, but are we having that sense of déjà vu all over again? Have you ever started listening to a debate and you are starting to think: Are we discussing two completely separate pieces of legislation here?

Mr. Chair, this isn't that complicated. So far, I have got to tell you, this debate—and this is going to be a little harsh—has been absolutely intellectually vacuous because we are not saying things that are true. Let's try one more time—no, Madam Ranking Member, you are not. So let's try it one more time.

What does the piece of legislation do? It is public policy made by public data, public data by public policy. Why is that so terrifying to the left? This concept of, well, there's personal medical records used for part of this—there are.

That is why this White House, 3 or 4 years ago, did a series of memos instructing how to do the deidentification of personal data.

If you really object to that, then I am sure you are going to stand up and start saying that the FDA, the CFPB, all the others that get personal data, you don't want them to touch that either. Come on, a little intellectual consistency here, let's try it.

Something I chose not to do when we ran this bill last time—and I am going to do this time—is that I will submit at a later time into the RECORD a handful of memos coming from my office from when this body was controlled by the Democrats and there was a Republican in the White House.

The Democrats were demanding this of the White House—and a series of senior Democrat officials—demanding this type of disclosure to make public policy. I think that would be sort of amusing to put into the public record, so folks can see how duplicitous this argument has started to become.

Now, back to sort of an underlying principle that I embraced—and I hope all those who actually are not at war with science and want to embrace the complete aggregation of information—is that we need to walk away from this arrogance that there is a small subset in our society that absolutely knows everything.

Because the fact of the matter is you put up a study today and a handful of smart folks at KENNEDY'S—do you represent MIT? Sorry. That is where all the really smart kids are, right?

But people like Arizona State, the next smartest school in the Nation, why can't they take that data set and bounce it up against studies they are doing? Why can't an industry group, why can't an environmental group, why can't an academic group, why can't someone who just really likes statistics?

What you are basically saying is all information, all knowledge, is housed in a tiny population and the rest of the world be damned.

There is a crowdsourcing concept of refining, and here is where I am fascinated that the left hasn't caught on. This bill, this piece of legislation may come back to us and say: EPA, you are actually not doing enough.

It could actually come back and say: When we make the data public, when we bounce it up against other data sources, when we do other latitudinal studies, we may find we are not doing enough. We may find there is a much better way to do a regulation set.

I would think, actually, in the modern world, where we know information is providing us so many opportunities, why aren't we embracing that? Why has that become partisan?

□ 1315

There are actually also a couple of other things that have been said from behind the microphone across the aisle that we need to, one more time, restate honestly.

What if a data set is provided by industry?

One of the biggest complaints in the past said, Well, if a Republican President had a Republican EPA and they used industry data to set up a reg—guess what? That falls under this same piece of legislation. That also is disclosed. All data that is used to create public policy is public.

Why does this terrify the left so much, public policy by public data and public data by public policy, and then the opportunity for everyone who takes an interest in this to be able to refine it and make it better and make it more efficient and more healthy for our families, for our environment, for our economy, instead of a small, arrogant population controlling all knowledge and all information?

The CHAIR. The Chair will remind Members to address their remarks to the Chair.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to close, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have no further requests for time, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I would like to thank Science Committee member and Environment Subcommittee Chairman DAVID SCHWEIKERT for his great efforts on this particular subject. Our goal is to help advance not just any science, but the best science.

Costly environmental regulations should only be based upon data that is available to independent scientists and the public and that can be verified. H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act of 2015, gives independent scientists an opportunity to validate the studies EPA uses to make new regulations.

In 2012, the President's own science adviser testified that, ''absolutely, the data on which regulatory decisions are based should be made available to the committee and should be made public.''

The chair of EPA's Science Advisory Board testified that EPA's advisers recommend ''that literature and data used by EPA be peer reviewed and be made available to the public.''

Let me repeat. The chair of EPA's own Science Advisory Board said the data EPA relies upon should be public.

And a recent poll from the Institute for Energy Research found that 90 percent of Americans agree that studies and data used to make Federal Government decisions should be public.

Relying on public data prevents the manipulation of scientific evidence. So this bill is no different from any other sunshine law, such as the Freedom of Information Act.

It doesn't roll back the laws that protect the air we breathe and the water we drink; it simply requires the EPA to use the best available science when it makes new regulations.

In other words, the EPA should rely upon good science, not science fiction.

The bill does not change or repeal critical privacy laws that prevent the EPA from releasing confidential information. It does not give the EPA any new authority to take private information and make it public. In fact, it prohibits that.

In a democratic society, regulations should not be based upon undisclosed data. Maybe in Putin's Russia, but not in the United States of America. Undisclosed data rightfully raises a lot of suspicions.

Actually, this bill is more than just about data. It is about an agency that apparently doesn't trust the American people. The EPA thinks it knows better than the American people what is good for them.

It is time to change that mindset. It is time to restore faith in our government and return the power to the people. It is time for honesty, and it is past time to ensure that the EPA bases their regulations on data that is public. The American people deserve to see the data.

Let us not forget the President also asked for this. H.R. 1030 ensures the speedy implementation of President Obama's Executive Order 13536, to give the public access to federally funded science.

This bill supports the administration's commitment to open science, but now they threaten to veto it. It makes you wonder what the administration is

trying to hide and whether you can believe what they say.

If you support this administration's promise to be the most transparent in history and want to make the EPA's data public, then support H.R. 1030.

Mr. Chairman, finally, there are three questions that those who are opposed either can't answer or won't answer:

One, what is the EPA hiding?

Two, why won't they make the data public?

And three, why doesn't the EPA trust the American people?

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.

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 114–11. 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. 1030

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 ''Secret Science Reform Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. DATA TRANSPARENCY.

Section 6(b) of the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 (42 U.S.C. 4363 note) is amended to read as follows:

''(b)(1) The Administrator shall not propose, finalize, or disseminate a covered action unless all scientific and technical information relied on to support such covered action is—

''(A) the best available science;

''(B) specifically identified; and

''(C) publicly available online in a manner that is sufficient for independent analysis and substantial reproduction of research results.

''(2) Nothing in the subsection shall be construed as—

''(A) requiring the Administrator to disseminate scientific and technical information; or

''(B) superseding any nondiscretionary statutory requirement.

''(3) In this subsection—

''(A) the term 'covered action' means a risk, exposure, or hazard assessment, criteria document, standard, limitation, regulation, regulatory impact analysis, or guidance; and

''(B) the term 'scientific and technical information' includes—

''(i) materials, data, and associated protocols necessary to understand, assess, and extend conclusions;

''(ii) computer codes and models involved in the creation and analysis of such information;

''(iii) recorded factual materials; and

''(iv) detailed descriptions of how to access and use such information.

''(4) The Administrator shall carry out this subsection in a manner that does not exceed $1,000,000 per fiscal year, to be derived from amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated.''.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be order except those printed in part B of House Report 114–37. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, 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 MS. EDWARDS

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

Ms. EDWARDS. 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 2, lines 21 through 24, amend paragraph (4) to read as follows:

''(4) There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator to carry out this subsection $250,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2019.''.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 138, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 1030, the so-called Secret Science Reform Act.

Let me just say first that I am opposed to the bill and the underlying premise that there is not good science, good research, and good data being gathered by the EPA.

Unfortunately, this bill would force the EPA to choose between protecting our health and environment and maintaining the privacy of patient medical records and the confidentiality of business records.

But my amendment highlights one issue that, to me, makes a mockery of this entire effort. The bill, as written, currently gives the EPA only $1 million per year to carry out the provisions in the bill.

It wouldn't be so bad except that the Congressional Budget Office estimates the cost of the bill to be $250 million per year to implement the bill.

I know, Mr. Chairman, that you perhaps think that you did not hear me correctly. But to put this disparity in some perspective, the Congressional Budget Office is estimating that implementing this bill would cost 25,000 percent more than the majority is providing.

Now I understand why the majority is doing this. They don't want to pass legislation that costs anything to implement. It wouldn't be fiscally conservative.

Now, I am not a math major, but simple math tells me that if a bill is $1 million in the text but costs $250 million to implement, you are asking the EPA to undertake $250 million of work with $1 million—not exactly fiscally or legislatively conservative or sound.

More importantly, it forces the Agency into an untenable position. They must either ignore the requirements of this legislation because the majority isn't providing them with the resources to carry them out, or they can comply with the requirements for—and Mr. Chairman, hold your breath—they could comply with the requirements for 1½ days. That is what the funding would allow: $1 million, 1½ days, and then shut down all of the covered actions under the bill.

So I know we think it might be laughable, except that it is true. But if the majority really believes in the premise behind this legislation, which I do not, then the majority should provide the Agency with the $250 million annually that, at a minimum, the Agency would need to carry out this bill.

Those are not my estimates. Those are the estimates of the independent Congressional Budget Office.

I am opposed to the bill for a number of reasons, and most likely, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would disagree with me on those points. However, I have a hard time believing that any responsible Member of Congress who supports fiscal conservatism would consciously support a bill that is guaranteed, absolutely guaranteed to cause failure.

So I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and not allow this bill to move forward with an unfunded mandate to the Agency.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I do thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Maryland, for her amendment, but I must oppose it.

This amendment would allow the Environmental Protection Agency to continue its practice of hiding data from the American people.

This amendment is based upon what appears to be a misreading of the bill that has resulted in an inaccurate score by the Congressional Budget Office. In fact, the statutory language directly contradicts the CBO's analysis, and here is why.

For its analysis, CBO assumed that the bill requires the EPA to collect and disseminate the underlying data of the science it relies upon. Through some unknown calculation, CBO then came up with a $250 million price tag for the collection and dissemination of the data.

However, the bill does not require the collection and dissemination of information. It simply says that the EPA must use data that is public and available to independent scientists.

The bill itself states that there is no requirement for the EPA to disseminate scientific and technical information. Again, I urge my colleagues to read the bill.

So let me say it again. This bill does not require the EPA to disseminate information. It simply says that, when the EPA decides to regulate, it needs to rely on the best available science that is publicly available for independent verification and review.

So the CBO is way off base—not for the first time—and, therefore, so is this amendment.

CBO's cost estimate also contradicts the clear statutory bill language, which reads: ''The Administrator shall carry out this subsection in a manner that does not exceed $1 million per fiscal year to be derived from amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated.''

When the CBO says that under this legislation the EPA will have to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to collect and disseminate new data, that is clearly inconsistent with the language and intent of the bill. So the CBO's cost estimate is meaningless.

But let's assume that the EPA decides it must collect and disseminate the data itself. EPA has an $8 billion budget. It spends more than $20 million of taxpayer money every day to issue regulations that cost taxpayers tens of billions of dollars every year. And the President has asked Congress for an increase of $50 million for the Agency this year.

Surely the EPA can base its rules on science that is transparent and available to everyone, and do it with funds from its already massive budget. A Federal agency that spends over $8 billion a year in taxpayer money should be able to afford to honor the public's right to know.

This amendment would allow the EPA to continue business as usual and would ignore congressional intent and statutory language. For these reasons, I oppose the amendment.

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

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Chairman, so we know that the EPA's jurisdiction is to make sure that we have clean water and clean air. That is sort of the basics of it.

And now we are hearing from the majority, Mr. Chairman, that not only do they not believe the science and they think it is secret, they also don't believe the Congressional Budget Office.

But for the fact that we cannot pick and choose which numbers we believe out of the Congressional Budget Office, the fact is that the Congressional Budget Office, not just this year but in the last term as well, said that this bill would cost American taxpayers $250 million if the Agency were implementing it according to the legislative language. So I don't think that the majority should be allowed to pick and choose its science or pick and choose its numbers.

The Congressional Budget Office, in fact, has said that this bill would cost $250 million to implement, more than 25,000 times the amount that is authorized in the language, and I think it is unacceptable for us to just denigrate the EPA, say that it is engaged in secret science, and then tell them that we want you to implement a bill without providing the resources that it takes to do it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), my colleague and the ranking Democrat on the committee.

□ 1330

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, I want to thank the gentlelady, and I fully support her amendment.

EPA normally relies upon approximately 50,000 scientific studies each year to support these actions. The Congressional Budget Office estimated that if EPA were to cut the amount of studies they considered in half, it would still cost the Agency roughly $250 million annually to comply with this legislation.

This bill will effectively require EPA to pay more in order to do less, yet my colleagues are only providing EPA with $1 million annually to comply with the provisions of this bill.

This forces EPA into a lose-lose situation. Either drastically limit the amount of science used to protect the public health and the environment or spend hundreds of millions of dollars per year ensuring that the job is done right.

I think this legislation is seriously misguided.

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Chairman I really don't know why it is so difficult to read this bill. It is only two pages long. And those who are concerned about the cost ought to recognize—or I hope they have realized and seen—that the bill this year reads differently than the bill last year.

And what I would like to do is read to those who are opposed who raised the cost issue. Look at lines 17 and 18 of page 1 and lines 1 and 2 of page 2. They read as follows: ''Nothing in the subsection shall be construed as requiring the Administrator to disseminate scientific and technical information.''

I hope that allays their concerns. But it is always nice to hear my colleagues on the other side of the aisle so concerned about the cost of legislation.

Mr. Chairman, contrary to the CBO estimate, H.R. 1030 does not require the EPA to disseminate information. It requires the EPA to base their regulations on data that is public so that all Americans are better informed about the regulations that affect their daily lives.

Americans deserve all the facts, and they deserve all the data. They have the right to know if the regulations they are forced to live under are justified by sound science.

The EPA spends over $8 billion a year. Surely it can base its rules on science that is transparent and available to everyone.

For these reasons, I oppose the amendment.

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

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS).

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

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

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

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. KENNEDY

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

Mr. KENNEDY. 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:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 3. ENSURING THE USE OF THE BEST SCIENCE.

Nothing in this Act shall prevent the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from considering or relying upon any peer-reviewed scientific publication even if such publication is based on data that is prohibited from public disclosure.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 4 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I echo the comments of my colleagues about the importance of transparency that we have heard over the course of this debate. An open government with transparent rules and regulations is at the very core of our democracy. But I am discouraged and disappointed that we are having this debate yet again, especially on a bill that undermines science even more dramatically than last year's version.

When this country's greatest minds come together to tackle our greatest problems, we are a stronger nation. Whether we are talking about achievements in cancer treatment or clean water, science makes us healthier, more innovative, and more competitive. Unfortunately, the bill we are considering today takes science off the table for the EPA, the very Agency entrusted with keeping our air clean, our water safe, and our homes clear of toxic substances.

The bill before us leaves EPA with unworkable standards, prohibiting it from using certain studies simply because they include information that, by law, cannot be made public, such as people's personal health records.

My amendment does a very simple thing. It fixes that oversight by clarifying that the EPA should use the most

reliable scientific information available, regardless of whether that can be publicly disclosed.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the EPA relies on about 50,000 scientific studies every year. As written, H.R. 1030 would drastically shrink this number. The bill before us could even prohibit the EPA from using other government-funded research, like NIH studies that link toxic substances to premature births or CDC research on mitigating the impact of natural disasters on public health.

Furthermore, there are several protections in place already to ensure the science the EPA uses is properly vetted and credited. First, any and all studies go through a significant peer review process, including an independent analysis. Second, Mr. Chairman, the Office of Science and Technology Policy is already working to ensure that all publicly funded research is available online. Third, public comment periods allow for anyone, an individual or organization, to submit evidence supporting or opposing a proposed regulation. However, this bill would actually put limits on the public comment period.

Mr. Chairman, this legislation jeopardizes our clean air, our clean water, and the health of our families. I urge the House to accept my amendment to clarify that the EPA may use the most reliable science available.

I would also like to thank my colleagues from Massachusetts, Congressman JIM MCGOVERN and KATHERINE CLARK, and the ranking member of the committee for their support of this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I want to thank my colleague and friend from Massachusetts for offering this amendment, but I must oppose it.

The gentleman's amendment implies that the bill does something that, in fact, it does not. The amendment also creates a loophole the EPA Administrator could easily exploit.

First, by stating that nothing in the act prevents the EPA from considering or relying upon peer reviewed science, the amendment appears to imply that the bill would do otherwise. This is simply not true.

The EPA, through its implementation of the Information Quality Act, is already required to rely on peer reviewed information. Nothing in this legislation changes that.

What this bill would accomplish—and what the gentleman's amendment would undermine—is to ensure that the science the EPA relies upon is publicly available and verifiable.

Independent scientists don't have an opportunity to examine the assumptions and methodologies that EPA relies upon when it makes public regulations. It is time for the EPA to show its work and come out into the daylight. Peer review alone is not a sufficient check. Peer reviewers are not always provided the underlying data, and the quality of peer review is highly variable.

The simple premise behind H.R. 1030 is that public policy should be backed up by public data. Peer review alone does not allow independent scientists to verify the EPA's claims.

This amendment would destroy the purpose of the bill and provide the EPA Administrator with permission to disregard the basic principles of transparency and accountability that are provided by H.R. 1030. For these reasons, I oppose the amendment.

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Chairman, if I could inquire into the time that I have remaining.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by thanking the chairman of the committee, my friend from Texas, for his friendship and for the work that he has been doing. I know that we share the same goal of having a transparent government and a transparent enforcement mechanism. Unfortunately, I think he and I have come to disagree on the underlying impact of my amendment and the underlying bill itself.

The EPA—the goal of this amendment is to make sure that they are able to rely on the most sound, reliable information available. We heard from the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS), my colleague, earlier that there are already constraints put in place by this legislation that limit the EPA from doing so should this bill pass.

My amendment takes up that same challenge and tries to make sure that when we are making rules and regulations that are going to impact our society that we are using the best data that is available. All of that data and all of those studies must be peer reviewed. There is a process which the EPA goes through that is publicly available and not actually under any sort of challenge because the underlying bill here doesn't say that that peer review process is flawed.

So if we take it as given, then, that that peer review process is sound and is strong and can be relied upon, then the issue is the underlying data. And what we have seen here is an effort to try to ensure that, yes, the analysis and the method for the inquiry is actually available, but the underlying data that can contain people's personal health records, that can contain personally identifiable information is kept private to not expose people to the dissemination of data that they never even knew was going to be publicly available.

That is the sole point of this amendment: to ensure that our government is using information for the highest and best use as we promulgate rules and regulations that are going to impact the American people—nothing less, nothing more.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, let me just say to my friend from Massachusetts that I appreciate his comments and his friendship as well. While we agree on many things, we do happen to disagree on this one amendment.

Let me also say that I wish he was still a member of the Science Committee, and he would be welcomed back any time.

Mr. Chairman, the gentleman's amendment would allow the EPA to continue to hide the data it says justifies its regulations.

Peer review does not allow independent scientists to verify the EPA's claims. It is not a sufficient check to ensure that the EPA uses the best science available.

H.R. 1030 promotes the fundamental principles of transparency and accountability. This amendment would make it harder to achieve that goal.

Giving independent scientists an opportunity to examine the data that the EPA relies upon when it makes public regulations will ensure transparency and accountability.

Public policy should be backed up by public data. Peer review alone will not give the American people all the facts.

Americans deserve access to this data. They have the right to know if the regulations paid for with their tax dollars are based upon the best science available.

For these reasons, I oppose the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY).

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

Mr. KENNEDY. 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 Massachusetts will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part B of House Report 114–37 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. EDWARDS

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes 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 164, noes 254, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 122]

AYES—164

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
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
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—254

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
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
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duckworth
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
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Quigley
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
Ruiz
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
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
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—14

Fudge
Graves (MO)
Hinojosa
Hurd (TX)
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
Luetkemeyer
Payne
Roskam
Sanchez, Loretta
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Young (IN)

□ 1408

Messrs. FLORES, DUFFY, WALBERG, ABRAHAM, MILLER of Florida, WALZ, and YOUNG of Alaska changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. TORRES, and Messrs. ISRAEL and PASCRELL changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 122 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. KENNEDY

The CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes 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 CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 184, noes 231, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 123]

AYES—184

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)
Cartwright
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)
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, 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
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
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

NOES—231

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
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Griffith
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
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
Sanford
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 (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—17

Ashford
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Graves (MO)
Grothman
Hinojosa
Holding
Kaptur
Loudermilk
Palazzo
Payne
Roskam
Sanchez, Loretta
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Young (IN)

□ 1412

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 123 I was detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 123 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) having assumed the chair, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, 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. 1030) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from proposing, finalizing, or disseminating regulations or assessments based upon science that is not transparent or reproducible, 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.

The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute.

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. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. TAKAI. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Takai moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1030 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. 3. PROTECTING TAXPAYERS FROM SCIENCE PROMOTED BY POLLUTING COMPANIES.

Under the amendment made by section 2, the Environmental Protection Agency shall not rely on advice from any scientist whose primary source of research funds 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. SCHWEIKERT (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk continued to read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Hawaii is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. TAKAI. 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 would immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment is simple. It would prohibit the EPA from relying on advice from any scientist whose primary source of research funding comes from corporations or individuals convicted of major environmental crimes. The Democratic motion to recommit would help ensure the integrity and the independence of the EPA's scientific review process by prohibiting the reliance on advice from those who are funded by the biggest abusers of our environment.

H.R. 1030, the Secret Science Reform Act, would impose arbitrary, unnecessary, and expensive requirements that would seriously impede the 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. This bill would stack the cards in favor of industry-backed data studies rather than the most reliable studies. In doing so, it will prevent the EPA from using the best data possible to make decisions.

Think about 50 years of tobacco-backed studies that lied about the effects of cigarette smoking in order to avoid labeling, regulation, and fines. That is the type of data that this bill wants the EPA to rely on to make decisions about our environment—industry-backed data that shifts the favor to polluters, climate deniers, and those who do not have the best interests of public health and our environment in mind. This amendment would make sure that this data does not come from corporations or individuals who show disregard for our environmental laws, which is the main reason the EPA exists in the first place.

Consequences of H.R. 1030 could include the public release of industry-funded studies and data intended to bias the body of scientific evidence that the EPA is allowed to consider towards a particular industry position. For example, research that shows arsenic, mercury, or benzene is not bad for you could be in the majority of studies the EPA is allowed to base its recommendations and regulations on.

Unfortunately, Republicans will claim that this bill increases the EPA's transparency and accountability by ensuring that its regulations are based on public data that can be verified and reproduced. In reality, this bill would prevent the EPA from functioning effectively and from using the most relevant scientific data, including data that is legally protected from public disclosure.

An effort to limit the scope of science that can be considered by the EPA does not strengthen scientific integrity but undermines it. The EPA relies on peer reviewed scientific research from our universities as the backbone of its mission to protect public health and our environment. This amendment ensures that this data does not come from sources that routinely break our environmental laws. Because clinicians and researchers are legally prohibited from making the data publicly available, if this bill becomes law, the EPA would be forced to ignore this valuable research when protecting the public.

At no point does this bill make the public safer, which is the fundamental function of government. The Secret Science Reform Act would only reduce the science available to the EPA on some of the most important decisions it makes.

Mr. Speaker, over 30 of the most respected groups that are dedicated to scientific and health research have opposed this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same. However, before doing so, I urge my colleagues to vote for this commonsense amendment to this bill.

Again, all this amendment does is prohibit the EPA from relying on advice from any scientist whose primary source of research funding comes from corporations or individuals convicted of major environmental crimes. This ensures the integrity and independence of the EPA's scientific review process by prohibiting advice from those who are funded by the biggest abusers of our environment.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Democratic motion to recommit, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. 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. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, to the gentleman from Hawaii, whom I have not actually had the chance to make friends with yet, you are actually hitting on one really good point: If there is data being used by bad actors, shouldn't we all know it?

The way the EPA operates right now with their keeping their data sets secret, none of you are going to get to know that. That is actually what this piece of legislation fixes. If there is going to be data of groups that are bad actors—industries that you consider dodgy—wouldn't it be a wonderful thing to have that data available for everyone, whether you be on the right or whether you be on the left, so it can be refined by sunshine? so it can be reviewed and meshed up against other data sets?

If you believe that making information public refines it, if you believe public policy should be made by public data and public data should be available in the making of public policy, you like this piece of legislation.

What is so fascinating in the debate we have had this time and last year is that I have a number of memos, demand letters, threats of subpoenas from when the left in this body was in both the majority and the minority, but there was a Republican President who was demanding this type of legislation. Let's try something new around here: a little bit of intellectual consistency.

Do you believe the public—the researchers, the scientists, those who are academics, those who just have an interest in the subject area—should have the right to touch the data, to model it, to stress it, to put it up against other data sets and see if we are doing what is best for our environment? Are we doing it the best way? Is there a better way? Is there a more efficient way? Is there a more cost-effective way? That is what this bill accomplishes, and I have no idea why my brothers and sisters on the left are so fearful of that.

As I yield back, I beg all of my fellow Members here to vote ''yes'' on this legislation but to vote ''no'' on this motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, 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. TAKAI. 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 181, noes 239, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 124]

AYES—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
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)
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.
Jones
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
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
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

NOES—239

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
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
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
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema

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 (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—12

Castor (FL)
Fudge
Graves (MO)
Hinojosa
Kaptur
Payne
Roskam
Sanchez, Loretta
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Young (IN)

□ 1432

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. 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 241, noes 175, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 125]

AYES—241

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
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
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
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
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
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
Sanford
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
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
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)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
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)
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, 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
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
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
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Fudge
Graves (MO)
Himes
Hinojosa
Kaptur
Pascrell
Payne
Peters
Roskam
Sanchez, Loretta
Schock
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Van Hollen
Walker
Young (IN)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1439

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 125 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Stated against:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, on March 18, 2015, I was unavoidably detained and missed one vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 125.

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present to cast my vote on passage of H.R. 1030—The Secret Science Reform Act. I wish the record to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote. Had I been present for rollcall No. 125, I would have voted "no."

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

There was no objection.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, as a third-generation farmer from Washington State, I am amazed by the level of progress our Nation's agricultural community has made, even in just my lifetime. It is because of this great progress that today we celebrate March 18 as National Agriculture Day.

Few people realize that during the 1960s the average American farmer fed 25 people. Today it is 144 people. The difference is that today our farmers are growing more disease- and pest-resistant crops that require less water and pesticides and better conserve our natural resources. Advancements in technology and technique have allowed our farmers to continue the long-held tradition of caring for the land they use and the people they grow for.

On National Agriculture Day, please join me in recognizing our farming community and the essential role they continue to fill in feeding our Nation and the world.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DR. WILLIAM E. "BRIT" KIRWAN UPON HIS RETIREMENT AS CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND

(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 rise to pay tribute to one of our Nation's greatest higher education leaders and a great advocate for accessible quality higher education. He is a dear friend and a colleague of mine for the last 40 years.

On June 30, Dr. William E. ''Brit'' Kirwan will retire after 12 years as chancellor of the University System of Maryland. Under his leadership, the University System has transformed from being a national leader in public higher education into a national model in several areas; these include campus diversity, academic innovation, and efforts to close the achievement gap.

There is, of course, a lot I could say, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues about Dr. Kirwan's distinguished career and commitment to improving higher education across the country.

Mr. Speaker, on June 30, Dr. William E. ''Brit'' Kirwan, who has served as chancellor of the University System of Maryland (USM) for more than twelve years, will retire after a career dedicated to advancing higher education.

Dr. Kirwan has left his mark on academia and the State of Maryland in a way few others have. After a quarter-century as an educator and administrator at the University of Maryland, he was President of the University of Maryland, College Park, before serving as President of The Ohio State University. Later, he returned to Maryland to assume the position of USM Chancellor. Common threads throughout his fifty-one-year career in public higher education include an unwavering commitment to affordability, a passion for excellence, and a drive to increase access, especially for underrepresented minorities and low-income students.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kirwan's leadership has helped move the USM from a national leader in public higher education to a national model in several areas. The USM's groundbreaking Effectiveness and Efficiency (E&E) initiative—a reengineering of administrative and academic processes to cut costs and improve quality—has been profiled in national publications and specifically cited by President Obama. The ''Closing the Achievement Gap'' Initiative, which USM launched in 2007, targets the gap in college participation, retention, and graduation rates between low-income students, first-generation college students, and underrepresented minorities, on one hand, and the general student population on the other. With this enhanced focus, these gaps in diversity have been narrowed—and even eliminated—on some USM campuses.

As President of the University of Maryland, College Park, Dr. Kirwan helped make that institution one of the most diverse public research universities in the United States. As President of The Ohio State University, he made diversity a centerpiece of the University's Academic Plan. When he left Ohio State in 2002, the University added his name to its interdisciplinary research institute dedicated to understanding racial and ethnic disparities worldwide, now known as the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

Dr. Kirwan's effort to establish a productive working relationship with Maryland's elected officials is another testament to his leadership. By aligning higher education goals with state priorities, the USM has ushered in an era of academic and research excellence, targeted workforce development, greater economic impact, and improved affordability. In fact, the average tuition for undergraduate in-state students at USM institutions, once the nation's seventh highest, has now dropped to twenty-sixth.

With the launch of its Course Redesign Initiative in 2006, the USM became the first university system in the nation to use innovative new technology to redesign entire courses. To facilitate academic transformation and excellence even further, in 2012 the USM established the Center for Academic Innovation (CAI) to develop, apply, and evaluate more ways to deliver high-quality courses optimizing technology and other resources system-wide. Today the USM is recognized as a national leader in the burgeoning academic innovation movement.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kirwan's impact has also been felt beyond Maryland's borders. He currently serves or has served as Co-Chair of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics; Chair of the College Board's Commission on Access, Admissions, and Success in Higher Education; a member of the Business-Higher Education Forum, and Chair of the National Research Council Board of Higher Education and the Workforce. Dr. Kirwan has also been called upon by U.S. Presidents from both parties to advise on national higher education efforts. His impact on higher education has been honored with two of the most prestigious awards in the field: the TIAA–CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership (2010) and the Carnegie Corporation Leadership Award (2009).

Under Dr. Kirwan's leadership the USM has flourished, and his lifetime of achievement and service will be celebrated on April 18 at a special retirement gala that will raise endowment funds for the Center for Academic Innovation, which promises to continue exploring the themes of access, affordability, and excellence in higher education that have been hallmarks of his career.

I hope my colleagues in the House will join me in thanking Dr. Kirwan for fifty-one years of service to higher education in our country and congratulating him on his retirement.

□ 1445

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, March is Women's History Month, which honors and celebrates the struggles and achievements of American women throughout the history of the United States.

Since 1917, when Republican Representative Jeannette Rankin of Montana became the first woman to serve in Congress, 313 women have served as U.S. Representatives, Senators, or Delegates.

In 2014, the American people made history by electing a record number of women to Congress. In January, 12 new women were sworn in to the House of Representatives, joining 72 incumbents who won reelection. The number of women serving in the Senate has reached 20, and four of the five nonvoting Delegates are women.

These women with rich perspectives and a commitment to good ideas and teamwork are changing the way Washington does business. The women of the 114th Congress are shaping our Nation, and it is an opportunity and responsibility that we take seriously.

HONORING NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND MAYOR JEAN STOTHERT

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

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observation of National Women's History Month. During this time, it is important to celebrate the achievements and contributions of women in our great Nation.

I am proud to recognize my friend, Mayor Jean Stothert, the 51st mayor of the great city of Omaha, Nebraska, and the first woman elected to this office.

In 1993, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Stothert moved to Nebraska, quickly embracing her new home. Her advocacy garnered an appointment to the Millard school board, a position to which she was reelected three times.

Expanding her passion for service, she sought and won election to the Omaha City Council in 2009. With a strong work ethic and ambition, Mayor Stothert was elected mayor of the city of Omaha on May 14, 2013.

An illustration by our very famous editorial cartoonist Jeff Koterba of the Omaha World-Herald portrays Mayor Stothert breaking the proverbial glass ceiling in Omaha.

Good for her—she represents a phalanx of women in Omaha who are taking leadership positions in our community and in our State.

WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

(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, yesterday, the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy, and Forestry, which I chair, held a hearing to review the definition of the ''waters of the United States'' proposed rule and its impact on rural America.

Enacted in 1972, the Clean Water Act established a Federal-State partnership to protect our Nation's navigable waterways; however, despite strong opposition from Congress and the public, the Obama administration has taken upon itself to redefine the Clean Water Act's jurisdictional waters. The EPA's proposed rule could have serious consequences for rural America and the Nation's economy.

Yesterday, members of the House Committee on Agriculture asserted that the administration has acted on its own, without input from the States and stakeholders, to broaden the scope of the Clean Water Act, threatening the livelihood of farmers, ranchers, and rural America.

It is my hope that yesterday's hearing will spur the administration to pull

the rule and consult with the States and stakeholders first or repropose the rule and allow a new round of public comment.

Mr. Speaker, there is too much on the line to continue down the current path.

ADDRESSING THE WEALTH GAP

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I have introduced the addressing the wealth gap resolution which calls on Congress to recognize the wealth gap and the racial wealth gap as national economic crises and focus its efforts on their elimination.

This country is facing the widest wealth gap since 1983. The statistics are alarming. Wealthy families make nearly seven times as much as middle class families and 70 times as much as lower class families. African Americans have 13 times and Latinos have 10 times less wealth than White households. White households have $100,000 more in retirement savings than African Americans and Latinos.

The cause of the record-level wealth gap stems from a structural crisis that started well before the Great Recession. The recession hit, and the housing market collapsed and made everything worse.

In the aftermath, middle-income families and people of color have had to endure income inequality, slow wage growth, skyrocketing student loans, and continued unequal access to quality education and barriers to the housing market. These are problems that widened the gap and require Congress to implement pragmatic solutions.

We cannot sit idly by and expect things to change. This is why I am introducing the addressing the wealth gap resolution. The first step to resolving this problem is acknowledging that it exists, and I encourage all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join and focus on the goal of rebuilding wealth in America.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KATKO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am here today representing the Congressional Progressive Caucus and to discuss our budget, the people's budget. I pray that I am not the only one that is speaking for the 60 minutes allotted.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives released their budget proposal. Although they have a new chairman, they are following the same game plan: privatize Medicare, slash spending on safety net programs, and hope that tax cuts for the rich trickle down from top earners to the rest of the country.

That is not what the American people need. They need a plan that levels the playing field, that gives them an opportunity to succeed, and puts their interests above the interests of corporations and the wealthy. They need a budget that is of the people, by the people, and for the people. That is what we are offering in the people's budget.

If you need a way to pay for affordable child care while you are at your job, we have got it in the people's budget. If you need access to quality education for your children, teachers that are trained to give them the knowledge they need to be great, we have got it in the people's budget.

If you worked hard to get into college but now need a way to pay for your tuition, we have got it in the people's budget. If you can't make ends meet, if the pay you take home barely keeps a roof over your head and you are making important choices between food and shelter and you are looking for a livable wage, we have got it in the people's budget.

Mr. Speaker, in the hands of the GOP, this Congress has offered tax break after tax break after tax break after tax break for corporations and billionaires while cutting the very programs that working Americans rely on to pull themselves up the economic ladder that has given generations of American families access to the middle class.

If anyone deserves a tax cut, it is not millionaires. It is the folks that are loading the trucks, the folks that are scanning the groceries, the folks that are cleaning the office buildings, the folks that are working as clerks, the folks that are working as secretaries, and the folks that are doing the important service jobs that our society so needs.

The people's budget would invest in priorities that will keep the American people strong, just for everyone. It offers jobs that will restore our middle class. It addresses our Nation's most pressing challenges, issues like climate change, aging transportation infrastructure, access to education at every level, and good-paying jobs.

This, Mr. Speaker, is about restoring Congress' commitment to serving hardworking Americans who are playing by the rules but still not getting ahead. This, Mr. Speaker, is about the lives that regular Americans are able to live.

Some say that it is not hard to find any old job and get a paycheck, but does that job offer a high enough wage or enough hours to pay the rent? Can you take time off for illness or to take care of your kids? Do you know that you will have enough to pay for child care while you are at the job? Do you have health insurance in the event that you need it?

My Congressional Progressive Caucus colleagues and I think that taxpaying Americans deserve to confidently answer ''yes'' to all of these questions, and that is what we are fighting for.

Today, we were given the distinct opportunity to present tenets of our budget to a group of interested people—everyday working people—people who are working for decent-paying jobs.

They are not looking for handouts. They are looking for recognition that they are part of this American Dream, and it is our responsibility to ensure that we are not impediments, but that we are facilitators of that American Dream for everyone.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the chairman of the Progressive Caucus, Congressman ELLISON.

Mr. ELLISON. Let me thank the gentlewoman for yielding, the Congresswoman from New Jersey, BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN.

As I said earlier today, BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN may have just got sworn in as a Member of Congress a few months ago, but she is no stranger to fighting for people.

That was on full display when she spoke at a rollout of our Progressive Caucus budget where she talked about how you can look at any aspect of the Progressive Caucus budget and you will find the same thing in every place: prioritizing people, making sure people can get their needs met in this government, making sure that workers can get access to a job, making sure that people who are sick but who are working can actually get a sick day so that they don't bring that sickness back to their workplace and don't have to abandon their children that might be sick, too.

You pointed out, Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, the fact is that job creation should be the primary metric of any budget. How are we doing putting people back to work in good jobs? How are we helping take care of them while they are on the job? If they are sick, can they take time off? How are we educating people? You focused on the key elements of the Progressive Caucus budget, and I was proud to hear you do it.

The fact is this is our fifth budget that we have put out. It is a budget that is about working people. That is why we call it the people's budget. We urge people to check out the people's budget online at the Congressional Progressive Caucus Web site.

Let me name a few things about the Progressive Caucus budget that are important to highlight. It creates 8.4 million good-paying jobs by 2018.

Now, you just take the Republican budget that was put out yesterday. It was interesting to me that none of my Republican colleagues wanted to tout how many jobs their budget would create, how many jobs the economists—after looking at the Republican budget proposed—would create because that is not what they consider to be a priority;

but it is a priority to the Progressive Caucus budget. Our priority is 8.4 million good-paying jobs investing in America, making sure Americans are working again.

Now, you might correctly ask: How are you going to get all these jobs? One way we are going to get the jobs is we are going to invest $820 billion to repair America's rapidly aging roads and bridges and upgrade our energy systems to address climate change, keep our communities safe, and prepare for the next generation to thrive in our society and workforce.

I would like to share with the Speaker that I come from a town—Minneapolis, Minnesota—where, 6 years ago, the I–35 bridge fell into the Mississippi River because we had not taken care of it. We had not done adequate maintenance on this bridge.

Thirteen people died when that bridge fell. They were Black. They were White. They were wealthy. They were low income. They were born in America. They were born abroad. They were America. That is who lost their lives on that bridge, and 100 more people got injured.

This Progressive Caucus investment in infrastructure repair is not just a job creator and a productivity increaser; it is public safety to have decent, safe infrastructure. I am very proud of that.

We also provide $945 million to help States and municipalities hire police, firefighters, health care workers, teachers, librarians, and other public employees.

Mr. Speaker, I have got to tell you, I met with my chiefs of police in the Fifth Congressional District about a week ago. Of course, all of us here tonight represent more than one city.

I met with the chiefs of police—I am very proud to represent a city where law enforcement is dedicated—and they were asking me: What's going on with the Byrne grants? What's going on with the JAG grants? What's going on with the COPS grants? These things that have helped us be a better police department have shrunk. Our ability to protect the public is weakened by our limited resources.

□ 1500

Well, we are going to do something about that. We are going to rehire teachers. So if you have got a teacher with 30 second graders in the classroom trying to keep up with all of them, we can hire a teacher's aide who might be able to actually help that teacher do what that teacher does most effectively.

We put $1.9 trillion in America's future by investing in the working families. This restores and enhances funding for vital programs that Americans rely on, like SNAP, like food, nutrition, so that young people can be in the classroom and can be fully fed and ready to learn.

So these are just a few things about the Progressive Caucus budget. But I wonder if the gentlewoman from New Jersey or the gentlewoman from Michigan will yield to a question.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. ELLISON. Should a budget be a moral document which lists the priorities of the Nation?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to respond to that question, Congressman.

As a State legislator, I spent many years in appropriations and on the budget committee, and I came to realize that there is no other document that represents the values and the priorities of the governing entity than the budget statement.

So where we put our money is where we think our interests lie; where we put our money represents our priorities; where we put our money represents our values. And that is one of the major reasons that I am just so proud to be associated with the people's budget as crafted by the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Thank you for giving me that opportunity.

Mr. ELLISON. Will the gentlewoman yield for another question?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. ELLISON. So the Progressive Caucus budget was not just written by members of the Progressive Caucus. We didn't just sit in a room and write up a budget. We actually pulled in our partners, like the Economic Policy Institute, labor.

How important were our progressive partners in pulling our budget together?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Well, I certainly would like to yield to the gentlelady from Michigan. I just simply want to say that the associations, the affiliations, and the organizations that you identified just very quickly represent the interests of working class people, represent the interests of those who wish to be part of the middle class, and represent those individuals who are responsible for the standards that we have that protect people in the working environment, that protect jobs here in America, and that protect the aspirations and hopefulness of those who recognize that things like public education are great equalizers.

Congressman, I would very much appreciate the opportunity to yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan, my classmate and my friend, Congresswoman BRENDA LAWRENCE.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, and to my colleagues, thank you for yielding.

I am here today to speak in my support for the Congressional Progressive Caucus alternative budget and their fight for greater access to affordable housing.

As you know, I was previously a mayor, and the quality of life in America is determined by our housing options, and the CPC budget acknowledges that.

We have an affordable housing crisis. Only one in four families eligible for housing assistance receive it. There is a shortage of low-income apartments and rental homes that are affordable in low-income households.

We have seen the results of sequestration taking housing assistance from 70,000 families, and the CPC budget moves us from trying to preserve existing affordable housing to making significant improvements and investments in new production.

When you are an elected official or a mayor of a community, you see firsthand the challenges from unemployment, the challenges of jobs that are being reduced, the unemployed, and trying to maintain housing.

It is important that we realize that in this budget we call for two new sources for affordable housing, the National Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Magnet Fund, to be fully funded by contributions from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, as is already required by law. This budget gives families and communities devastated by foreclosure the resources to renovate and resell homes and maintain overall property values.

I come from Michigan, and I represent Detroit. Here I have an article that states: ''Downtown Detroit Tenants Rally to Demand Decent and Affordable Housing.'' This conversation is happening all over the country while we see some communities where families are actually being displaced as a result of the upper class of our communities being able to buy and push prices up while those in the bottom of our economic class are being challenged every day to find the simple thing that we call quality of life in America, and that is housing.

In my State of Michigan, we have a campaign to end homelessness, to promote housing, first, through the prevention and rapid rehousing activities.

We understand in Michigan that in order to effectively approach homelessness, a community needs a clear, deliberate, and comprehensive strategy. The low incomes of so many families across this country make this increasingly difficult for them to manage the rising cost of housing. This puts them at risk, and some lose their housing and fall into homelessness. We may call this a homelessness crisis, but it is primarily a housing affordability crisis.

Permanent housing subsidies like section 8 need to do a better job of addressing the family housing crisis. However, as this body knows, such subsidies are severely underfunded. Nationally, only one-quarter of the need for such subsidies are being met.

Before I conclude, I want to be clear that we, as members of the Progressive Caucus, stress strongly that we present a budget that is funded, that will ensure that in America the American Dream and the basic quality of life right to have a home is maintained through our budget.

Mr. ELLISON. I represent Minneapolis, Minnesota, and I was talking

with my Housing Authority people who were here in town the other day, and I bet your Housing Authority folks were in town, too. One of the things that they said to me is that they opened up their list, and for 2,000 available units, they had 37,000 people who applied for those positions.

Here is another separate fact which I would like you to react to, if you don't mind. In Minneapolis, we pride ourselves on being a progressive town. We have got 4,000 kids who leave shelters every day to go to a public school, and those kids are asked to take standardized tests.

How important is it for a budget, particularly a Progressive Caucus budget, to house America's people?

Mrs. LAWRENCE. It is extremely important.

Thank you.

It is extremely important, and those of us who understand the cry of the people for housing, and understand the impact of homelessness on Americans today, funding of housing, affordable housing, is critical.

I served on the local government board, and one of the things we looked at consistently is: How do we sustain the low-income or sustainable housing for our population?

Children repeatedly, every day across this country, awaken, go to school, and then their families, they are living in cars or they are living in shelters, and they have to take on that responsibility, as a child, and adjust to an environment that they can learn. We know that this is a total distraction. Some of them, through this homelessness, the school is the only stable place for them to go to every single day.

So now we are in a position where we are looking at cutting back on education. We are cutting back on housing. In America, are we sending a message through a budget that will not support sustainable housing for American citizens who are not in the top 1 percent, who some, by no fault of their own, are unemployed? Are we, in this country and as a government, turning our backs on those people?

That is why we have, through the Progressive Caucus, a budget that will awaken the minds of so many in this country and this government, and we want our colleagues across the aisle—and all of our colleagues—to look at this budget and say that this is the time in America we need to step up and fund sustainable housing in America.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, can you tell us just how much time we have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New Jersey has approximately 40 minutes remaining.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I appreciate the comments that have been offered by both of my colleagues here. I think that you can certainly understand that a lot of work went into the creation, the development, and the evolution of this budget. We are happy to note that, over the years, some of those issues that were identified by the Progressive Caucus have now become part of the regular budget that is presented by the Democratic Caucus.

I want to highlight a couple of other things, because I think we just talked about the need for housing. And we recognize that not only did we lose a lot of housing during the predatory lending crisis, a lot of that housing is still vacant, and we need to figure out a way to recapture that housing and use it for affordable housing purposes. Our budget proposes the extension of the use of vouchers for housing because we recognize how fundamental the need is to have safe and secure housing.

We recognize that, over the last several years, millionaires, billionaires, and corporations have been getting tremendous tax breaks, that the very wealthy have received extremely generous credits.

We want to see working people get credit for work, get tax advantages for the work that working people do, get additional child care credits so that they can provide the kind of safety and security and healthy environment for their families.

Everybody has the desire to have a healthy family. Everybody has a desire to be able to participate in our society, to even pay taxes, Mr. Speaker. They just need to have the mechanisms, the infrastructure, the opportunity, the policies that will provide those opportunities, and this budget does just that.

It is known that one in five children live, in the United States of America, in poverty. One out of three African American children live in poverty. That is unacceptable for any child to live impoverished in a nation that is as rich and that has so much wealth concentrated in so few hands.

To whom much is given, much is required, and it is pay now or pay later.

We need to recognize the significance of our budget that recognizes that education is, indeed, the equalizer here. Not only are we looking to expand access to preschool care, but full funding of K–12.

In addition to that, we recognize that higher education is what distinguishes our middle class from those who never can get into the middle class. But we want to make sure that students have access to education without being overly burdened with debt. So we want to look at creating opportunities for students to refinance their debt.

Let's look at this country as a country of diplomacy, of humanitarianism. Let's look at this country as a country of peacefulness and hopefulness for goodwill for all nations. Let us move away from the sort of cold war mentality; look at modernizing our militaristic events; look at what we are doing with our resources; invest our resources here in America, not overseas; seek to bring humanitarian aid; seek to bring diplomacy. Seek, first, peace; seek, first, coalitions; but seek, first and foremost, to invest in America.

□ 1515

Our unemployment rate is supposedly somewhere around 5 or 6 percent, but that is so misleading. It is so misleading on so many different levels.

Number one, that is not true in rural areas, and that is not true in urban areas, and that is not true for minority communities, and that is not true for those who simply aren't looking anymore because they have been so doggone discouraged that they don't even think that there is any hope for them to have a job. For those people, for that cohort that I am speaking of, unemployment is double digits. It could be 25 percent. It could be 13 percent. It is something that we really don't even know exactly what it is, but we need to be focusing on lifting up all of our communities.

And if we truly, absolutely want the American economy to expand, then we need to know that we need more consumers. We need more jobs. We need more paychecks. We need more customers. And we do that by investing in our middle class. We do that by investing in small businesses, in new businesses, in startups, in education, and in research and development. This budget recognizes that if we are going to be the great America that we are supposed to be, that we need to make these investments.

Today was monumental for me because I got to articulate and to stand with individuals who expressed things that I have believed. Even as a legislator in the State of New Jersey, I believed that if we are to experience an America that really works, an America where our communities are safe because there is full employment—so no one is trying to rob anybody or no one is feeling a need to engage in illegal activity simply to put some food on the table—if we are going to be competitive globally, then we need to be investing in education. We need to be building schools. We need to ensure that even the schools in the poorest districts across the United States of America have all of the 21st century technology and opportunities to learn and produce. And we need to have high expectations. We need to have high expectations for everyone.

So I thank you very much for this opportunity, and I will take this moment to yield back to my colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON), the cochair of our Progressive Caucus.

Mr. ELLISON. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

I was really intrigued by the things that you were saying about the Progressive Caucus budget because I have always believed that you know someone's treasure by how they prioritize their expenses.

You can look at a family's budget, and if you see a lot of money being spent on television and movies and candy, you know that they care a lot about that. And if you see people spend a lot of money on books and education, you know they care about that.

What does it mean if you have the budget of a nation where the biggest amounts of the budget are spent on helping rich people get richer and cutting health and safety regulations? What does that mean at a time when income inequality is at its height since the Great Depression?

My problem with the Republican budget is that they have been acting like rich people don't have enough money and poor people have too much for 40 years. What it has brought us is massive income inequality. And their answer to that is to do it some more.

It has hurt this economy to prioritize the well-to-do over everyone else. It doesn't even help rich people very much because rich people own stores and factories and stuff like that. If regular folks, ordinary people don't have any money, how can they even help boost the consumer demand?

This economy that we have, it is important to point out that the United States is a country of tremendous resources. This is still the richest country in the world. Not only is America the richest country in the world but America itself has never been richer.

If you look at per capita income and you scale it on a graph and compare it over time, you are looking at a steadily rising line. Yet the American budget, our governmental expenditures as a proportion of it, we have seen one of the lowest proportions of government spending relative to GDP in a great many years.

The fact of the matter is, the reason the proportion of government expenditure to GDP has been going down is because America has been giving away the resources that it needs to take care of the needs of its people. I am talking about lifesaving research in medicine. I am talking about dealing with issues of climate. I am talking about infrastructure investment.

One of the things that the Progressive Caucus budget does to try to recapture some of the money that the government is due and owed is we end corporate inversion and deferral.

What is corporate inversion? Corporate inversion is where the company does not actually physically move anywhere, but they sell themselves to a foreign corporation with a lower tax rate or no tax rate, thereby escaping the payment of moneys in taxes as an American corporation but not really moving anything. In fact, they might even increase their physical footprint in the country that they are in.

We have had that happen in my own community. And before I went to criticize the company that did it, I had to deal with the fact that it is legal to do.

How are you going to blame a corporation for trying to get money when it is legal to do? Well, I say, rather than blame the company, I will blame Congress, you know? So we went and did something about it. We went to the Progressive Caucus budget and we ended inversions. You can't do that anymore.

We are also in this process of deferral, this idea that corporate profits don't have to be paid as long as they are deferred and kept overseas. We end this process. We end deferrals. I think that these two things alone will bring money back to the United States Government so we can invest in roads and bridges and infrastructure, so we can make sure that no 5-year-old kid is leaving a shelter and going to a public school in the morning, so we can make sure that there is enough SNAP, that kids have a decent meal to eat, and that our seniors can actually hope to one day be able to beat Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and all of these kinds of diseases. These things take public investment to solve these kinds of medical problems.

So the Progressive Caucus budget, I am very proud to be a part of it because it is a budget that looks at the needs of the American people and does something about it.

Let me just talk about the education side of it. We have universal pre-K. Now, it doesn't matter if you are a conservative economist or if you are a liberal economist; they all agree that the best return on investment is educating little kids. You educate those little guys and it will keep them out of trouble. It will put them on a path to college or some form of higher education. And they will not become a government expense; they will be a government asset. They will not be an expenditure on the taxpayer; they will be paying taxes.

Yet the Progressive Caucus doesn't just know that, we actually do something about it by funding universal pre-K. I am so happy about that because, you know, those little guys are so cute, and we definitely want to see those bright-eyed little children maximize their talents. They are actually really smart. And if you put them in an educational environment, an academic environment where they can do more than just learn how to count—they can maybe even learn how to use a computer—you never know what tremendous benefits they will bring to our society. And we move from there.

In K–12 education, we help fund municipal and local public employees who need that kind of help. We have placed $95 billion in that, where we can, again, put a teacher or a teacher's aide back into the classroom. Ever since the recession in 2008, local governments have been shedding public employees, including teachers.

Now, what does this mean? To the average teacher, the average teacher used to have a classroom of 28 kids, 19 kids. Well, those classes are bigger because you have got fewer teachers. You used to be able to have a little budget to decorate the classroom, to put inspiring messages and notes and pictures up there.

I would actually like to ask the gentlelady from New Jersey a question. Have you had the experience of talking to a teacher where they tell you that they are going into their own pocket to decorate the classroom? Have you ever heard that?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Not only have I heard it, but I have helped some of the teachers buy the supplies for their classrooms.

Mr. ELLISON. Right. So the fact is, we need to respond to these kinds of things.

I would also like to ask the gentlelady, What does it mean to a police department that needs about, you know, 40 people to protect the people of the city but only has 20 folks? What does that mean? Does that mean the officers aren't getting out of their cars and forming relationships? Does that mean they are just running from call to call to call? Does that mean they may not have the equipment that they need? What does it mean?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Thank you for that question, Congressman. It means all of those things.

What it means for communities like the capital of the State of New Jersey, which is the city of Trenton, it means that our neighborhoods are unsafe. It means that police are running to situations that have already occurred, as opposed to having the resources and the capacity to understand what is happening out there and be proactive and preventative in nature. So it certainly does negatively impact the quality of life for those who live in the city—and cities particularly—and those who work there.

I am particularly concerned about the seniors who invested in the cities years ago when the cities where the thriving environments, Congressman, and now they are still living there because they can't afford to move. So they are finding themselves in communities where, because of the housing crisis, there are vacant houses all around them. Members of gangs have settled into some of those houses, creating almost prison-like environments for the people who can't even go outside and sit on their porch. And all of this has been the function of our disinvestment in our cities.

Mr. ELLISON. The Progressive Caucus budget is trying to step up and address these issues. When you talk to officers and firefighters, health care workers, teachers, librarians, all of these local government functions have been cut.

I would like to ask the gentlewoman another question:

What does it mean to see the library hours cut in your city because the Federal assistance or the local municipalities just don't have enough funding for the library, so the hours get cut, the library staff gets cut. What does that mean to a local community?

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank you for the opportunity to address this because I know this firsthand. In the capital city in the State of New Jersey, they have had to actually close libraries.

Now, we already experience a digital divide in urban centers and in poor environments, and sometimes the only

access that students have to computers and the Internet and the capacity to do research is in the libraries, in the local libraries. So it has negatively impacted their ability to get the information that they need to succeed in school.

It has also negatively impacted those who are looking for jobs, who go to libraries to be able to research jobs on the Internet. It has had a devastating impact on the community.

So when we look at our budget, the Progressive budget, and we recognize that we wish to restore services, restore funding to programs that empower our communities, it is giving them a chance, again, to become productive, productive in the work environment, productive in the school environment. It restores hope where hope has been taken away for so long.

Mr. ELLISON. That is right.

If I could just say, putting workers back on the job who are firefighters, librarians, police officers, teachers, these are very important to the quality of life.

I would like to refer to these people as everyday heroes. They may not wear big letters on their chest. But when I think about the people other than my parents who helped inspire me, it was probably a teacher, probably a cop who saw me hanging on the corner and said, Hey, man, we know you are smart. You can do better than what you are doing.

You know what I mean? All of these people are the everyday heroes that make neighborhoods run every single day. So I just think it is important for the Progressive Caucus to say, We are going to prioritize rehiring these people who have been let go in the course of this recession.

We have seen private sector employment increase every single month. But you know what? We have also seen public sector employment actually go down.

□ 1530

One of the things I would also like to get your take on, if you wouldn't mind sharing your views on this issue, is restoring and enhancing emergency unemployment compensation. As you know, back on December 26, 2013, the long-term unemployed were just cast adrift by the Republican majority. These are people who were working but just couldn't find a job soon enough. Some people tried to imply that they were lazy and just didn't want a job, so we had to kick them off unemployment so they would actually look for a job.

I wonder what your thoughts are about this.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. First of all, let me just say for those individuals who, without any fault of their own, were victims of the trickle-down economics that have failed us from 40 years ago to even today, those individuals who but for the shift in policies and having this negative impact because of trickle-down economics which doesn't work except for perhaps on an essay paper, they struggled. They struggled. They lost their homes; they lost their family; they lost their health care; and they lost their health.

The people's budget recognizes the responsibility that government has to those individuals. So to extend the unemployment benefits for the 99 weeks, I believe it is over a 2-year period, gives people an opportunity, as well as gives the policymakers an opportunity to create opportunities for these people to find jobs and to have some meager form of income while they are looking, because they basically have been left with absolutely nothing. So it is a further illustration that the people's budget is a reflection of the people's needs. I am so very fortunate to be associated with it.

One last thing I wanted to raise as it relates to our urban centers, Mr. Speaker, right now in Washington, D.C., there is a conference of the urban mayors from the State of New Jersey. I am going to have an opportunity to speak to them later on this evening. I tell you, I am very excited to talk to them about what it means to support the Progressive budget, the alternative Progressive Caucus budget, and what it means to their communities, whether it is for education, for teachers, for aides, for paraprofessionals, for police, for nurses, for hospitals, whatever. They will understand that this is a budget that recognizes that where the majority of the people live in this country there is a budget that acknowledges that their needs are paramount to the success of collective success of our economy and our country.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ELLISON. That's right. I thank the gentlelady for yielding back to me.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to point out that, again, the Progressive Caucus budget is in dramatic contrast to the Republican budget. Take the Republican budget, for example. The Republican budget calls for repealing the Affordable Care Act. This is a piece of legislation that has extended health care access to literally millions and millions and millions of people. The Republicans want to snatch health care access out of people who now, for the first time in their life, have acquired it; and they are doing it by saying: Oh, we want you to have freedom, and we think ObamaCare infringes on your freedom, so now be free to be sick with no access to health care other than an emergency room.

That is their idea of freedom, I suppose.

They want to partially privatize Medicare. Is that what we need is privatization of Medicare?

A few years ago, the Republicans wanted to privatize Social Security. They wanted to say: We are going to take all the money you saved, and we are going to put it in some Wall Street account. Of course, they will be administered for a ''reasonable fee''—I put that in quotes—but don't worry about it. Everything will be fine.

Then we see stock market prices fall and plummet. They go up and they go down. But when you are talking about something like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, these have to be stable and reliable, and they want to privatize it as they have proposed to other important programs.

They want to turn Medicaid and food stamps into block grants for States. What does that mean? In some States, maybe the Governor will do the right thing. I am pretty confident in Minnesota our Governor would do the right thing. Our unemployment is at a record low. In our State, our wages have been climbing. We actually have a surplus in the State of Minnesota. Our next-door neighbor, Wisconsin, is run by Scott Walker. They have a big, ugly deficit, which is embarrassing, given that he is supposed to be this fiscal conservative. But facts don't seem to bother some people.

My point is that the Republicans want to block grant these programs. If you block grant it in Minnesota, it will be less money. Whenever there is a budget pinch, they will use that money for other things other than the intended purpose. But if you send it to a State like Wisconsin with a Governor like Scott Walker, the people who are intended to benefit from that money may never ever see it at all. And so this is a very important program not to block grant these programs.

Tax reforms that lower rates and eliminate any taxation on profits reported abroad—come on. As a matter of fact, if just cutting taxes to the bone and cutting taxes for rich people as much as we possibly can would be good for the economy, wouldn't we have avoided the recession of 2008? We should have more jobs than we could possibly imagine with these guys. We should have never had any recession, and every American should be paid, I don't know, $100,000 a year if just cutting taxes was good for the economy. Cutting taxes is good for some people, but it is not good for the economy overall. The evidence is all around us. The Republicans want to turn the rest of the world into a tax haven for multinationals.

Now, the President has been trying to set the record straight. He has been trying to signal what an economy where there is shared prosperity should look like. But the fact is that, if you look at the Republican budget and you contrast it with other proposals, it certainly fails the test of being good for the American people. The Progressive Caucus budget, on the other hand, passes the test. We do programs that actually help the American people: universal pre-K, robust support for title I, and debt-free college to ensure every child gets a quality education. When you contrast their budget and you look at our budget, it is clear which one the American people find to be most meritorious.

So we ask people to look at the Progressive Caucus budget. We ask people to read it; share it with your friends; offer your views on it. We ask people to

just support the budget that they think makes a lot of sense.

Probably we will be debating the budgets next week. Probably we will have a vote. We think it is important for Americans to tune in to this debate. Because if you are an American person and you are busy, you are trying to raise kids, you are trying get to work on time, and you are trying to earn a living, you don't have time to be plugged in to politics like some of us who do this our whole lives. You are busy. But you are smart and you know what is going on.

I am going to ask Americans to actually slow down and say: Hey, look, what is going on in this budget? What does the Republican budget look like? They want to cut taxes. They don't want overseas corporations to return those profits and pay taxes on that. The Progressive Caucus wants to let the little kids go to school, let the teenagers and the young adults go to school. They want to train our workforce, and they want to invest in our Nation's infrastructure.

I guarantee this is what the people in this country want to see.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for upholding the Progressive Caucus message, and I wish you very great success in the people's budget.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this opportunity to share the good news about the Progressive budget and to inform those who are here as well as those who are at home what this budget represents.

One last issue that I think I would like to address that we may not have clearly or substantively articulated has to do with environmental issues. This budget acknowledges the devastating impact that we have had on the environment, and it takes concrete steps to reverse it, forcing polluters to pay for the carbon that is causing so much of our climate change, eliminating fossil fuel subsidies for Big Oil that, frankly, don't need government support, and ensuring EPA has the resources it needs to help reduce our carbon footprint.

We have spent this last 45, 50 minutes—I am thankful for this opportunity—sharing the good news about the people's budget, the Progressive budget, and I hope that anyone who has a need for additional information will seek this information out online.

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

STRENGTHENING HIGHER EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KNIGHT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today, too many Americans struggle to realize the dream of higher education. Our current system is unaffordable, inflexible, and outdated, and it has resulted in too many students unable to complete college, saddled with loan debt, and ill-equipped to compete in our modern economy.

In recent years, burdensome Federal regulations, a lack of transparency, and a dizzying maze of student aid programs have only contributed to the problem. Students and families deserve better.

Mr. Speaker, when my husband and I were in high school and contemplating the possibility of college, we were penniless people. In his case, his parents had no formal education—they couldn't read and write—and my family had very limited education, but we understood then that the way out of poverty was to go to college, work hard, and get a good job. Folks like us who had no resources could do that. It is very difficult for people in this day and time to do what he and I did. He graduated from college with a very small debt. I graduated from college with absolutely no debt because of working my way through. It did take me 7 years to do it, but I was able to do it.

Mr. Speaker, we want to be able to provide an environment in this country where people with very limited resources can do what my husband and I and millions of other young people did in the past, which is get a higher education without going deeply into debt to do so.

The upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act provides Congress an opportunity to help every individual—regardless of age, location, or background—access and complete higher education if they choose.

To inform the reauthorization process, the Education and the Workforce Committee has held 15 hearings over the last several years. After receiving feedback from students, institutions, innovators, administrators, and researchers, the committee established a set of key principles that will guide our reform of the postsecondary education law.

First, we must empower students and families to make informed decisions when it comes to selecting the institution that meets their unique needs. Today's higher education resources are incomplete and inaccurate and often complicate the financial aid process, misguiding students about their academic and financial options. Developing a more streamlined and transparent system, as well as enhancing financial literacy services, will help students better understand the higher education landscape and make choices based on easy-to-understand, relevant information.

Second, we must simplify and improve student aid. Currently, the Federal Government operates more than 10 aid programs, each with its own set of rules and requirements. Many students, particularly first-generation and low-income students, are overwhelmed by the complexity of the current system, which can ultimately deter them from accessing the aid that will help make college a reality.

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Consolidating this patchwork of aid programs will simplify the application and eligibility process and help more students understand, manage, and repay their debt.

Third, we must promote innovation, access, and completion. In recent years, as the postsecondary student population has changed, many institutions have developed new approaches to delivering higher education, including competency-based curriculums and online classes.

The Federal Government should make every effort to support these innovations, as they have enabled more Americans to earn a degree or certificate faster with less cost and without additional disruption to their daily lives.

Finally, we must ensure strong accountability by limiting the Federal role. The current administration has subjected institutions to onerous regulations and requirements, which have created a costly and time-consuming process, hampered innovation, and jeopardized academic freedom.

Eliminating ineffective Federal burdens will provide States and institutions the flexibility they need to deliver effectively a high-quality education to their students.

We are confident that these pillars will translate into meaningful Federal reforms that reflect the evolving needs of students and the workforce.

Yesterday, the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held its first hearing of the 114th Congress, where we heard policy recommendations on how we can strengthen America's higher education system to serve students, families, workers, and taxpayers better.

Former Indiana Governor and Purdue University President Mitch Daniels testified:

> It is my great hope that this Congress will have the courage to see the challenges and treat reauthorization of the Higher Education Act as an opportunity for reform.

He continued:

> The country needs a reauthorization that will reduce the costs of higher education's regulatory burdens, simplify and improve student aid, and create an environment more conducive to innovation in higher education.

Dr. Christine Keller, vice president of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, stressed the need for ''access to clear, meaningful data . . . to answer questions and provide essential information for higher education stakeholders—for students and families to make more informed decisions about where to attend college, for policymakers to determine allocations of public resources and evaluate institutional effectiveness, and for college leaders to facilitate innovation and successful student outcomes.''

After outlining several opportunities for simplifying Federal aid, Mr. Michael Bennett, associate vice president for financial aid services at St. Petersburg College, recommended ''a new repayment model that will simplify and streamline the repayment process by collapsing the various existing plans into two basic plans . . . simplifying repayment for students would certainly decrease default rates and the taxpayers' burden of having to shoulder the costs of defaulted loans.''

In the coming months, there will be many conversations and what can be done to maintain the strength of our robust higher education system. We have a responsibility to act now to preserve our unique role in the world as a summit of opportunity.

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

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I submit for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the attached copy of the rules of the Committee on Education and the Workforce for the U.S. House of Representatives for the 114th Congress:

RULE 1. REGULAR, ADDITIONAL, AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

(a) Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held on the second Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m., while the House is in session. The Committee shall meet for the consideration of a bill or resolution pending before the Committee or the transaction of other committee business on regular meeting days fixed by the Committee if notice is given in accordance with paragraph (g)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(b) The Chair may call and convene, as he or she considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business.

(c) If at least three members of the Committee desire that a special meeting of the Committee be called by the Chair, those members may file in the offices of the Committee their written request to the Chair for that special meeting. Immediately upon the filing of the request, the staff director of the Committee shall notify the Chair of the filing of the request. If, within three calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chair does not call the requested special meeting to be held within seven calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the members of the Committee may file in the offices of the Committee their written notice that a special meeting of the Committee will be held, specifying the date and hour thereof, and the measure or matter to be considered at that special meeting. Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the staff director of the Committee shall notify all members of the Committee that such meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour and the measure or matter to be considered. Such notice shall also be made publicly available in electronic form and shall satisfy the notice requirements in clause (g)(3)(A(ii) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Committee shall meet on that date and hour and only the measure or matter specified in that notice may be considered at that special meeting.

(d) Legislative meetings of the Committee and its subcommittees shall be open to the public, including radio, television, and still photography coverage, unless such meetings are closed pursuant to the requirements of the Rules of the House of Representatives. No business meeting of the Committee, other than regularly scheduled meetings, may be held without each member being given reasonable notice.

(e) The Chair of the Committee or of a subcommittee, as appropriate, shall preside at meetings or hearings. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee or of a subcommittee, members shall preside as provided in clause 2(d) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. No person other than a Member of Congress or Congressional staff may walk in, stand in, or be seated at the rostrum area during a meeting or hearing of the Committee or subcommittee unless authorized by the Chair.

RULE 2. STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES AND JURISDICTION

(a) There shall be four standing subcommittees. In addition to conducting oversight in the area of their respective jurisdictions as required in clause 2 of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, each subcommittee shall have the following jurisdiction:

Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.—Education from early learning through the high school level, including but not limited to elementary and secondary education, special education, homeless education, and migrant education; overseas dependent schools; career and technical education; school safety and alcohol and drug abuse prevention; school lunch and child nutrition programs; educational research and improvement including the Institute of Education Sciences; environmental education; pre-service and in-service teacher professional development including Title II of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* and Title II of the Higher Education Act; early care and education programs including the *Head Start Act* and the *Child Care and Development Block Grant Act;* adolescent development and training programs, including but not limited to those providing for the care and treatment of certain at-risk youth, including the *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act* and the *Runaway and Homeless Youth Act;* and all matters dealing with child abuse and domestic violence, including the *Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act* and child adoption.

Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training.—Education and training beyond the high school level, including but not limited to higher education generally, postsecondary student assistance and employment services, and the *Higher Education Act;* Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; all domestic volunteer programs; all programs related to the arts and humanities, museum and library services, and arts and artifacts indemnity; postsecondary career and technical education, apprenticeship programs, and job training, including the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act,* vocational rehabilitation, and training programs from immigration funding; science and technology programs; adult basic education (family literacy); all welfare reform programs, including work incentive programs and welfare-to-work requirements; poverty programs, including the *Community Services Block Grant Act* and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); the *Native American Programs Act;* the Institute of Peace; and all matters dealing with programs and services for the elderly including nutrition programs and the *Older Americans Act.*

Subcommittee on Workforce Protections.—Wages and hours of workers, including but not limited to the *Davis-Bacon Act,* the *Walsh-Healey Act,* the *Service Contract Act,* and the *Fair Labor Standards Act;* workers' compensation including the *Federal Employees' Compensation Act,* the *Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act,* and the *Black Lung Benefits Act;* the *Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act;* the *Family and Medical Leave Act;* the *Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act;* the *Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988;* trade and immigration issues as they affect employers and workers; workers' safety and health, including but not limited to occupational safety and health, mine safety and health, and migrant and agricultural worker safety and health; and all matters related to equal employment opportunity and civil rights in employment.

Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions.—All matters dealing with relationships between employers and employees, including but not limited to the *National Labor Relations Act,* the *Labor-Management Relations Act,* and the *Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act;* the Bureau of Labor Statistics; and employment-related health and retirement security, including pension, health, and other employee benefits and the *Employee Retirement Income Security Act* (ERISA).

(b) The majority party members of the Committee may provide for such temporary, ad hoc subcommittees as determined to be appropriate.

RULE 3. EX OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP

The Chair of the Committee and the ranking minority party member (''Ranking Member'') shall be ex officio members, but not voting members, of each subcommittee to which such Chair or Ranking Member has not been assigned.

RULE 4. SUBCOMMITTEE SCHEDULING

(a) Subcommittee chair shall set meeting or hearing dates after consultation with the Chair and other subcommittee chair with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings, wherever possible. No such meetings or hearings, however, shall be held outside of Washington, D.C., or during a recess or adjournment of the House of Representatives without the prior authorization of the Committee Chair. Where practicable, 14 days' notice will be given of such meeting or hearing.

(b) Available dates for subcommittee meetings during the session shall be assigned by the Chair to the subcommittees as nearly as practicable in rotation and in accordance with their workloads. As far as practicable, the Chair shall not schedule simultaneous subcommittee markups, a subcommittee markup during a full Committee markup, or any hearing during a markup.

RULE 5. SUBCOMMITTEE RULES

The rules of the Committee shall be the rules of its subcommittees.

RULE 6. SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT OF MEMBERS

To facilitate the oversight and other legislative and investigative activities of the Committee, the Chair of the Committee may, at the request of a subcommittee chair, make a temporary assignment of any member of the Committee to such subcommittee for the purpose of constituting a quorum and of enabling such member to participate in any public hearing, investigation, or study by such subcommittee to be held outside of Washington, D.C. Any member of the Committee may attend public hearings of any subcommittee and any member of the Committee may question witnesses only when

they have been recognized by the Chair for that purpose.

RULE 7. HEARING PROCEDURE

(a) The Chair, in the case of hearings to be conducted by the Committee, and the appropriate subcommittee chair, in the case of hearings to be conducted by a subcommittee, shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted on any measure or matter at least one week before the commencement of that hearing unless the Chair of the Committee, with the concurrence of the Ranking Member, determines that there is good cause to begin such hearing at an earlier date or the Committee so determines by majority vote in the presence of the number of members required under the rules of the Committee for the transaction of business. In the latter event, the Chair or the subcommittee chair, as the case may be, shall have such an announcement promptly published in the Daily Digest and made publicly available in electronic form. To the extent practicable, the Chair or the subcommittee chair shall make public announcement of the final list of witnesses scheduled to testify at least 48 hours before the commencement of the hearing. The staff director of the Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record as soon as practicable after such public announcement is made.

(b) Subcommittees are authorized to hold hearings, receive exhibits, hear witnesses, and report to the Committee for final action, together with such recommendations as may be agreed upon by the subcommittee.

(c) All opening statements at hearings conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee will be made part of the permanent written record. Opening statements by members may not be presented orally, unless the Chair of the Committee or any subcommittee determines that one statement from the Chair or a designee will be presented, in which case the Ranking Member or a designee may also make a statement. If a witness scheduled to testify at any hearing of the Committee or any subcommittee is a constituent of a member of the Committee or subcommittee, such member shall be entitled to briefly introduce such witness at the hearing.

(d) To the extent practicable, witnesses who are to appear before the Committee or a subcommittee shall file with the staff director of the Committee, at least 48 hours in advance of their appearance, a written statement of their proposed testimony, together with a brief summary thereof, and shall limit their oral presentation to a summary thereof. The staff director of the Committee shall promptly furnish to the staff director of the minority a copy of such testimony submitted to the Committee pursuant to this rule. The Chair of the Committee, or a member designated by the Chair, may administer oaths to witnesses.

(e) When any hearing is conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chair by a majority of those minority party members before the completion of such hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearing thereon. The minority party may waive this right by calling at least one witness during a Committee hearing or subcommittee hearing.

(f) In the conduct of hearings of subcommittees sitting jointly, the rules otherwise applicable to all subcommittees shall likewise apply to joint subcommittee hearings for purposes of such shared consideration.

RULE 8. QUESTIONING OF HEARING WITNESSES

(a) Subject to clauses (b), (c), and (d), a Committee member may question hearing witnesses only when the member has been recognized by the Chair for that purpose, and only for a five-minute period until all members present have had an opportunity to question a witness. The questioning of witnesses in both Committee and subcommittee hearings shall be initiated by the Chair, followed by the Ranking Member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority party. The Chair shall exercise discretion in determining the order in which members will be recognized. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chair shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority party members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to place the members of the majority party in a disadvantageous position.

(b) The Chair may permit a specified number of members to question a witness for longer than five minutes. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this clause shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(c) The Chair may permit Committee staff for the majority and the minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this clause shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(d) In an investigative hearing or in an executive session, the Chair's authority to extend questioning under subsection (b) and (c) of this rule shall be equal for the majority and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate, and shall only be conducted by counsel for the majority and the minority party when authorized under subsection (c) of this rule.

RULE 9. SUBPOENA AUTHORITY

The power to authorize and issue subpoenas is delegated to the Chair of the full Committee, as provided for under clause 2(m)(3)(A)(i) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Chair shall notify the Ranking Member prior to issuing any subpoena under such authority. To the extent practicable, the Chair shall consult with the Ranking Member at least 24 hours in advance of a subpoena being issued under such authority, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays. As soon as practicable after issuing any subpoena under such authority, the Chair shall notify in writing all members of the Committee of the issuance of the subpoena.

RULE 10. DEPOSITION PROCEDURE

(a) In accordance with the Committee receiving authorization by the House of Representatives for the taking of depositions in furtherance of a Committee investigation, the Chair, upon consultation with the Ranking Member, may order the taking of depositions pursuant to notice or subpoena as contemplated by this rule.

(b) The Chair or majority staff shall consult with the Ranking Member or minority staff no less than three business days before any notice or subpoena for a deposition is issued. After such consultation, all members shall receive written notice that a notice or subpoena for a deposition will be issued.

(c) A notice or subpoena issued under this rule shall specify the date, time, and place of the deposition and the method or methods by which the deposition will be recorded. Prior to testifying, a deponent shall be provided with a copy of the Committee's rules, the House Resolution authorizing the taking of the deposition, and Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(d)(1) A deposition shall be conducted by one or more members or Committee counsel as designated by the Chair or Ranking Member.

(2) A deposition shall be taken under oath or affirmation administered by a member or a person otherwise authorized to administer oaths and affirmations.

(3) A deposition shall be, unless waived by the deponent, attended by a member of the Committee.

(e) A deponent may be accompanied at a deposition by counsel to advise the deponent of the deponent's rights. Only members and Committee counsel, however, may examine the deponent. No one may be present at a deposition other than members, Committee staff designated by the Chair or Ranking Member, such individuals as may be required to administer the oath or affirmation and transcribe or record the proceedings, the deponent, and the deponent's counsel (including personal counsel and counsel for the entity employing the deponent if the scope of the deposition is expected to cover actions taken as part of the deponent's employment). Observers or counsel for other persons or entities may not attend.

(f)(1) Unless the majority, minority, and deponent agree otherwise, questions in a deposition shall be propounded in rounds, alternating between the majority and minority. A single round shall not exceed 60 minutes per side, unless the members or counsel conducting the deposition agree to a different length of questioning. In each round, a member or Committee counsel designated by the Chair shall ask questions first, and the member or Committee counsel designated by the Ranking Member shall ask questions second.

(2) Any objection made during a deposition must be stated concisely and in a non-argumentative and non-suggestive manner. Deponent may refuse to answer a question only to preserve a privilege. When the deponent has objected and refused to answer a question to preserve a privilege, the Chair may rule on any such objection after the deposition has adjourned. If the Chair overrules any such objection and thereby orders a deponent to answer any question to which a privilege objection was lodged, such ruling shall be filed with the clerk of the Committee and shall be provided to members and the deponent no less than three days before the ruling is enforced at a reconvened deposition. If a member of the Committee appeals in writing the ruling of the Chair, the appeal shall be preserved for Committee consideration. A deponent who refuses to answer a question after being directed to answer by the Chair in writing may be subject to sanction, except that no sanctions may be imposed if the ruling of the Chair is reversed on appeal. In all cases, when deposition testimony for which an objection has been made is offered for admission in evidence before the Committee, all properly lodged objections then made shall be timely and shall be considered by the Committee prior to admission in evidence before the Committee.

(g) Deposition testimony shall be transcribed by stenographic means and may also be video recorded. The clerk of the Committee shall receive the transcript and any video recording and promptly forward such to minority staff at the same time the clerk distributes such to other majority staff.

(h) The individual administering the oath shall certify on the transcript that the deponent was duly sworn. The transcriber shall certify that the transcript is a true, verbatim record of the testimony, and the transcript and any exhibits shall be filed, as shall any video recording, with the clerk of the

Committee. In no case shall any video recording be considered the official transcript of a deposition or otherwise supersede the certified written transcript.

(i) After receiving the transcript, majority staff shall make available the transcript for review by the deponent or deponent's counsel. No later than ten business days thereafter, the deponent may submit suggested changes to the Chair. Committee majority staff may direct the clerk of the Committee to note any typographical errors, including any requested by the deponent or minority staff, via an errata sheet appended to the transcript. Any proposed substantive changes, modifications, clarifications, or amendments to the deposition testimony must be submitted by the deponent as an affidavit that includes the deponent's reasons therefore. Any substantive changes, modifications, clarifications, or amendments shall be included as an appendix to the transcript, a copy of which shall be promptly forwarded to minority staff.

(j) The Chair and Ranking Member shall consult regarding the release of deposition transcript or electronic recordings. If either objects in writing to a proposed release of a deposition transcript or electronic recording or a portion thereof, the matter shall be promptly referred to the Committee for resolution.

RULE 11. QUORUMS

One-third of the members of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum for taking any action other than amending Committee rules, closing a meeting from the public, reporting a measure or recommendation, or in the case of the Committee or a subcommittee authorizing a subpoena. For the enumerated actions, a majority of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum. Any two members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

RULE 12. REFERRAL OF BILLS, RESOLUTIONS, AND OTHER MATTERS

(a) The Chair shall consult with subcommittee chair regarding referral to the appropriate subcommittees of such bills, resolutions, and other matters that have been referred to the Committee. Once copies of a bill, resolution, or other matter are available to the Committee, the Chair shall, within three weeks of such availability, provide notice of referral, if any, to the appropriate subcommittee.

(b) Referral to a subcommittee shall not be made until three days have elapsed after written notification of such proposed referral to all subcommittee chair, at which time such proposed referral shall be made unless one or more subcommittee chair shall have given written notice to the Chair of the full Committee and to the chair of each subcommittee that he or she intends to question such proposed referral at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee, or at a special meeting of the Committee called for that purpose, at which time referral shall be made by the majority members of the Committee. All bills shall be referred under this rule to the subcommittee of proper jurisdiction without regard to whether the author is or is not a member of the subcommittee. Upon a majority vote of the Committee, a bill, resolution, or other matter referred to a subcommittee in accordance with this rule may be recalled at any time for the Committee's direct consideration or for reference to another subcommittee.

(c) The Chair shall announce the date, place, and subject matter of a Committee meeting, which may not commence earlier than the third day on which members have notice thereof; but this requirement may be waived if the Chair of the Committee, with the concurrence of the Ranking Member, determines that there is good cause or the Committee so determines by majority vote in the presence of the number of members required under the rules of the Committee for the transaction of such business.

(d) When a bill or resolution is being considered by the Committee or a subcommittee, members shall provide the clerk in a timely manner a sufficient number of written copies of any amendment offered, so as to enable each member present to receive a copy thereof prior to taking action. A point of order may be made against any amendment not reduced to writing. A copy of each such amendment shall be maintained in the public records of the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be.

(e) In determining the order in which amendments to a matter pending before the Committee or a subcommittee will be considered, the Chair may give priority to:

(1) The Chair's mark, and

(2) Amendments, otherwise in order, that have been filed with the Committee at least 24 hours prior to the Committee or subcommittee business meeting on said measure or matter.

RULE 13. VOTES

(a) With respect to each roll call vote on a motion to report any bill, resolution, or matter of a public character, and on any amendment offered thereto, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those members voting for and against, shall be included in the Committee report on the measure or matter.

(b) In accordance with clause 2(h) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Chair of the Committee or a subcommittee is authorized to postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment. Such Chair may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time after reasonable notice. When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

RULE 14. RECORDS AND ROLLCALLS

(a) Written records shall be kept of the proceedings of the Committee and of each subcommittee, including a record of the votes on any question on which a roll call is demanded. The result of each such roll call vote shall be made available by the Committee or subcommittee for inspection by the public at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee or subcommittee and shall be made available on the Committee's website within 48 hours of such record vote. Information so available for public inspection and on the Committee's website shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition; the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition; and the names of those members present but not voting. The text of an amendment offered to a measure or matter considered in Committee shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than 24 hours after its final disposition in Committee. A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the members present or, in the apparent absence of a quorum, by any one member.

(b) In accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, any official permanent record of the Committee (including any record of a legislative, oversight, or other activity of the Committee or any subcommittee) shall be made available for public use if such record has been in existence for 30 years, except that—

(1) any record that the Committee (or a subcommittee) makes available for public use before such record is delivered to the Archivist under clause 2 of Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be made available immediately, including any record described in subsection (a) of this Rule;

(2) any investigative record that contains personal data relating to a specific living individual (the disclosure of which would be an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy), any administrative record with respect to personnel, and any record with respect to a hearing closed pursuant to clause 2(g)(2) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be available if such record has been in existence for 50 years; or

(3) except as otherwise provided by order of the House of Representatives, any record of the Committee for which a time, schedule, or condition for availability is specified by order of the Committee (entered during the Congress in which the record is made or acquired by the Committee) shall be made available in accordance with the order of the Committee.

(c) The official permanent records of the Committee include noncurrent records of the Committee (including subcommittees) delivered by the Clerk of the House of Representatives to the Archivist of the United States for preservation at the National Archives and Records Administration, which are the property of and remain subject to the rules and orders of the House of Representatives.

(d)(1) Any order of the Committee with respect to any matter described in paragraph (2) of this subsection shall be adopted only if the notice requirements of Committee Rule 12(c) have been met, a quorum consisting of a majority of the members of the Committee is present at the time of the vote, and a majority of those present and voting approve the adoption of the order, which shall be submitted to the Clerk of the House of Representatives, together with any accompanying report.

(2) This subsection applies to any order of the Committee which—

(A) provides for the non-availability of any record subject to subsection (b) of this rule for a period longer than the period otherwise applicable; or

(B) is subsequent to, and constitutes a later order under clause 4(b) of Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, regarding a determination of the Clerk of the House of Representatives with respect to authorizing the Archivist of the United States to make available for public use the records delivered to the Archivist under clause 2 of Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives; or

(C) specifies a time, schedule, or condition for availability pursuant to subsection (b)(3) of this Rule.

RULE 15. REPORTS

(a) Reports of the Committee. All Committee reports on bills or resolutions shall comply with the provisions of clause 2 of Rule XI and clauses 2, 3, and 4 of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(1) No such report shall be filed until copies of the proposed report have been available to all members at least 36 hours prior to such filing in the House of Representatives. No material change shall be made in the report distributed to members unless agreed to by the Ranking Member; but any member or members of the Committee may file, as part of the printed report, individual, minority, or dissenting views, without regard to the preceding provisions of this rule.

(2) Such 36-hour period shall not conclude earlier than the end of the period provided under clause 4 of Rule XIII of the Rules of

the House of Representatives after the Committee approves a measure or matter if a member, at the time of such approval, gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, or additional views for inclusion as part of the printed report.

(3) To the extent practicable, any report prepared pursuant to a Committee or subcommittee study or investigation shall be available to members no later than 48 hours prior to consideration of any such report by the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be.

(b) Disclaimers.

(1) A report on activities of the Committee required under clause 1 of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall include the following disclaimer in the document transmitting the report to the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Education and the Workforce or any subcommittee thereof and therefore may not necessarily reflect the views of its members.

Such disclaimer need not be included if the report was circulated to all members of the Committee at least seven days prior to its submission to the House of Representatives and provision is made for the filing by any member, as part of the printed report, of individual, minority, or dissenting views.

(2) All Committee or subcommittee reports printed pursuant to legislative study or investigation and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate, shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of such report:

This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Education and the Workforce (or pertinent subcommittee thereof) and therefore may not necessarily reflect the views of its members.

The minority party members of the Committee or subcommittee shall have three calendar days, excluding weekends and holidays, to file, as part of the printed report, supplemental, minority, or additional views.

(c) Reports of Subcommittees. Whenever a subcommittee has ordered a bill, resolution, or other matter to be reported to the Committee, the chair of the subcommittee reporting the bill, resolution, or matter to the Committee, or any member authorized by the subcommittee to do so, may report such bill, resolution, or matter to the Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair of the subcommittee to report or cause to be reported promptly such bill, resolution, or matter, and to take or cause to be taken the necessary steps to bring such bill, resolution, or matter to a vote.

(1) In any event, the report, described in the proviso in subsection (c)(2) of this rule, of any subcommittee on a measure which has been approved by the subcommittee shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the staff director of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the members of the subcommittee, for the reporting of that measure. Upon the filing of any such request, the staff director of the Committee shall transmit immediately to the chair of the subcommittee a notice of the filing of that request.

(2) Bills, resolutions, or other matters favorably reported by a subcommittee shall automatically be placed upon the agenda of the Committee as of the time they are reported. No bill or resolution or other matter reported by a subcommittee shall be considered by the full Committee unless it has been delivered or electronically sent to all members and notice of its prior transmission has been in the hands of all members at least 48 hours prior to such consideration. A member of the Committee shall receive, upon his or her request, a paper copy of such bill, resolution, or other matter reported. When a bill is reported from a subcommittee, such measure shall be accompanied by a section-by-section analysis; and, if the Chair of the Committee so requires (in response to a request from the Ranking Member of the Committee or for other reasons), a comparison showing proposed changes in existing law.

RULE 16. APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES, NOTICE OF CONFERENCE MEETINGS, AND CONFERENCE MOTION

(a) Whenever in the legislative process it becomes necessary to appoint conferees, the Chair shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees the names of those members of the subcommittee which handled the legislation in the order of their seniority upon such subcommittee and such other Committee members as the Chair may designate with the approval of the majority party members. Recommendations of the Chair to the Speaker shall provide a ratio of majority party members to minority party members no less favorable to the majority party than the ratio of majority members to minority party members on the full Committee. In making assignments of minority party members as conferees, the Chair shall consult with the Ranking Member of the Committee.

(b) After the appointment of conferees pursuant to clause 11 of Rule I of the Rules of the House of Representatives for matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee, the Chair shall notify all members appointed to the conference of meetings at least 48 hours before the commencement of the meeting. If such notice is not possible, then notice shall be given as soon as possible.

(c) The Chair is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House of Representatives whenever the Chair considers it appropriate.

RULE 17. MEASURES TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER SUSPENSION

A member of the Committee may not seek to suspend the Rules of the House of Representatives on any bill, resolution, or other matter which has been modified after such measure is ordered reported, unless notice of such action has been given to the Chair and Ranking Member of the full Committee.

RULE 18. BROADCASTING OF COMMITTEE HEARINGS AND MEETINGS

(a) Television, Radio and Still Photography.—

(1) Whenever a hearing or meeting conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee is open to the public, those proceedings shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography subject to the requirements of clause 4 of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and except when the hearing or meeting is closed pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives and of the Committee. The coverage of any hearing or meeting of the Committee or any subcommittee thereof by television, radio, or still photography shall be under the direct supervision of the Chair of the Committee, the subcommittee chair, or other member of the Committee presiding at such hearing or meeting and may be terminated by such member in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(2) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media shall be then currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(3) Personnel providing coverage by still photography shall be then accredited to the Press Photographers' Gallery.

(b) Audio and Video Coverage of Committee Hearings and Meetings.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings and shall maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public. Such coverage shall be fair and nonpartisan in accordance with clause 4(b) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives and other applicable rules of the House of Representatives and of the Committee. Personnel providing such coverage shall be employees of the House of Representatives or currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

RULE 19. COMMITTEE STAFF

(a) The employees of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chair in consultation with subcommittee chair and other majority party members of the Committee within the budget approved for such purposes by the Committee.

(b) The staff appointed by the minority shall have their remuneration determined in such manner as the minority party members of the Committee shall determine within the budget approved for such purposes by the Committee.

RULE 20. SUPERVISION AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEE STAFF

The staff of the Committee shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chair, who shall establish and assign the duties and responsibilities of such staff members and delegate authority as he or she determines appropriate. The staff appointed by the minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the minority party members of the Committee, who may delegate such authority as they determine appropriate. All Committee staff shall be assigned to Committee business and no other duties may be assigned to them.

RULE 21. AUTHORIZATION FOR TRAVEL

(a) Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolutions as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern travel of Committee members and staff. Travel to be paid from funds set aside for the full Committee for any member or any staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chair. Travel may be authorized by the Chair for any member and any staff member in connection with the attendance of hearings conducted by the Committee or any subcommittee thereof and meetings, conferences, and investigations that involve activities or subject matter under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. The Chair shall review travel requests to assure the validity to Committee business. Before such authorization is given, there shall be submitted to the Chair in writing the following:

(1) The purpose of the travel;

(2) The dates during which the travel is to be made and the date or dates of the event for which the travel is being made;

(3) The location of the event for which the travel is to be made; and

(4) The names of members and staff seeking authorization.

(b)(1) In the case of travel outside the United States of members and staff of the Committee for the purpose of conducting hearings, investigations, studies, or attending meetings and conferences involving activities or subject matter under the legislative assignment of the Committee or pertinent subcommittees, prior authorization must be obtained from the Chair, or, in the case of a subcommittee, from the subcommittee chair and the Chair. Before such authorization is given, there shall be submitted to the Chair, in writing, a request for

such authorization. Each request, which shall be filed in a manner that allows for a reasonable period of time for review before such travel is scheduled to begin, shall include the following:

(A) The purpose of travel;

(B) The dates during which the travel will occur;

(C) The names of the countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each;

(D) an agenda of anticipated activities for each country for which travel is authorized together with a description of the purpose to be served and the areas of Committee jurisdiction involved; and

(E) The names of members and staff for whom authorization is sought.

(2) Requests for travel outside the United States may be initiated by the Chair or the chair of a subcommittee (except that individuals may submit a request to the Chair for the purpose of attending a conference or meeting) and shall be limited to members and permanent employees of the Committee.

(3) The Chair shall not approve a request involving travel outside the United States while the House is in session (except in the case of attendance at meetings and conferences or where circumstances warrant an exception).

(4) At the conclusion of any hearing, investigation, study, meeting, or conference for which travel outside the United States has been authorized pursuant to this rule, each subcommittee (or members and staff attending meetings or conferences) shall submit a written report to the Chair covering the activities of the subcommittee and containing the results of these activities and other pertinent observations or information gained as a result of such travel.

(c) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, or regulations of the House of Representatives and of the Committee on House Administration pertaining to such travel, including rules, procedures, and limitations prescribed by the Committee on House Administration with respect to domestic and foreign expense allowances.

(d) Prior to the Chair's authorization for any travel, the Ranking Member shall be given a copy of the written request therefor.

RULE 22. BUDGET AND EXPENSES

(a) The Chair, in consultation with the majority party members of the Committee, shall prepare a preliminary budget. Such budget shall include necessary amounts for staff personnel, for necessary travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee; and, after consultation with the minority party membership, the Chair shall include amounts budgeted to the minority party members for staff personnel to be under the direction and supervision of the minority party, travel expenses of minority party members and staff, and minority party office expenses. All travel expenses of minority party members and staff shall be paid for out of the amounts so set aside and budgeted. The Chair shall take whatever action is necessary to have the budget as finally approved by the Committee duly authorized by the House of Representatives. After such budget shall have been adopted, no change shall be made in such budget unless approved by the Committee. The Chair or the chair of any standing subcommittee may initiate necessary travel requests as provided in Committee Rule 21 within the limits of their portion of the consolidated budget as approved by the House, and the Chair may execute necessary vouchers therefor.

(b) Subject to the Rules of the House of Representatives and procedures prescribed by the Committee on House Administration, and with the prior authorization of the Chair of the Committee in each case, there may be expended in any one session of Congress for necessary travel expenses of witnesses attending hearings in Washington, D.C.:

(1) Out of funds budgeted and set aside for each subcommittee, not to exceed $5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending hearings of each such subcommittee;

(2) Out of funds budgeted for the full Committee majority, not to exceed $5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending full Committee hearings; and

(3) Out of funds set aside to the minority party members, (A) Not to exceed, for each of the subcommittees, $5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending subcommittee hearings, and (B) Not to exceed $5,000 for expenses of witnesses attending full Committee hearings.

(c) A full and detailed monthly report accounting for all expenditures of Committee funds shall be maintained in the Committee office, where it shall be available to each member of the Committee. Such report shall show the amount and purpose of each expenditure, and the budget to which such expenditure is attributed.

RULE 23. CHANGES IN COMMITTEE RULES

The Committee shall not consider a proposed change in these rules unless the text of such change has been delivered or electronically sent to all members and notice of its prior transmission has been in the hands of all members at least 48 hours prior to such consideration; a member of the Committee shall receive, upon his or her request, a paper copy of the proposed change.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I submit for publication the attached copy of the rules of the Committee on Financial Services of the U.S. House of Representatives as adopted on January 14, 2015, for the 114th Congress:

RULE 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) The rules of the House are the rules of the Committee on Financial Services (hereinafter in these rules referred to as the ''Committee'') and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are privileged motions in the Committee and shall be considered without debate. A proposed investigative or oversight report shall be considered as read if it has been available to the members of the Committee for at least 24 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or legal holidays except when the House is in session on such day).

(b) Each subcommittee is a part of the Committee, and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules so far as applicable.

(c) The provisions of clause 2 of rule XI of the Rules of the House are incorporated by reference as the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable.

RULE 2

MEETINGS

Calling of Meetings

(a)(1) The Committee shall regularly meet on the first Tuesday of each month when the House is in session.

(2) A regular meeting of the Committee may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of the Chairman of the Committee (hereinafter in these rules referred to as the ''Chair''), there is no need for the meeting.

(3) Additional regular meetings and hearings of the Committee may be called by the Chair, in accordance with clause 2(g)(3) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(4) Special meetings shall be called and convened by the Chair as provided in clause 2(c)(2) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

Notice for Meetings

(b)(1) The Chair shall notify each member of the Committee of the agenda of each regular meeting of the Committee at least three calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on any such day) before the time of the meeting.

(2) The Chair shall provide to each member of the Committee, at least three calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on any such day) before the time of each regular meeting for each measure or matter on the agenda a copy of—

(A) the measure or materials relating to the matter in question; and

(B) an explanation of the measure or matter to be considered, which, in the case of an explanation of a bill, resolution, or similar measure, shall include a summary of the major provisions of the legislation, an explanation of the relationship of the measure to present law, and a summary of the need for the legislation.

(3) At least 24 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting for the markup of legislation, the Chair shall cause the text of such legislation to be made publicly available in electronic form.

(4) The provisions of this subsection may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the Committee or by the Chair with the concurrence of the ranking minority member.

RULE 3

MEETING AND HEARING PROCEDURES

In General

(a)(1) Meetings and hearings of the Committee shall be called to order and presided over by the Chair or, in the Chair's absence, by a member designated by the Chair to carry out such duties.

(2) Meetings and hearings of the committee shall be open to the public unless closed in accordance with clause 2(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(3) Any meeting or hearing of the Committee that is open to the public shall be open to coverage by television broadcast, radio broadcast, and still photography in accordance with the provisions of clause 4 of rule XI of the Rules of the House (which are incorporated by reference as part of these rules). Operation and use of any Committee operated broadcast system shall be fair and nonpartisan and in accordance with clause 4(b) of rule XI and all other applicable rules of the Committee and the House.

(4) To the extent feasible, members and witnesses may use the Committee equipment for the purpose of presenting information electronically during a meeting or hearing, provided the information is transmitted to the appropriate Committee staff in an appropriate electronic format at least one business day before the meeting or hearing so as to ensure display capacity and quality. The content of all materials must relate to the pending business of the Committee and conform to the Rules of the House. The confidentiality of the material will be maintained by the technical staff until its official presentation to the Committee members. For the purposes of maintaining the official records of the Committee, printed copies of all materials presented, to the extent practicable, must accompany the presentations.

(5) No person, other than a Member of Congress, Committee staff, or an employee of a Member when that Member has an amendment under consideration, may stand in or be seated at the rostrum area of the Committee rooms unless the Chair determines otherwise.

Quorum

(b)(1) For the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence, two members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(2) A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of reporting any measure or matter, of authorizing a subpoena (other than a subpoena authorized and issued by the Chair pursuant to subsection (e)(1)), of closing a meeting or hearing pursuant to clause 2(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House (except as provided in clause 2(g)(2)(A) and (B)) or of releasing executive session material pursuant to clause 2(k)(7) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(3) For the purpose of taking any action other than those specified in paragraph (2), one-third of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

Voting

(c)(1) No vote may be conducted on any measure or matter pending before the Committee unless the requisite number of members of the Committee is actually present for such purpose.

(2) A record vote of the Committee shall be provided on any question before the Committee upon the request of one-fifth of the members present.

(3) No vote by any member of the Committee on any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(4) In addition to any other requirement of these rules or the Rules of the House, including clause 2(e)(1)(B) of rule XI, the Chair shall make the record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is demanded publicly available for inspection at the offices of the Committee and in electronic form on the Committee's Web site not later than one business day after such vote is taken. Such record shall include in electronic form the text of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition, the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members of the Committee present but not voting. With respect to any record vote on any motion to report or record vote on any amendment, a record of such votes shall be included in the report of the Committee showing the total number of votes cast for and against and the names of those members of the Committee present but not voting.

(5) POSTPONED RECORD VOTES.—(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the Chairman may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment. The Chairman may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time, but no later than the next meeting day.

(B) In exercising postponement authority under subparagraph (A), the Chairman shall take all reasonable steps necessary to notify members on the resumption of proceedings on any postponed record vote.

(C) When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(D) The Chair's authority to postpone recorded votes will not be used to prejudice a member with regard to the offering of another amendment. In the application of this rule, the Chair will consult regularly with the ranking minority member regarding the scheduling of the resumption of postponed votes.

Hearing Procedures

(d)(1)(A) The Chair shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any committee hearing at least one week before the commencement of the hearing, unless the Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, or the Committee by majority vote with a quorum present for the transaction of business, determines there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner, in which case the Chair shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date.

(B) Not less than three days before the commencement of a hearing (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays except when the House is in session on any such day) announced under this paragraph, the Chair shall provide to the members of the Committee a concise summary of the subject of the hearing, or, in the case of a hearing on a measure or matter, a copy of the measure or materials relating to the matter in question and a concise explanation of the measure or matter to be considered. At the same time the Chair provides the information required by the preceding sentence, the Chair shall also provide to the members of the Committee a list of the witnesses expected to appear before the Committee at that hearing. The witness list may not be modified within 24 hours of a hearing, unless the Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines there is good cause for such modification.

(2) To the greatest extent practicable—

(A) each witness who is to appear before the Committee shall file with the Committee two business days in advance of the appearance sufficient copies (including a copy in electronic form), as determined by the Chair, of a written statement of proposed testimony and shall limit the oral presentation to the Committee to brief summary thereof; and

(B) each witness appearing in a non-governmental capacity shall include with the written statement of proposed testimony a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of any Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two preceding fiscal years. Such disclosure statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness appears.

(3) The requirements of paragraph (2)(A) may be modified or waived by the Chair when the Chair determines it to be in the best interest of the Committee.

(4)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the five-minute rule shall be observed in the interrogation of witnesses before the Committee or any of its subcommittees until each present member thereof has had an opportunity to question the witnesses. No member shall be recognized for a second period of five minutes to interrogate witnesses until each present member of the Committee or such subcommittee has been recognized once for that purpose.

(B) The Chair may permit a specified number of members to question one or more witnesses for a specified period of time not to exceed 60 minutes in the aggregate, equally divided between and controlled by the Chair and the ranking minority member.

(5) Whenever any hearing is conducted by the Committee on any measure or matter, the minority party members of the Committee shall be entitled, upon the request of a majority of them before the completion of the hearing, to call witnesses with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearing thereon. The Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, will determine the date, time, and place of such hearing.

(6) At any hearing of the Committee, opening statements by members of the Committee shall be limited to 10 minutes in the aggregate. The Chair shall control five minutes and recognize members in the Chair's sole discretion. The ranking minority member shall control five minutes; the Chair shall recognize members for such five minutes according to the direction of the ranking minority member as communicated to the Chair.

(7) Notwithstanding any member's oral delivery of an opening statement, written opening statements by any member of the Committee submitted to the Chair within 5 legislative days after the adjournment of a hearing shall be made a part of the official hearing record thereof.

Subpoenas and Oaths

(e)(1) The power to authorize and issue subpoenas is delegated to the Chair. The Chair will provide written notice to the ranking minority member at least 48 hours in advance of the authorization and issuance of a subpoena, except when exigent circumstances exist that do not permit such amount of notice, in which case the Chair shall provide such notice as soon as possible.

(2) Authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chair or by any member designated by the Committee, and may be served by any person designated by the Chair or such member.

(3) The Chair, or any member of the Committee designated by the Chair, may administer oaths to witnesses before the Committee.

RULE 4

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING MEASURES OR MATTERS

(a) No measure or matter shall be reported from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee is actually present.

(b) The Chair of the Committee shall report or cause to be reported promptly to the House any measure approved by the Committee and take necessary steps to bring a matter to a vote.

(c) The report of the Committee on a measure which has been approved by the Committee shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the clerk of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the members of the Committee, for the reporting of that measure pursuant to the provisions of clause 2(b)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House.

(d) All reports printed by the Committee pursuant to a legislative study or investigation and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of such report: ''This report has not been officially adopted by the Committee on Financial Services and may not necessarily reflect the views of its Members.''

(e) The Chair is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chair considers it appropriate.

RULE 5

SUBCOMMITTEES

Establishment and Responsibilities of Subcommittees

(a)(1) There shall be five subcommittees of the Committee as follows:

(A) SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS AND GOVERNMENT SPONSORED ENTERPRISES.—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises includes—

(i) securities, exchanges, and finance;

(ii) capital markets activities, including business capital formation and venture capital;

(iii) activities involving futures, forwards, options, and other types of derivative instruments;

(iv) the Securities and Exchange Commission;

(v) secondary market organizations for home mortgages, including the Federal National Mortgage Association, the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, and the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation;

(vi) the Federal Housing Finance Agency; and

(vii) the Federal Home Loan Banks.

(B) SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER CREDIT.—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit includes—

(i) all agencies, including the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Federal Reserve System, and the National Credit Union Administration, which directly or indirectly exercise supervisory or regulatory authority in connection with, or provide deposit insurance for, financial institutions, and the establishment of interest rate ceilings on deposits;

(ii) all matters related to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection;

(iii) the chartering, branching, merger, acquisition, consolidation, or conversion of financial institutions;

(iv) consumer credit, including the provision of consumer credit by insurance companies, and further including those matters in the Consumer Credit Protection Act dealing with truth in lending, extortionate credit transactions, restrictions on garnishments, fair credit reporting and the use of credit information by credit bureaus and credit providers, equal credit opportunity, debt collection practices, and electronic funds transfers, including consumer transactions using mobile devices;

(v) creditor remedies and debtor defenses, Federal aspects of the Uniform Consumer Credit Code, credit and debit cards, and the preemption of State usury laws;

(vi) consumer access to financial services, including the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act and the Community Reinvestment Act;

(vii) the terms and rules of disclosure of financial services, including the advertisement, promotion and pricing of financial services, and availability of government check cashing services;

(viii) deposit insurance; and

(ix) consumer access to savings accounts and checking accounts in financial institutions, including lifeline banking and other consumer accounts.

(C) SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND INSURANCE.—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance includes—

(i) insurance generally; terrorism risk insurance; private mortgage insurance; government sponsored insurance programs, including those offering protection against crime, fire, flood (and related land use controls), earthquake and other natural hazards; the Federal Insurance Office;

(ii) housing (except programs administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs), including mortgage and loan insurance pursuant to the National Housing Act; rural housing; housing and homeless assistance programs; all activities of the Government National Mortgage Association; housing construction and design and safety standards; housing-related energy conservation; housing research and demonstration programs; financial and technical assistance for nonprofit housing sponsors; housing counseling and technical assistance; regulation of the housing industry (including landlord/tenant relations); and real estate lending including regulation of settlement procedures;

(iii) community development and community and neighborhood planning, training and research; national urban growth policies; urban/rural research and technologies; and regulation of interstate land sales; and

(iv) the qualifications for and designation of Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (other than matters relating to tax benefits).

(D) SUBCOMMITTEE ON MONETARY POLICY AND TRADE.—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade includes—

(i) financial aid to all sectors and elements within the economy;

(ii) economic growth and stabilization;

(iii) defense production matters as contained in the Defense Production Act of 1950, as amended;

(iv) domestic monetary policy, and agencies which directly or indirectly affect domestic monetary policy, including the effect of such policy and other financial actions on interest rates, the allocation of credit, and the structure and functioning of domestic financial institutions;

(v) coins, coinage, currency, and medals, including commemorative coins and medals, proof and mint sets and other special coins, the Coinage Act of 1965, gold and silver, including the coinage thereof (but not the par value of gold), gold medals, counterfeiting, currency denominations and design, the distribution of coins, and the operations of the Bureau of the Mint and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing;

(vi) development of new or alternative forms of currency;

(vii) multilateral development lending institutions, including activities of the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Policies as related thereto, and monetary and financial developments as they relate to the activities and objectives of such institutions;

(viii) international trade, including but not limited to the activities of the Export-Import Bank;

(ix) the International Monetary Fund, its permanent and temporary agencies, and all matters related thereto; and

(x) international investment policies, both as they relate to United States investments for trade purposes by citizens of the United States and investments made by all foreign entities in the United States.

(E) SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS.—The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations includes—

(i) the oversight of all agencies, departments, programs, and matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee, including the development of recommendations with regard to the necessity or desirability of enacting, changing, or repealing any legislation within the jurisdiction of the Committee, and for conducting investigations within such jurisdiction; and

(ii) research and analysis regarding matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee, including the impact or probable impact of tax policies affecting matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

(2) In addition, each such subcommittee shall have specific responsibility for such other measures or matters as the Chair refers to it.

(3) Each subcommittee of the Committee shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within its general responsibility.

Referral of Measures and Matters to Subcommittees

(b)(1) The Chair shall regularly refer to one or more subcommittees such measures and matters as the Chair deems appropriate given its jurisdiction and responsibilities. In making such a referral, the Chair may designate a subcommittee of primary jurisdiction and subcommittees of additional or sequential jurisdiction.

(2) All other measures or matters shall be subject to consideration by the full Committee.

(3) In referring any measure or matter to a subcommittee, the Chair may specify a date by which the subcommittee shall report thereon to the Committee.

(4) The Chair, in his or her sole discretion, may discharge a subcommittee from consideration of any measure or matter referred to a subcommittee of the Committee.

Composition of Subcommittees

(c)(1) Members shall be elected to each subcommittee and to the positions of chair and ranking minority member thereof, in accordance with the rules of the respective party caucuses. The Chair of the Committee shall designate a member of the majority party on each subcommittee as its vice chair. The Chair may designate one member of the Committee who previously has served as the chairman of the Committee as the Chairman Emeritus.

(2) The Chair and ranking minority member of the Committee shall be ex officio members with voting privileges of each subcommittee of which they are not assigned as members and may be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum in such subcommittees. The Chairman Emeritus shall be an ex officio member without voting privileges of each subcommittee to which he or she is not assigned and shall not count for purposes of establishing a quorum in such subcommittees.

(3) The subcommittees shall be comprised as follows:

(A) The Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises shall be comprised of 30 members, 17 elected by the majority caucus and 13 elected by the minority caucus.

(B) The Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit shall be comprised of 30 members, 17 elected by the majority caucus and 13 elected by the minority caucus.

(C) The Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance shall be comprised of 21 members, 12 elected by the majority caucus and 9 elected by the minority caucus.

(D) The Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade shall be comprised of 21 members, 12 elected by the majority caucus and 9 elected by the minority caucus.

(E) The Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations shall be comprised of 21 members, 12 elected by the majority caucus and 9 elected by the minority caucus.

Subcommittee Meetings and Hearings

(d)(1) Each subcommittee of the Committee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive testimony, mark up legislation, and report to the full Committee on any measure or matter referred to it, consistent with subsection (a).

(2) No subcommittee of the Committee may meet or hold a hearing at the same time as a meeting or hearing of the Committee.

(3) The chair of each subcommittee shall set hearing and meeting dates only with the approval of the Chair with a view toward assuring the availability of meeting rooms and

avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings.

Effect of a Vacancy

(e) Any vacancy in the membership of a subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the functions of the subcommittee as long as the required quorum is present.

Records

(f) Each subcommittee of the Committee shall provide the full Committee with copies of such records of votes taken in the subcommittee and such other records with respect to the subcommittee as the Chair deems necessary for the Committee to comply with all rules and regulations of the House.

RULE 6

STAFF

In General

(a)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the professional and other staff of the Committee shall be appointed, and may be removed by the Chair, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of the Chair.

(2) All professional and other staff provided to the minority party members of the Committee shall be appointed, and may be removed, by the ranking minority member of the Committee, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of such member.

(3) It is intended that the skills and experience of all members of the Committee staff be available to all members of the Committee.

Subcommittee Staff

(b) From funds made available for the appointment of staff, the Chair of the Committee shall, pursuant to clause 6(d) of rule X of the Rules of the House, ensure that sufficient staff is made available so that each subcommittee can carry out its responsibilities under the rules of the Committee and that the minority party is treated fairly in the appointment of such staff.

Compensation of Staff

(c)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Chair shall fix the compensation of all professional and other staff of the Committee.

(2) The ranking minority member shall fix the compensation of all professional and other staff provided to the minority party members of the Committee.

RULE 7

BUDGET AND TRAVEL

Budget

(a)(1) The Chair, in consultation with other members of the Committee, shall prepare for each Congress a budget providing amounts for staff, necessary travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee and its subcommittees.

(2) From the amount provided to the Committee in the primary expense resolution adopted by the House of Representatives, the Chair, after consultation with the ranking minority member, shall designate an amount to be under the direction of the ranking minority member for the compensation of the minority staff, travel expenses of minority members and staff, and minority office expenses. All expenses of minority members and staff shall be paid for out of the amount so set aside.

Travel

(b)(1) The Chair may authorize travel for any member and any staff member of the Committee in connection with activities or subject matters under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is granted, there shall be submitted to the Chair in writing the following:

(A) The purpose of the travel.

(B) The dates during which the travel is to occur.

(C) The names of the States or countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each.

(D) The names of members and staff of the Committee for whom the authorization is sought.

(2) Members and staff of the Committee shall make a written report to the Chair on any travel they have conducted under this subsection, including a description of their itinerary, expenses, and activities, and of pertinent information gained as a result of such travel.

(3) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, and regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration.

RULE 8

COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATION

Records

(a)(1) There shall be a transcript made of each regular meeting and hearing of the Committee, and the transcript may be printed if the Chair decides it is appropriate or if a majority of the members of the Committee requests such printing. Any such transcripts shall be a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to require that all such transcripts be subject to correction and publication.

(2) The Committee shall keep a record of all actions of the Committee and of its subcommittees. The record shall contain all information required by clause 2(e)(1) of rule XI of the Rules of the House and shall be available in electronic form and for public inspection at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee.

(3) All Committee hearings, records, data, charts, and files shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the Chair, shall be the property of the House, and all Members of the House shall have access thereto as provided in clause 2(e)(2) of rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(4) The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Chair shall notify the ranking minority member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of the rule, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on written request of any member of the Committee.

Committee Publications on the Internet

(b) The Chair shall maintain an official Committee website for the purpose of carrying out the official responsibilities of the Committee, including communicating information about the Committee's activities. The ranking minority member may maintain an official website. To the maximum extent feasible, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form on the official Committee website maintained by the Chair.

Audio and Video Coverage of Committee Hearings and Meetings

(c)(1) To the maximum extent feasible, the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings; and

(2) maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS FOR THE 114TH CONGRESS

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I submit for publication the attached copy of the rules of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for the U.S. House of Representatives for the 114th Congress:

JURISDICTION OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives establishes the standing committees of the House and their jurisdiction. Under that rule, all bills, resolutions, and other matters relating to the subjects within the jurisdiction of any standing committee shall be referred to such committee. Clause 1(s) of Rule X establishes the jurisdiction of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs as follows:

(1) Veterans' measures generally.

(2) Cemeteries of the United States in which veterans of any war or conflict are or may be buried, whether in the United States or abroad (except cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior).

(3) Compensation, vocational rehabilitation, and education of veterans.

(4) Life insurance issued by the Government on account of service in the Armed Forces.

(5) Pensions of all the wars of the United States, general and special.

(6) Readjustment of servicemembers to civil life.

(7) Servicemembers' civil relief.

(8) Veterans' hospitals, medical care, and treatment of veterans.

RULE 1—GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) APPLICABILITY OF HOUSE RULES—The Rules of the House are the rules of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are non-debatable privileged motions in Committees and subcommittees.

(b) SUBCOMMITTEES—Each subcommittee of the Committee is a part of the Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules so far as applicable.

(c) INCORPORATION OF HOUSE RULE ON COMMITTEE PROCEDURE—Rule XI of the Rules of the House, which pertains entirely to Committee procedure, is incorporated and made part of the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable. Pursuant to clause 2(a)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the full Committee is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

(d) VICE CHAIRMAN—Pursuant to clause 2(d) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the full Committee shall designate the Vice Chairman of the Committee.

RULE 2—REGULAR AND ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

(a) REGULAR MEETINGS—The regular meeting day for the Committee shall be at 10 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in such place as the Chairman may designate. However, the Chairman may dispense with a regular Wednesday meeting of the Committee.

(b) ADDITIONAL MEETINGS—The Chairman of the Committee may call and convene, as he considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet for such purpose pursuant to the call of the Chairman.

(c) NOTICE—The Chairman shall notify each member of the Committee of the agenda of each regular and additional meeting of the Committee at least 24 hours before the time of the meeting, except under circumstances the Chairman determines to be of an emergency nature. Under such circumstances, the Chairman shall make an effort to consult the ranking minority member, or in such member's absence, the next ranking minority party member of the Committee.

RULE 3—MEETINGS AND HEARINGS GENERALLY

(a) OPEN MEETINGS AND HEARINGS—Meetings and hearings of the Committee and each of its subcommittees shall be open to the public unless closed in accordance with clause 2(g) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(b) ANNOUNCEMENT OF HEARING—The Chairman, in the case of a hearing to be conducted by the Committee, and the subcommittee Chairman, in the case of a hearing to be conducted by a subcommittee, shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted on any measure or matter at least one week before the commencement of that hearing unless the Committee or the subcommittee determines that there is good cause to begin the hearing at an earlier date. In the latter event, the Chairman or the subcommittee Chairman, as the case may be, shall consult with the ranking minority member and make such public announcement at the earliest possible date. The clerk of the Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Clerk of the Congressional Record and the Committee scheduling service of the House Information Resources as soon as possible after such public announcement is made.

(c) WIRELESS TELEPHONE USE PROHIBITED—No person may use a wireless telephone during a Committee or subcommittee meeting or hearing.

(d) MEDIA COVERAGE—Any meeting of the Committee or its subcommittees that is open to the public shall be open to coverage by radio, television, and still photography in accordance with the provisions of clause 4(f) of House rule XI as follows:

(1) If audio or visual coverage of the hearing or meeting is to be presented to the public as live coverage, that coverage shall be conducted and presented without commercial sponsorship.

(2) The allocation among the television media of the positions or the number of television cameras permitted by a committee or subcommittee chair in a hearing or meeting room shall be in accordance with fair and equitable procedures devised by the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(3) Television cameras shall be placed so as not to obstruct in any way the space between a witness giving evidence or testimony and any member of the committee or the visibility of that witness and that member to each other.

(4) Television cameras shall operate from fixed positions but may not be placed in positions that obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing or meeting by the other media.

(5) Equipment necessary for coverage by the television and radio media may not be installed in, or removed from, the hearing or meeting room while the committee is in session.

(6)(A) Except as provided in subdivision (B), floodlights, spotlights, strobelights, and flashguns may not be used in providing any method of coverage of the hearing or meeting.

(B) The television media may install additional lighting in a hearing or meeting room, without cost to the Government, in order to raise the ambient lighting level in a hearing or meeting room to the lowest level necessary to provide adequate television coverage of a hearing or meeting at the current state of the art of television coverage.

(7) If requests are made by more of the media than will be permitted by a committee or subcommittee chair for coverage of a hearing or meeting by still photography, that coverage shall be permitted on the basis of a fair and equitable pool arrangement devised by the Standing Committee of Press Photographers.

(8) Photographers may not position themselves between the witness table and the members of the committee at any time during the course of a hearing or meeting.

(9) Photographers may not place themselves in positions that obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing by the other media.

(10) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media shall be currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(11) Personnel providing coverage by still photography shall be currently accredited to the Press Photographers' Gallery.

(12) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media and by still photography shall conduct themselves and their coverage activities in an orderly and unobtrusive manner.

(e) REQUIREMENTS FOR TESTIMONY

(1) Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or a subcommittee shall file with the clerk of the Committee, at least 48 hours in advance of his or her appearance, or at such other time as designated by the Chairman after consultation with the Ranking Member, a written statement of his or her proposed testimony. Each witness shall, to the greatest extent practicable, also provide a copy of such written testimony in an electronic format prescribed by the Chairman. Each witness shall limit any oral presentation to a summary of the written statement. (2) Pursuant to clause 2(g)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House:

(A) In the case of a witness appearing in a non-governmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the current calendar year or either of the two previous calendar years by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing.

(B) The disclosure required by this Rule shall include the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing and the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(f) CALLING AND QUESTIONING WITNESSES

(1) Committee and subcommittee members may question witnesses only when they have been recognized by the Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee for that purpose, and only for a 5-minute period until all members present have had an opportunity to question a witness. The 5-minute period for questioning a witness by any one member may be extended only with the unanimous consent of all members present. The questioning of witnesses in both Committee and subcommittee hearings shall be initiated by the Chairman, followed by the ranking minority party member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority. Except as otherwise announced by the Chairman at the beginning of a hearing, members who are present at the start of the hearing will be recognized before other members who arrive after the hearing has begun. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chairman shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to disadvantage the members of the majority.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) regarding the 5-minute rule, the Chairman after consultation with the ranking minority member may designate an equal number of members of the Committee or subcommittee majority and minority party to question a witness for a period not longer than 30 minutes. In no event shall the Chairman allow a member to question a witness for an extended period under this rule until all members present have had the opportunity to ask questions under the 5-minute rule. The Chairman after consultation with the ranking minority member may permit Committee staff for its majority and minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods of time.

(3) Non-Committee Members may be invited to sit at the dais for Committee hearings with the unanimous consent of all Members present. Further, non-Committee Members may be recognized for questioning of witnesses but only after all Committee Members have first been recognized.

(4) When a hearing is conducted by the Committee or a subcommittee on any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman of a majority of those minority members before the completion of the hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of the hearing thereon.

(g) SUBPOENAS—Pursuant to clause 2(m) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, a subpoena may be authorized and issued by the Committee or a subcommittee in the conduct of any investigation or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the members voting, a majority being present.

(h) NOTICE REQUIREMENTS—

(1) The text of all bills or resolutions for markup, and any amendments in the nature of a substitute to such bills or resolution to be first recognized by the Chairman, shall be made available, via written or electronic notice, to Committee members at least 48 hours prior to a scheduled markup, except as agreed to by unanimous consent.

(2) Subject to the second sentence of this paragraph, it shall not be in order for the Committee to consider any amendment proposed to a bill or resolution under consideration by the Committee, or proposed to an amendment in the nature of a substitute noticed under paragraph (1), unless a written or electronic copy of such amendment has been delivered to each Member of the Committee (or Subcommittee for purposes of Subcommittee markups) at least 24 hours before the meeting at which the amendment is to be proposed. This paragraph may be waived by unanimous consent and shall apply only when the 48-hour written notice has been provided in accordance with paragraph (1).

(i) CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE SCORING—The Committee shall not include any bill or resolution for consideration during a

committee markup which is not accompanied by an accounting from the Congressional Budget Office of the mandatory and discretionary costs or savings associated with such bill or resolution.

The accounting from the Congressional Budget Office need not be official, but is expected to provide Committee members with an approximation of the budgetary impact a bill or resolution may have prior to any vote to favorably forward or report such bill or resolution. The requirements of this paragraph may be waived by a majority of Committee members, a quorum being present.

RULE 4—QUORUM AND RECORD VOTES; POSTPONEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS

(a) WORKING QUORUM—A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for business and a majority of the members of any subcommittee shall constitute a quorum thereof for business, except that two members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

(b) QUORUM FOR REPORTING—No measure or recommendation shall be reported to the House of Representatives unless a majority of the Committee was actually present.

(c) RECORD VOTES—A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the members present or, in the apparent absence of a quorum, by any one member. With respect to any record vote on any motion to amend or report, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those members voting for and against, shall be included in the report of the Committee on the bill or resolution.

(d) PROHIBITION AGAINST PROXY VOTING—No vote by any member of the Committee or a subcommittee with respect to any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(e) POSTPONING PROCEEDINGS—Committee and subcommittee chairmen may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment, and may resume proceedings within two legislative days on a postponed question after reasonable notice. When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

RULE 5—SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) ESTABLISHMENT AND JURISDICTION—

(1) There shall be four subcommittees of the Committee as follows:

(A) Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, which shall have legislative, oversight and investigative jurisdiction over compensation; general and special pensions of all the wars of the United States; life insurance issued by the Government on account of service in the Armed Forces; cemeteries of the United States in which veterans of any war or conflict are or may be buried, whether in the United States or abroad, except cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior; burial benefits; the Board of Veterans' Appeals; and the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

(B) Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, which shall have legislative, oversight and investigative jurisdiction over education of veterans, employment and training of veterans, vocational rehabilitation, veterans' housing programs, readjustment of servicemembers to civilian life, and servicemembers civil relief.

(C) Subcommittee on Health, which shall have legislative, oversight, and investigative jurisdiction over the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) including medical services, medical support and compliance, medical facilities, medical and prosthetic research, and major and minor construction.

(D) Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, which shall have oversight and investigative jurisdiction over veterans' matters generally, information technology, procurement, and over such matters as may be referred to the subcommittee by the Chairman of the full Committee for its oversight or investigation and for its appropriate recommendations. The subcommittee shall have legislative jurisdiction over such bills or resolutions as may be referred to it by the Chairman of the full Committee.

(2) Each subcommittee shall have responsibility for such other measures or matters as the Chairman refers to it.

(b) VACANCIES—Any vacancy in the membership of a subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the functions of that subcommittee.

(c) RATIOS—On each subcommittee, there shall be a ratio of majority party members to minority party members which shall be consistent with the ratio on the full Committee.

(d) REFERRAL TO SUBCOMMITTEES—The Chairman of the Committee may refer a measure or matter, which is within the general responsibility of more than one of the subcommittees of the Committee, as the Chairman deems appropriate. In referring any measure or matter to a subcommittee, the Chairman of the Committee may specify a date by which the subcommittee shall report thereon to the Committee.

(e) POWERS AND DUTIES—

(1) Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the full Committee on all matters referred to it or under its jurisdiction. Subcommittee chairmen shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their respective subcommittees after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and other subcommittee chairmen with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings whenever possible.

(2) Whenever a subcommittee has ordered a bill, resolution, or other matter to be reported to the Committee, the Chairman of the subcommittee reporting the bill, resolution, or matter to the full Committee, or any member authorized by the subcommittee to do so shall notify the Chairman and the ranking minority party member of the Committee of the Subcommittee's action.

(3) A member of the Committee who is not a member of a particular subcommittee may sit with the subcommittee during any of its meetings and hearings, but shall not have authority to vote, cannot be counted for a quorum, and cannot raise a point of order at the meeting or hearing.

(4) Non-Committee Members may be invited to sit at the dais for subcommittee hearings with the unanimous consent of all Members present. Further, non-Committee Members may be recognized for questioning of witnesses but only after all subcommittee Members have first been recognized for questioning.

(5) Each subcommittee shall provide the Committee with copies of such record votes taken in subcommittee and such other records with respect to the subcommittee as the Chairman of the Committee deems necessary for the Committee to comply with all rules and regulations of the House.

RULE 6—GENERAL OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY

(a) PURPOSE—Pursuant to clause 2 of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall carry out oversight responsibilities. In order to assist the House in—

(1) Its analysis, appraisal, evaluation of—

(A) The application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of the laws enacted by the Congress, or

(B) Conditions and circumstances, which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation, and

(2) Its formulation, consideration and enactment of such modifications or changes in those laws, and of such additional legislation, as may be necessary or appropriate, the Committee and its various subcommittees, consistent with their jurisdiction as set forth in Rule 5, shall have oversight responsibilities as provided in subsection (b).

(b) REVIEW OF LAWS AND PROGRAMS—The Committee and its subcommittees shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the applications, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of the Committee or subcommittee, and the organization and operation of the Federal agencies and entities having responsibilities in or for the administration and execution thereof, in order to determine whether such laws and the programs thereunder are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of the Congress and whether such programs should be continued, curtailed, or eliminated. In addition, the Committee and its subcommittees shall review and study any conditions or circumstances which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation within the jurisdiction of the Committee or subcommittee (whether or not any bill or resolution has been introduced with respect thereto), and shall on a continuing basis undertake future research and forecasting on matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee or subcommittee.

(c) OVERSIGHT PLAN.—Not later than February 15 of the first session of a Congress, the Committee shall meet in open session, with a quorum present, to adopt its oversight plans for that Congress for submission to the Committee on House Administration and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, in accordance with the provisions of clause 2(d) of Rule X of the Rules of the House.

(d) OVERSIGHT BY SUBCOMMITTEES—The existence and activities of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations shall in no way limit the responsibility of the other subcommittees of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for carrying out oversight duties.

RULE 7—BUDGET ACT RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) BUDGET ACT RESPONSIBILITIES—Pursuant to clause 4(f)(1) of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall submit to the Committee on the Budget not later than six weeks after the President submits his budget, or at such time as the Committee on the Budget may request—

(1) Its views and estimates with respect to all matters to be set forth in the concurrent resolution on the budget for the ensuing fiscal year that are within its jurisdiction or functions; and

(2) An estimate of the total amounts of new budget authority, and budget outlays resulting therefrom, to be provided or authorized in all bills and resolutions within its jurisdiction that it intends to be effective during that fiscal year.

RULE 8—RECORDS AND OTHER MATTERS

(a) TRANSCRIPTS—There shall be a transcript made of each regular and additional meeting and hearing of the Committee and its subcommittees. Any such transcript shall be a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks involved.

(b) RECORDS—

(1) The Committee shall keep a record of all actions of the Committee and each of its subcommittees. The record shall contain all information required by clause 2(e)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House and shall be available for public inspection at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee.

(2) There shall be kept in writing a record of the proceedings of the Committee and each of its subcommittees, including a record of the votes on any question on which a recorded vote is demanded. The result of each such record vote shall be made available by the Committee for inspection by the public at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee. Information so available for public inspection shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order or other proposition and the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members present but not voting.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVED RECORDS—The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House. The Chairman shall notify the ranking minority member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3 or clause 4 of Rule VII of the Rules of the House, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on written request of any member of the Committee.

(d) AVAILABILITY OF PUBLICATIONS—Pursuant to clause 2(e)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form to the maximum extent feasible.

RULE 9—TRAVEL

(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVEL—All requests for travel, funded by the Committee, for Members and staff in connection with activities or subject matters under the general jurisdiction of the Committee, shall be submitted to the Chair for approval or disapproval. All travel requests should be submitted to the Chair at least five working days in advance of the proposed travel. For all travel funded by any other source, notice shall be given to the Chair at least five working days in advance of the proposed travel. All travel requests shall be submitted to the Chair in writing and include the following:

(1) The purpose of the travel.

(2) The dates during which the travel is to occur.

(3) The names of the locations to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each.

(4) The names of members and staff of the Committee for whom the authorization is sought. Travel by the minority shall be submitted to the Chair via the Ranking Member.

(b) TRIP REPORTS—Members and staff shall make a written report to the Chair within 15 working days on all travel approved under this subsection. Reports shall include a description of their itinerary, expenses, and activities, and pertinent information gained as a result of such travel.

When travel involves majority and minority Members or staff, the majority shall submit the report to the Chair on behalf of the majority and minority. The minority may append additional remarks to the report at their discretion.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF HOUSE RULES—Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, and regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration.

RULE 10—FACILITY NAMING

(a) FACILITY NAMING—No Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility or property shall be named after any individual by the Committee unless:

(1) Such individual is deceased and was:

(A) A veteran who (i) was instrumental in the construction or the operation of the facility to be named, or (ii) was a recipient of the Medal of Honor or, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, otherwise performed military service of an extraordinarily distinguished character;

(B) A Member of the United States House of Representatives or Senate who had a direct association with such facility;

(C) An Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, a Secretary of Veterans Affairs, a Secretary of Defense or of a service branch, or a military or other Federal civilian official of comparable or higher rank; or

(D) An individual who, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, performed outstanding service for veterans.

(2) Each Member of the Congressional delegation representing the State in which the designated facility is located must indicate in writing such Member's support of the proposal to name such facility after such individual. Evidence of a Member's support in writing may either be in the form of a letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member or cosponsorship of legislation proposing to name the particular VA facility in question.

(3) The pertinent State department or chapter of each Congressionally chartered veterans' organization having a national membership of at least 500,000 must indicate in writing its support of such proposal.

(b) The above criteria for naming a VA facility may be waived by unanimous consent.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 19, 2015, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

796. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer and Acceptance to Mexico, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, Transmittal No.: 15-04; to the Committee on Armed Services.

797. A letter from the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the ''Calendar Year 2014 Reports on the Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratory Personnel Management Demonstration Projects'', pursuant to Sec. 1107(d) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, as amended (Pub. L. 110-181), and Sec. 1107(g) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Pub. L. 113-66); to the Committee on Armed Services.

798. A letter from the Acting Director, Directorate of Whistleblower Protection Programs, OSHA, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures for the Handling of Retaliation Complaints Under Section 806 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, as Amended [Docket No.: OSHA-2011-0126] (RIN: 1218-AC53) received March 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

799. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Sec. 73.622(i), Post-Transition Table of DTV Allotments, Television Broadcast Stations (Lansing, Michigan) [MB Docket No.: 15-2] [RM-11744] received March 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

800. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting a report on the extensions of hydropower construction deadlines under Sec. 13 of the Federal Power Act, pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 1992, section 1701(c)(5); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

801. A letter from the Chairman, Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, transmitting in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987, Pub. L. 100-203, ''A Report to the U.S. Congress and the Secretary of Energy'', for the period January 1, 2008, through December 31, 2012; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

802. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report concerning international agreements other than treaties, entered into by the United States, to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

803. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification pursuant to the reporting requirements of Sec. 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (Transmittal No.: DDTC 14-143); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

804. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by Sec. 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and Sec. 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 of April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

805. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by Sec. 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, as amended by Sec. 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), and pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a semiannual report detailing telecommunications-related payments made to Cuba pursuant to Department of the Treasury licenses during the period from July 1 through December 31, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

806. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting two reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

807. A letter from the Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization for nine officers to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

808. A letter from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled ''Examination of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Receiving Local District Funds to Provide Homeless Services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

809. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting

in accordance with the provisions of Sec. 17(a) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act, the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-576, the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (as amended), the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, the provisions of Sec. 5 (as amended) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, and the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000, the Corporation's 2014 Annual Report; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

810. A letter from the General Counsel, National Endowment for the Humanities, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

811. A letter from the Chief Counsel for Administrative Law, Office of the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

812. A letter from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting the ''Executive Summary of the 2014 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the Unites States Courts'' and ''Judicial Business of the United States Courts'', pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 604(a)(4); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

813. A letter from the Board of Trustees, National Railroad Retirement Investment Trust, transmitting the Annual Management Report for Fiscal Year 2014, pursuant to Sec. 105 of the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

814. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — NASA Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (RINs: 2700-AE01 and 2700-AE09) received March 16, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

815. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's ''FY 2012 Annual Report to Congress on the Child Support Program'', pursuant to Sec. 452(a) of the Social Security Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

816. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Beginning of Construction for Secs. 45 and 48 [Notice 2015-25] received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

817. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2015 Calendar Year Resident Population Figures [Notice 2015-23] received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

818. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Notice under Sec. 529A [Notice 2015-18] received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

819. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Safe Harbor Method for Determining a Wagering Gain or Loss from Slot Machine Play [Notice 2015-21] received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

820. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — User Fees and Change of Address for Submission of Applications for Approval of Sec. 403(b) Pre-approved Plans (Rev. Proc. 2015-22) received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

821. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Health Insurance Providers Fee [TD 9711] (RIN: 1545-BM52) received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

822. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Alternative Simplified Credit Election [TD 9712] (RIN: 1545-BL78) received March 12, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

823. A letter from the Chairman, United States World War One Centennial Commission, transmitting the Commission's periodic report for the period ending December 31, 2014, pursuant to Public Law 112-272, section 5(b)(1); jointly to the Committees on Financial Services, Natural Resources, and Oversight and Government Reform.

824. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of Defense, transmitting a draft of proposed legislation titled ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016''; jointly to the Committees on Armed Services, Financial Services, Oversight and Government Reform, Veterans' Affairs, Science, Space, and Technology, and Foreign Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 1021. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the integrity of the Medicare program, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–46, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Energy and Commerce discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1021 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 1415. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to strengthen enforcement of spousal court-ordered property distributions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina (for herself and Mr. ISRAEL):

H.R. 1416. A bill to prevent application of sequestration to payment for certain physician-administered drugs under part B of the Medicare program in fiscal years 2016 and 2017, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 1417. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide parity to Puerto Rico hospitals with respect to inpatient hospital payments under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 1418. A bill to amend part B of the title XVIII of the Social Security Act to apply deemed enrollment to residents of Puerto Rico and to provide a special enrollment period and a reduction in the late enrollment penalties for certain residents of Puerto Rico; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BECERRA (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. PIERLUISI):

H.R. 1419. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to improve the Social Security Administration's ability to fight fraud, prevent errors, and protect the Social Security Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, 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. PASCRELL (for himself and Mr. ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 1420. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to establish a surveillance system regarding traumatic brain injury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. POCAN (for himself, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. MENG, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. LEE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. KILMER, Mr. PETERS, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. RUIZ):

H.R. 1421. A bill to prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 1422. A bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to exclude a loan secured by a non-owner occupied 1- to 4-family dwelling from the definition of a member business loan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 1423. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the

Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from the definition of health insurance coverage certain medical stop-loss insurance obtained by certain plan sponsors of group health plans; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. YARMUTH):

H.R. 1424. A bill to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act to allow the marketing, distribution, or sale of solid antimicrobial copper alloys with certain claims, to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to exclude certain solid antimicrobial copper alloys from regulation as drugs or devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. LAMBORN):

H.R. 1425. A bill to amend titles 10 and 32, United States Code, to require congressional approval before any change may be made to the oaths required for appointment as an officer in the Armed Forces, enlistment in the Armed Forces, or appointment as a cadet or midshipman at a military service academy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 1426. A bill to ensure public access to published materials concerning scientific research and development activities funded by Federal science agencies; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. WHITFIELD):

H.R. 1427. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 1428. A bill to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BOST (for himself and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 1429. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to allow for petitions for reconsideration of size standards for small business concerns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. BOUSTANY (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. NEAL, Mr. REED, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut):

H.R. 1430. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the look-through treatment of payments between related controlled foreign corporations; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 1431. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act and the Railway Labor Act to prohibit the preemption of State stalking laws; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 1432. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act and the Railway Labor Act to prohibit the preemption of State identity theft laws; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. COHEN (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MOORE, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 1433. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives for the establishment of supermarkets in certain underserved areas; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COURTNEY (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. DEGETTE, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. BASS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. ESTY, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. HAHN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SIRES, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MOULTON, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LEE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. NEAL, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. WALZ, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. KEATING, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 1434. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and the Budget, 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. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 1435. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require States to develop policies on positive school climates and school discipline; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 1436. A bill to require that certain Federal lands be held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 1437. A bill to amend the Coquille Restoration Act to clarify certain provisions relating to the management of the Coquille Forest; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 1438. A bill to require that certain Federal lands be held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. HONDA, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. LEE, Miss RICE of New York, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. POLIS, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. TONKO, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. NADLER, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. BERA, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. HAHN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 1439. A bill to provide paid family and medical leave benefits to certain individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DESJARLAIS (for himself and Mr. FLEISCHMANN):

H.R. 1440. A bill to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 to treat employment as a field emergency medical service practitioner in the same manner as employment as a firefighter for purposes of such Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. ESTY (for herself, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. TONKO, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 1441. A bill to emphasize manufacturing in engineering programs by directing the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in coordination with other appropriate Federal agencies including the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and National Science Foundation, to designate United States manufacturing universities; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. ISRAEL, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MENG, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. TONKO, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. HANNA, Mr. REED, Mr. KATKO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. COLLINS of New York):

H.R. 1442. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 90 Cornell Street in Kingston, New York, as the ''Staff Sergeant Robert H. Dietz Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. ZINKE, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 1443. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a bison management plan for Grand Canyon National Park; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HANNA (for himself, Mr. CHABOT, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 1444. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to prohibit the use of reverse auctions for procurements of covered contracts; to the Committee on Small Business.

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

H.R. 1445. A bill to provide that there shall be no net increase in the acres of certain Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, or the Forest Service unless the Federal budget is balanced for the year in which the land would be purchased; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HURT of Virginia (for himself and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 1446. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide privacy protections that enable certain individuals to remove their profiles from the healthcare.gov website, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 1447. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to improve the Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LANGEVIN (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. DUCKWORTH):

H.R. 1448. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Transportation to carry out a transit accessibility innovation program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 1449. A bill to repeal certain impediments to the administration of the firearms laws; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 1450. A bill to permit employees to request, and to ensure employers consider requests for, flexible work terms and conditions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, House Administration, and 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 Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1451. A bill to provide for the land exchange involving Navy Outlying Landing Field Site 8 in Escambia County, Florida; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1452. A bill to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NUNES (for himself, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. PETERS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. HARPER, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. VEASEY):

H.R. 1453. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modernize payments for ambulatory surgical centers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Ms. BASS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. FARR, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. ISRAEL, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. TAKANO, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 1454. A bill to modify the definition of armor piercing ammunition to better capture its capabilities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. STIVERS (for himself and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H.R. 1455. A bill to require the Food and Drug Administration to expedite review of pharmaceuticals that are approved for marketing in the European Union; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WHITFIELD (for himself, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 1456. A bill to provide a biennial budget for the United States Government; to the Committee on the Budget, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DOLD (for himself, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. COSTA, Mr. LAMALFA, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. SHERMAN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MENG, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. NUNES, Mr. DENHAM, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. BASS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. GARRETT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. TROTT, Ms. LEE, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. PETERSON, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. CAPUANO):

H. Res. 154. A resolution calling on the President to work toward equitable, constructive, stable, and durable Armenian-Turkish relations based upon the Republic of Turkey's full acknowledgment of the facts and ongoing consequences of the Armenian Genocide, and a fair, just, and comprehensive international resolution of this crime against humanity; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SESSIONS:

H. Res. 155. A resolution electing a Member to a certain standing committee of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to. considered and agreed to.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. PETERS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. MICA, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California):

H. Res. 156. A resolution recognizing the cultural and historical significance of Nowruz; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. TITUS, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H. Res. 157. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Social Work Month and World Social Work Day; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. NORTON:

H. Res. 158. A resolution condemning Dalit untouchability, the practice of birth-descent discrimination against Dalit people, which is widely practiced in India, Nepal, the Asian diaspora, and other South Asian nations, and calling on these countries to recognize the human rights of the Dalit people and end all forms of untouchability within their borders; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (for herself, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEWIS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. BASS, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. MOORE, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. CLAY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. POCAN, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. NADLER, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. RUSH, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms.

BROWN of Florida, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois):

H. Res. 159. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the current record breaking wealth gap is a national problem for the nation's economic security, and that broad-based, generational and systemic inequities continue to distort economic progress and opportunity for tens of millions of Americans -especially low and middle-income Americans and communities of color; 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. 1415.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:

H.R. 1416.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Commerce Clause: Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power ''to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 1417.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. PIERLUISI:

H.R. 1418.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of the Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution; to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution such power, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution; and to make rules and regulations respecting the U.S. territories, as enumerated in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the Constitution.

By Mr. BECERRA:

H.R. 1419.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to ''provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.''

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 1420.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. POCAN:

H.R. 1421.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 1422.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution to regulate commerce.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 1423.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, paragraph 3 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. LATTA:

H.R. 1424.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 1425.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 16 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 1426.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 1427.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 1

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 1428.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 9

By Mr. BOST:

H.R. 1429.

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. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 1430.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 1431.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 1432.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 1433.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8, clause 3 (relating to the power to interstate commerce).

By Mr. COURTNEY:

H.R. 1434.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 1435.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 1 of the Constitution, and Article I, section 8, clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 1436.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3, of Section 8, of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 1437.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3, of Section 8, of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 1438.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3, of Section 8, of Article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 1439.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution and Article I. Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. DESJARLAIS:

H.R. 1440.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. ESTY:

H.R. 1441.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 1442.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 7

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 1443.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (The Property Clause)

The Property Clause states that Congress has the power to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States. The Supreme Court in Fort Leavenworth Railroad v. Lowe (1885), reasoned that the authority of the federal government over federal lands is ''necassarily paramount.'' The Court opinion went on to further reason that state governments also have rights though with regards to certain activites that take place on federal lands within state borders. The Act provides guidelines for controlling populations of bison in Grand Canyon National Park and requires the Secretary to corrdinate with the appropriate State Wildlife Management Agency, thus making it constitutionally permissible.

By Mr. HANNA:

H.R. 1444.

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. HARDY:

H.R. 1445.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

''clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution''.

By Mr. HURT of Virginia:

H.R. 1446.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. KENNEDY:

H.R. 1447.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress

By Mr. LANGEVIN:

H.R. 1448.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grant Congress the authority to enact this bill.

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 1449.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 of the Constitution

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 1450.

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. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1451.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 1452.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section III, Clause II

By Mr. NUNES:

H.R. 1453.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 1454.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 1455.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution. The Constitution's Commerce Clause allows Congress to enact laws when reasonably related to the regulation of interstate commerce.

By Mr. WHITFIELD:

H.R. 1456.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 1 of the Constitution

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.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 25: Mr. RATCLIFFE.

H.R. 140: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 167: Mr. ISRAEL and Mr. NEWHOUSE.

H.R. 173: Mr. CRAWFORD.

H.R. 223: Ms. STEFANIK.

H.R. 231: Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 233: Mr. GUINTA.

H.R. 262: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 282: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 304: Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. KILMER, and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 395: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 400: Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 408: Ms. MENG.

H.R. 504: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 531: Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 540: Mr. POCAN and Mr. HASTINGS.

H.R. 546: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 588: Mr. MARINO and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 595: Mr. PITTENGER and Mr. PIERLUISI.

H.R. 602: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 631: Ms. GRANGER, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 650: Mr. DENT, Mr. BYRNE, and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 663: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 670: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 711: Ms. GRANGER, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 722: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.

H.R. 727: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. HAHN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. SCHRADER, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 729: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. ESHOO, and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 750: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 782: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 804: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 818: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 822: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 825: Mr. BYRNE and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 900: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 903: Mr. MULLIN.

H.R. 920: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 967: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 977: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 986: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 996: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 999: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. HANNA, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 1002: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. JOLLY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. ROSS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 1009: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1019: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania and Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 1027: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 1042: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. TAKAI, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1062: Mr. NOLAN, Mr. CRAMER, and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 1084: Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 1086: Mr. CRAMER and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 1091: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 1105: Mr. NEUGEBAUER and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1120: Mr. DENT and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 1131: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 1139: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. BEYER.

H.R. 1148: Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 1149: Mr. BILIRAKIS and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 1185: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 1188: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 1206: Mr. WALKER, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, and Mr. LAMALFA.

H.R. 1221: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. RUSH, and Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 1247: Mr. POLIS and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1249: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.

H.R. 1269: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 1284: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 1302: Mr. ISRAEL and Mr. BLUM.

H.R. 1310: Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1332: Mr. OLSON, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 1339: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 1358: Mr. NADLER and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 1368: Mr. POE of Texas and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 1369: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 1378: Ms. TITUS and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 1384: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 1411: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.J. Res. 25: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.J. Res. 29: Mr. RUSSELL.

H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. DUFFY.

H. Con. Res. 23: Mr. BUCK, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. STEWART, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. HANNA, and Mr. ENGEL.

H. Res. 110: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015 No. 46

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Merciful God, enthroned above all powers, thank You for bestowing on us the dignity of being called Your children. You are mighty in power and we are grateful for the masterpiece of another day. Lord, forgive us when we forget that You are still in charge of what happens in our Nation and world. This world belongs to You, and though the wrong seems very strong, Your sovereignty still prevails. Your power is far beyond any conceivable authority.

Guide our Senators with Your sovereignty. Use them, Lord, to solve the critical problems in our time, contributing to the peace and stability of this land we love. Bless those who support them in their work as You surround us all with the shield of Your divine favor.

We pray in Your sacred 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. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is hard to believe what we saw yesterday. Democrats actually filibustered a bill to help victims of modern slavery apparently because leftwing lobbyists told them to. Yes, their historic mistake is callous and extreme, but more than that it is tragic.

I mentioned the story of Melissa yesterday. Melissa was sold into sexual slavery before she had even become a teenager. She still bears the scars of her years of torment, the beatings, the shackling, the emotional cruelty. When Melissa finally escaped, she wasn't embraced as a victim, she was branded as a criminal.

Melissa's story is heartbreaking, but it is anything but unique. Stories such as hers remind us how important the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act is. It is stories such as hers that remind us that no excuse about not reading a bill and no command from leftwing lobbyists could justify filibustering the critical help this human rights bill would provide.

So we have not given up on the thousands of victims in this country who suffer as Melissa did—shaken and shackled but still hanging on to hope. Democrats owe these victims, not lobbyists, help—help the Senate is so close to passing.

A strong majority of the Senate, including several Democrats, have already voted in favor of this human rights bill. Now all it takes is a few more Democrats of courage to ignore the lobbyists and do what is right. All that will mean is the Democrats on the Judiciary Committee supporting the very same bill they voted for just a few weeks earlier.

Apparently, all of these Senators were for this human rights bill before they were against it, and it is not like the bipartisan provision now suddenly in question is anything new. As the Congressional Research Service notes, bipartisan provisions such as this one ''have been enacted in a variety of contexts since 1970,'' appearing in authorizing legislation as diverse as the State Children's Health Insurance Program, the Legal Services Corporation Act, the Department of Defense Authorization Act, the Foreign Assistance Act, and others—language that is quite common and has been voted for numerous times by our friends on the other side of the aisle.

That is why the distinguished Democratic leader, my friend, had been such a strong supporter of the bipartisan Hyde provision for so many years and why he said during his tenure as majority leader: ''My belief in the sanctity of life is why I have repeatedly voted against using taxpayer money for abortions.'' That was my friend, the Democratic leader. That is the declared view of my friend. It is what he said just a few short years ago before he and his party voted to filibuster a bill that would help the victims of modern slavery.

So this afternoon we invite Democrats to ignore the lobbyists and do the right thing. We invite every Democrat to help us write a happy ending to this story, where the forces of hope and humanity, not powerful lobbyists, prevail.

THE SENATE BUDGET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, several weeks ago the White House released an unserious budget that would have raised taxes by nearly $2 trillion and increase the national debt by more than $7 trillion. In other words, it was more of the same old tired, failed policies of the past. Hardly anyone took that budget seriously mostly because it was not meant to be taken seriously.

Contrast that with the balanced budget the Senate will introduce this morning. It is a budget that controls spending, reduces the deficit, and improves programs such as Medicaid. It is a budget that will support economic growth and more opportunity for hardworking families while protecting our most vulnerable citizens. It is a budget

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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that will allow us to repeal and replace a program that hurts the middle class, ObamaCare. It will allow us to repeal and replace a program that hurts the middle class, ObamaCare.

I thank the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator ENZI, for his good work on this sensible budget.

We have heard some talk of shrinking deficits these days. Of course, Republicans are proud to take credit for helping force some fiscal responsibility on the Obama administration, but we know these deficits will soon shoot up dramatically if Washington does not start making more commonsense choices.

The reality is our country still has many tough fiscal challenges to confront. These are not challenges that can just be taxed away. These are not challenges that can be denied away either. But by working together these are challenges we can overcome, and the way we can overcome them is with sensible ideas to get spending under control and make government more efficient, more effective, and more accountable, just as the Senate's budget proposes to do.

TRADE PROMOTION LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have one final matter. For all the issues that may divide Democrats and Republicans these days, there is one thing many of us can agree on—trade is good for America. There is bipartisan agreement that trade is good for American wages with export-related manufacturing jobs paying nearly 20 percent more than other kinds of jobs, and there is bipartisan agreement that trade is good for American jobs overall.

According to one study, trade supports nearly 40 million jobs nationally—about one out of every five jobs and more than one-half million jobs in my State of Kentucky alone. In fact, Kentucky's exports in goods and services have already increased dramatically since the enactment of trade agreements with countries such as Australia, from about $10 billion a year to almost $30 billion a year. Trade is good for Kentucky and trade is good for America, and that is why this is an issue where the White House and Congress are working together to support American jobs and wages.

While the United States has historically been a world leader in opening more markets to the products our country makes and grows, we have fallen woefully behind in recent years.

Thankfully, emerging agreements with countries in Europe and the Pacific present us with a real chance to catch up. These agreements present us with the unique opportunity to export more of what we make over there so we can create more American jobs right here at home. But we cannot make this important progress for America's middle class without passing the right kind of trade legislation in Congress first.

There is bipartisan agreement—at least in principle—to do exactly that, but the details will obviously be important. We want to ensure we get those details of that legislation right so we can get the best agreements possible for the American people. We certainly don't want to be considering legislation that would make these goals harder to achieve—undermining future economic and job growth.

The good news is our country has decades of experience with the kind of bipartisan trade promotion legislation that allows for the best deals for American workers to be negotiated by America's trade representatives and then approved by Congress. Several members of my conference will speak about that issue on the floor today. Like many of our Democratic friends, these Senators are interested in getting the best deals possible for the American people—the kind of deals that would only be possible with truly effective and bipartisan trade legislation. So they will explain this important issue, and that is just what is needed. They will explain it in further detail.

Before I leave the floor, I wish to recognize the good work of the chairman of the Finance Committee for being an incredible advocate on this issue, and allow me to also recognize the ranking member of the Finance Committee for working hard to try to get this right. We all look forward to working with these Members, and all Members, on this very important issue.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

THANKING SENATOR PAUL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, just as an aside, most everybody knows at this point that on New Year's Day I fell and hurt myself and injured my right eye.

During this period of time, the Presiding Officer—who by the way is a medical doctor, an ophthalmologist—has been so kind and thoughtful and considerate in visiting with me, giving me encouragement and some expert advice as to what he has seen in the past and given me hope for better sight out of my right eye. I appreciate it very much.

I want the people of Kentucky to know how thoughtful and considerate and kind the Presiding Officer has been to me over these past few months.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, instead of being bogged down in another Republican-contrived fight, I have proposed a path forward that is very simple and very direct. While we work toward an agreement to pass trafficking legislation—and there is work being done on that as we speak—we should move to the Executive Calendar and consider the nomination of a very fine person, Loretta Lynch.

Democrats are fully committed to voting for Lynch's nomination and returning immediately to the trafficking bill. The Senate can do two things at the same time. We can certainly work on coming up with a path forward on trafficking and also do something to move forward and have a vote for a new Attorney General.

The chief law enforcement officer of this country—the man who is now the Attorney General—said months ago he wants to leave. He has been winding down. It is not right for this country not to have a fully engaged Attorney General.

I am disappointed that with all the work the Senate needs to accomplish, the majority leader is bound and determined to waste the rest of this week with the same votes we took yesterday. I was told we are going to have the same votes today that we had yesterday, and we will have the same votes on Thursday that we are going to have today and that we had on Tuesday.

Albert Einstein, a genius, said the pure definition of insanity is somebody who does the same thing over and over again and comes up with the same result. It is insane to keep going forward on these votes that everyone knows are going to turn out the same way.

Loretta Lynch has waited 130 days. There is no reason to delay her confirmation another minute. We can vote for her confirmation now and move back to the trafficking bill right now.

THE HOUSE BUDGET

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Gandhi said, ''Action expresses priorities.'' Action expresses priorities. Congressional Republicans' actions on the budget clearly demonstrate how little regard they have for the American middle class. I want to get into a few examples. Their budget proposal—the one the House is going to send to us soon—ends Medicare as we know it, replacing it with another voucher program. It takes health care away from 16.4 million Americans now insured through the Affordable Care Act. It guts Medicaid and undercuts millions of families who rely on it to fund nursing homes and other care. It cuts billions in education funding—billions—and it cuts job training and employment services for 4 million American workers. The list goes on and on.

But we know one thing their budget does not do. It doesn't cut a single tax loophole for the superwealthy to reduce the deficit. Not one. Instead, this budget is brimming with more tax breaks for the megarich—many new tax breaks. In fact, the Republican budget would drastically cut the tax bill for the average millionaire while raising taxes on the middle class. That is not just irresponsible, it is immoral.

Of course, lowering taxes for millionaires and billionaires will add to the

deficit, not cut it. Republicans claim they are reducing the deficit, but that is not true. In truth, they are using mirrors and a lot of smoke in an effort to fool the American people.

House Republicans are really hiding the ball—moving the ball—claiming massive savings without explaining how. They are, for lack of a better description, cooking the books, using speculative and what they call ''dynamic scoring.'' What is dynamic scoring? This is an effort to claim they are balancing the budget. Dynamic scoring says, here is all this tax revenue and other money we are going to get and it will help significantly. The fact is everyone knows there isn't any truth to that. It is only some numbers on paper. They are relying on transparent tricks to hide their refusal to protect our military from sequestration and budget cuts. Yet Republicans say of their own budget plan, we do not rely on gimmicks or creative accounting to balance our budget.

The definition of ''gimmick'' is a concealed, devious aspect or feature of something, as a plan or a deal—a concealed, devious aspect or feature.

Well, we have a perfect example of a gimmick in the Republican budget that the House is working on and we are told they will complete. It sounds like a gimmick to me. At least one Republican from the House agrees with me. Congressman KEN BUCK of Colorado said yesterday, ''It's all hooey.'' The budget is all hooey. But as Dana Milbank said in today's Washington Post, speaking of the House Republicans' plan: ''True, the budget does not rely on gimmicks. The budget is a gimmick.'' That is a direct quote.

We don't need gimmicks. We need a responsible budget and this is not a responsible budget. This is not responsible governance.

Unfortunately, though, this is the budget we have come to expect from today's Republican Party—a party that is so committed to supporting the superwealthy that they are throwing America's middle class and the military overboard.

Democrats are focused on the middle class. We want to create jobs, invest in the future, and make sure that all Americans benefit from an improving economy.

We are more than happy to work with our Republican colleagues in order to make our goals a reality. Unfortunately, helping the middle class just doesn't seem to be a priority for congressional Republicans.

Mr. President, would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and with the time equally divided, with the Democrats controlling the first half, and the majority controlling the second half.

The assistant Democratic leader.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this is the Executive Calendar of the U.S. Senate. This Executive Calendar tells us the nominations that are pending before the U.S. Senate where action is needed. There is one name to be found on this calendar on page 4—a name which has been sitting on this calendar longer than any nominee for Attorney General of the United States of America over the last 30 years. This name has been sitting on this calendar for 20 days, which doesn't seem like an extraordinarily long period of time. However, it turns out that the previous nominees for Attorney General were moved so quickly on this Senate calendar that the last five combined, by Democratic and Republican Presidents, took less time to be confirmed than this one name. What is that name? It is Loretta E. Lynch of New York to be Attorney General—a name that was submitted to the U.S. Senate by President Barack Obama to make history—a name, a nominee to make history. This is the first African-American woman in the history of the United States to be nominated to serve as Attorney General. It is a civil rights milestone that her name has been submitted.

I sat through the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, and it was a packed room. All the TV cameras were there. Loretta Lynch came and sat at the table, with her father behind her, with her family around her, with close friends gathered from all over the United States, and this woman calmly, in a dignified way, gave the most compelling testimony I have heard of any witness before the Senate Judiciary Committee, including those who came before us seeking to be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. She was excellent. No one laid a glove on her. No one raised any concern about her nomination. And then, when the public witnesses were invited to come in from both the Republican and Democratic sides to comment on her nomination, Senator PATRICK LEAHY of Vermont asked all of them gathered: Is there any one of you who opposes the nomination of Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General? Not one. Not one.

Yet, here we are now, with this nomination pending longer than any Attorney General nomination in the last 30 years. Why? Why has the Senate Republican leadership decided to target this good woman and to stop her from serving as the first female African-American Attorney General of the United States of America? There is no good reason. There is no substantive reason. She has been an extraordinary prosecutor in New York. She has the support of so many outstanding organizations. The National District Attorneys Association supports Loretta Lynch, as do the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys. The FBI Agents Association supports Loretta Lynch, and a long list of Republican- and Democratic-appointed former U.S. Attorneys, including Patrick Fitzgerald from my State of Illinois, and former FBI Director Louis Freeh, appointed by a Republican President, and Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson from the George W. Bush administration. The list goes on and on.

The fact is there is no substantive reason to stop this nomination. The Republican majority leader announced over the weekend that he was going to hold this nomination of Loretta Lynch until the bill which is pending before the Senate passes, whenever that may be.

So Loretta Lynch, the first African-American woman nominated to be Attorney General, is asked to sit in the back of the bus when it comes to the Senate calendar. That is unfair. It is unjust. It is beneath the decorum and dignity of the U.S. Senate.

This woman deserves fairness. She seeks to lead the Department of Justice, and the U.S. Senate should be just in its treatment of her nomination. To think that we would jeopardize her opportunity to serve this Nation and to make history is fundamentally unfair.

What is the issue? The issue is this important bill. It is a bill which relates to human trafficking. As chairman of the constitution subcommittee, I have held hearings on this subject and it is heartbreaking to hear how primarily young women have been enslaved and exploited not just around the world but in the United States. I support this legislation. I think we should move it forward. What is holding this up is very simple: one sentence. Out of a 112-page bill, there is 1 sentence on pages 50 and 51 that relates to the issue of abortion.

I needn't tell anyone following this debate how controversial and divisive that issue can be and has been for so many decades in the United States. The fact is that issue has nothing to do with human trafficking. It should be debated at another moment, another time, on another bill. But, sadly, this 1 sentence in this 100-page bill is holding it up from being considered on the floor.

If the senior Senator from Texas, who is the lead sponsor on this bill, would come to the floor and simply remove this one sentence, this bill would pass. It would pass this afternoon, overwhelmingly. There is no question about it. He knows it. We have told him that. We have offered that to him, but he refuses.

So this good bill language is on the calendar, the Senate is mired in controversy, and Loretta Lynch sits on the calendar for another day.

It has been 130 days since President Obama announced the nomination of this woman to serve as our Attorney General. That is more than three times the period of time it took for us to confirm Attorney General Ashcroft. It is more than 2½ times as long as it took to confirm Attorney General Mukasey and twice as long as it took to confirm Attorney General Holder.

It is time for us to give Loretta Lynch an opportunity to continue to serve America and to make civil rights history by allowing this African-American woman to step forward and serve. It is time to stop holding her hostage to a political debate on the floor of the U.S. Senate that has nothing to do with her obvious qualifications to serve this Nation.

Mr. President, 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. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is one thing Americans have made clear, it is that they want their leaders to do something about the economy. The recession may have officially ended almost 6 years ago, but millions of Americans are still struggling economically and opportunities are still few and far between.

One big thing we can do to help the economy and expand opportunities for American workers is pass trade promotion authority or what we refer to as TPA. Our prior trade agreements have been a boon to the economy, providing American workers with jobs and American farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers with new markets for their goods. In my home State of South Dakota, 74 percent of exports go to countries with which the United States has a free-trade agreement. Between 2005 and 2014, South Dakota saw a 110-percent increase in exports to free-trade agreement countries. That has been a huge benefit to South Dakota farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers.

Speaking of farmers and trade, today is National Agriculture Day. I would just like to add as an aside that the substantial agriculture trade surplus the United States currently enjoys is a tribute to the efficiency and the productivity of America's farmers and ranchers. I salute American farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses that provide America and the world with a safe and abundant food supply.

Passing trade promotion authority is one way we can ensure an even greater global expansion of U.S. agricultural trade. Currently, the administration is in the process of negotiating two new trade agreements that would open vast new markets for American products and put American goods on a level playing field internationally. The first of these agreements, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, is being negotiated with a number of Asia-Pacific nations, including Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, and Vietnam. Currently, American goods face heavy tariffs in many of these countries—at times as high as 85 percent. Tariffs of that size put American goods at incredible disadvantage compared to their foreign competitors. Tariffs provide a powerful disincentive for citizens in other nations to purchase American products. Removing this disincentive would increase foreign demand for U.S. products, which would mean more business for U.S. farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers and more jobs and opportunities for American workers.

Just to give an example of how important trade is to American agriculture, we currently export half of U.S. wheat, milled rice production, and soybean production; 70 percent of almond, walnut, and pistachio production; more than 75 percent of cotton production; 40 percent of grapes; 20 percent of cherries; 20 percent of apples; 20 percent of poultry and pork production; and 10 percent of beef production.

If you think about it, there are approximately now 260 preferential trade agreements worldwide. Only 20 of those involve the United States. Every time we have entered into a new trade agreement where we have been able to eliminate tariffs and duties on a lot of our products, we see an explosion in exports into those particular markets. That is why negotiating the strongest possible transpacific trade agreement, as well as the agreement the United States is negotiating with the European Union, has to be a priority. For that, we have to have trade promotion authority.

Trade promotion authority has been the means by which nearly every U.S. free-trade agreement has been negotiated. The idea behind TPA is very simple: Congress sets the negotiating priorities the administration must follow and then requires the administration to consult with Congress during the negotiating process. In return, Congress promises a simple up-or-down vote on the final agreement, instead of a lengthy amendment process that could leave the final agreement looking nothing like the deal the administration negotiated.

The promise of that up-or-down vote on a final agreement is the key. That is what gives our trading partners the confidence they need to put their best offers on the table, which allows for a successful conclusion of negotiations. Trade promotion authority demonstrates that Congress and the administration are on the same page when it comes to the content of trade agreements and that the final agreement will be either accepted or rejected, not amended beyond recognition.

Trade promotion authority expired in 2007. Republicans have been pushing for renewing it ever since. The President is also on board. He called for trade promotion authority in this year's State of the Union Address.

This is an excellent chance, I would add, for Democrats and Republicans to accomplish something significant for the American people and to show that Washington is working again.

Unfortunately, while the President and Republicans are united on this issue, many Senate Democrats continue to oppose trade promotion authority legislation. The chairman of the Senate Finance Committee is currently engaged in negotiations on a TPA bill with the committee's ranking member, the senior Senator from Oregon. I am hopeful and I know a lot of us on the committee and many of us in this Chamber are hopeful that these efforts will yield legislation both Republicans and Democrats can support.

Republicans are very open to suggestions and improvements. In fact, I expect the final agreement will include many elements advocated by the senior Senator from Oregon and other Senate Democrats, such as greater transparency surrounding trade negotiations. However, the one thing Republicans cannot support is an attempt to undermine the core of trade promotion authority—that guaranteed up-or-down vote that gives other countries the confidence to put forward their best offers in trade negotiations. Simply put, we cannot afford to weaken TPA.

I know the senior Senator from Utah, who is the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee—who is on the floor right now; and we will hear from him in just a few minutes—is working very hard to ensure that we have a strong TPA agreement that we can bring to the floor of the Senate, that we can pass through the Congress, and that we can put on the President's desk so that we can enable these trade negotiations to continue in a way that will lead to a conclusion, to a result that is good for American manufacturers and service industries and American farmers and ranchers.

If we fail to pass TPA, which will likely spell the failure of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the United States-European Union trade agreement, we will not be maintaining the status quo. Just because we are not negotiating agreements does not mean other countries will not be. Other countries will secure favorable treatment of their goods, and American goods will fall further and further behind. That is not something we can afford in this economy.

If we pass TPA, on the other hand, that will allow the transpacific trade agreement and the United States-European Union trade agreement to move forward, which means American producers will benefit from new markets

for their goods and American workers will benefit from new jobs and opportunities. Since 2009, exports have accounted for more than 1 million new jobs here in the United States. If we pass the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the United States-European Union trade agreements, we could be looking at more than 1 million more new jobs over the next few years.

It is time to pass TPA, to get these agreements concluded, and to let American workers and businesses start experiencing the benefits. It has been far too long. Mr. President, 2007 is when the last TPA expired. We are losing ground by the day when we are not in the room and a part of negotiating new trade agreements that are beneficial to American businesses, farmers, and ranchers.

I wish to point out one more time that there are approximately now 260 preferential trade agreements worldwide, only 20 of which involve the United States. So if we want to participate in a growing global economy where 95 percent of the world's population lives, we have to become aggressive in creating the trading opportunities that will enable our businesses to prosper, to create good-paying jobs here in the United States, to raise incomes for middle-income families in this country, and to give us as a country an opportunity to lead the world when it comes to an economy that benefits all people—not just those here in the United States but all around the world. We have the wherewithal, the know-how, the technology, the creativity, and the innovation in our economy to make that possible, to make it happen. That is why these trade agreements are so essential.

These trade agreements, as I pointed out, do not happen unless we have trade promotion authority in place to make sure they happen. If we do not have it in place and these trade agreements do not get done, it is not that America—that we are just going to be standing still, we are going to be losing ground as countries around the world that are aggressively trying to negotiate trade agreements and improve the economies of their countries continue to do that, leaving us further and further behind.

So I hope we can get this passed through the Senate Finance Committee, passed through the Senate, the House of Representatives, and on the President's desk where it can be signed into law. The sooner that happens, the better it will be for our economy, for jobs, for American businesses, and for American farmers and ranchers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues, and I appreciated the wonderful remarks of the senior Senator from South Dakota, Mr. THUNE. He is working very hard on that committee and really making a difference, as I think most people on the committee are trying to do. But he makes a difference, and I truly appreciated his remarks today.

I am pleased to join my colleagues on the floor to talk about the importance of Trade Promotion Authority, or TPA, to the health of our Nation's economy. At the beginning of this Congress, I, along with many of my colleagues, stated publicly that trade was one of the few areas where the new Republican Congress would be able to find common ground with President Obama. I still believe that is the case.

I chatted with him just last week—one of the few conversations I have had with him since he has been President—and I was very appreciative. He would like to get this done, and he is right.

The Obama administration is currently negotiating some of the most ambitious trade agreements in our Nation's history. The first is the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, an Asia-Pacific trade agreement being negotiated between the United States and 11 other countries. On the other side of the world, the United States is negotiating a bilateral trade agreement with 28 countries of the European Union; that is called T-TIP.

Together, these two trade agreements have the potential to greatly expand access to U.S. trade with other countries, allowing our job creators to sell more American-made goods and services. They are in demand. We just have to get in the game. This helps us create and support more high-paying export-related jobs at home. Of these two agreements, the TPP negotiations, or the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, are further advanced. According to administration officials, the agreement could be concluded over the next few months. That is good news.

Now, I wish talk about the bad news. Without renewal of effective TPA procedures, the administration will simply not be able to conclude a strong TPP agreement.

Why is TPA, or trade promotion authority, so important?

TPA is a compact between the Senate, the House, and the administration. Under this compact, the administration agrees to pursue specified objectives and consult with Congress as it negotiates trade agreements. Both the House and the Senate agree to allow for expedited consideration of trade agreements without amendments. This is essential for the conclusion and passage of strong trade agreements.

Put simply, without TPA, our trading partners will not put their best offers on the table because they will have no guarantees the agreement they sign will be the same one Congress will vote on in the end. The distinguished Senator from South Dakota made that very clear. They don't want to agree with our Trade Representative and then have countless amendments in the House and the Senate that could change the whole agreement they had agreed to. That is why trade promotion authority became such an important part of our international relations.

As former Deputy USTR Miriam Sapiro said in a recent speech:

> Neither our Asian nor our European partners want to get into the real give-and-take that's necessary to reach a final agreement until they are sure that the president has the authority that he needs to conclude the deal. Absent that, they are content to wait.

In other words, if we want good trade agreements, we must have strong TPA procedures in place, and we need to be clear on one other point: The specifics of those procedures matter. They matter a great deal. This is bipartisanship at its best.

Our goal should not be to pass just any TPA bill. Our goal should be to pass the strongest bill possible. That is the only way to ensure we get the best possible deal out of our trade negotiations, which is, in the end, the purpose of TPA. We have used the same basic TPA structure for every major trade agreement over the last four decades and, quite frankly, the results speak for themselves.

As my colleagues have so eloquently stated today, we do not need new, untested changes to establish TPA procedures that can hamper the process and make it harder for both our negotiators to reach a good deal and for Congress to be able to vote on agreement up or down.

When Republicans took control of the Senate this year and I became the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I made renewing TPA my top trade priority for this Congress. I set out to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to craft the best possible bill. We already had a good framework in place—the bill I introduced last year with former Chairman Baucus and Chairman Camp, which had broad support in Congress, in the administration, and in the business community.

My goal has been to see if we could improve upon that product in order to broaden support for TPA. I am certainly willing to do that, but I have made it clear throughout this process that I cannot agree to any bill that would dilute the effectiveness of TPA as a tool to negotiate and enact strong trade agreements.

Recently, I had the opportunity to talk personally with President Obama about TPA, as I mentioned. I think he understands the importance of getting a strong TPA bill through Congress. That is why I am willing to work with him to make the advancement of our Nation's trade agenda a higher priority. I am hoping the President will do his part to help persuade the Members of his party to support an effective TPA bill. He says he will, and I believe him.

Make no mistake. Our competitors are not sitting on their laurels when it comes to trade. There are literally hundreds of trade agreements under negotiation throughout the world, and the United States is party to only a few.

This hurts our exporters badly. This bill is really necessary. We need to do

better. We need to do everything we can to ensure that the United States is not only a participant in international trade but a leader. The only way we can do that is by passing a strong TPA bill.

I stand ready and willing to work with the White House and my colleagues in the Senate to get an effective TPA bill introduced out of committee and onto the Senate floor as soon as possible.

We cannot afford to miss this opportunity. This is a grand opportunity for us. It is bipartisan down the line, and I think it would be a great accomplishment for the Congress of the United States to get this done. But, more importantly, it would be a great accomplishment for the President and this administration to have this done. It would give him the tools to do a lot of the things that need to be done.

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. COATS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 178, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 178) to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

Pending:

Portman amendment No. 270, to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to enable State child protective services systems to improve the identification and assessment of child victims of sex trafficking.

Portman amendment No. 271, to amend the definition of ''homeless person'' under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to include certain homeless children and youth.

Vitter amendment No. 284 (to amendment No. 271), to amend section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to clarify those classes of individuals born in the United States who are nationals and citizens of the United States at birth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I did not come down to speak on this particular bill. I am back for week No. 4 of waste of the week.

In recent weeks, I have highlighted what I describe as excess spending of taxpayer dollars. We have talked about double dipping in unemployment insurance, where if we could close this loophole, we could save the taxpayer $5.7 billion in savings.

We have also talked about duplication in Federal economic development programs. There are 50-some programs that provide for workforce training spread among a number of agencies. Surely we can reduce that number significantly. And if we could do so, we could save the taxpayer $200 million.

And last week—somewhat tongue in cheek, nevertheless not small change—I talked about a $387,000 grant issued by the National Institutes of Health in which 18 New Zealand white rabbits were given, four times a day, 30-minute massages to determine whether they would be relieved of some soreness after they were given some physical exercise. Then four massages a day, 30 minutes apiece, costing $387,000, to prove that a massage helped to make them feel better or removed some of those aches and pains.

I think we could have asked any athlete from any college. As we are moving into college basketball's March Madness and Final Four that we all engage in at this time of year, we could ask any college athlete, or any person for that matter who is doing work in the yard: Do you think 4 30-minute massages a day would help you feel a little better and help you with some of those aches and pains? Do we need to spend $387,000 of taxpayer dollars in order to prove this and give rabbits massages?

So up we go with the chart. Waste of the week. This is week No. 4, and I would like to talk about a so-called bonus that has been given by our Federal Government that is quite egregious.

I am sure many look forward to a potential bonus at the end of the year—though it doesn't apply in our business here. A bonus sounds like something that comes along with something that was earned, but what if it was a bonus you didn't earn? Is it still a bonus or does it become fraud?

Internal Revenue Service Commissioner John Koskinen recently confirmed to the Senate that unless action is taken, an amnesty bonus would be available to millions who have broken our immigration laws. All of this stems from the President's announcement in November of 2014 to grant 3 years of tentative legal status to as many as 4 million individuals who crossed America's borders into this country illegally. Fortunately, President Obama's Executive amnesty has been temporarily blocked by a Federal court. Hopefully, that blockage will survive all legal challenges to undo it. But if this amnesty plan moves forward, 4 million illegal individuals will be granted Social Security numbers.

Why does this matter? Well, when you are granted a Social Security number, it triggers certain benefits, including eligibility for the earned income tax credit for up to 3 prior years in future tax filing years.

The earned income tax credit is a benefit for working people who have low to moderate income. It is an incentive and a reward for those who choose to work, and it does help to reduce the number of those who are dependent on government welfare programs. It allows some individuals to receive payments from the U.S. Treasury just by filing a tax return. It reduces the amount of tax an individual owes and it may also provide a tax refund.

Why is this issue qualified as waste of the week? Since the President is trying to legalize an additional 4 million individuals, if his action is upheld by the court, 4 million people will now have retroactive access to this benefit and taxpayers foot the bill for these 4 million illegal immigrants who will be in a position to earn this tax credit.

The Joint Committee on Taxation says this so-called amnesty bonus for those who have come into our country illegally will drain about $2.1 billion from the United States Treasury.

I am for legal immigration. The United States has a rich history as a destination where people from all over the world can come to make a better life for themselves. We are a nation of immigrants. As a matter of fact, I am the son of an immigrant. My mother came here with her family, and it has been the narrative of our family. Legal immigration is what has made America the great prosperous country it is today. But we also are a nation of laws, and Congress should help ensure that legal immigrants to our country can benefit from the opportunities they need to succeed, but that doesn't include rewarding those who are gaming our immigration system to receive benefits they do not legally qualify for.

To address this matter, I have joined with Senator GRASSLEY and several other of my colleagues to introduce legislation that would correct this issue. If we can correct this issue, we will save the taxpayers an estimated $2.1 billion in future spending.

So up we go with the thermometer here, and we will be adding another $2.1 billion to the money that can be saved our taxpayers by eliminating duplication, by pursuing awards that are not legally given, by looking at the way the Federal Government wastes money by giving rabbits back rubs, and we are going to continue to fill this up until we hopefully reach the $100 billion goal. That is not small change.

I continue to hear from Hoosiers and others who write and say: Yes, we haven't been able to address the big issues of debt and deficit, but we can go after government waste. And those who say we can't afford to cut spending a nickel because we have cut so much so far clearly have not paid attention to the billions of dollars that can be saved the taxpayers simply by addressing the waste and illegal use of the taxpayer money.

I look forward to sharing some more of these in coming weeks, and I thank the sponsor of the bill here for giving

me the time to come down and add another waste of the week to the list climbing toward our goal of $100 billion in savings for the taxpayer, who is overtaxed already.

With that, I yield the floor.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to speak on the pending business, the Justice for Victims of Human Trafficking Bill.

The Senate is now on the second week of the trafficking bill and my colleagues in the minority refuse to allow this body to amend or pass this bipartisan bill. When this legislation was reported out of committee, not a single Democrat on the committee raised any concern with the inclusion of the protections offered by the Hyde amendment. This was hardly surprising, after all, Democrats have previously voted in favor of legislation that includes similar long standing statutory protections—such as the Affordable Care Act. That is why it's so shocking that Democrats—out of nowhere—have had a change of heart on the Hyde amendment, and are now obstructing efforts to help victims of human trafficking.

I urge my colleagues who are filibustering this legislation to consider the gravity of their actions. While Democrats play politics as usual, thousands of victims—many of whom are children—are assaulted and abused every day, hoping someone will hear their cries for help. We cannot and must not allow political gamesmanship to stand in the way of helping thousands of victims of human trafficking. Now is the time we must work together to protect our Nation's most vulnerable from a horrific trade that robs our children of their childhood and rejects the sanctity of life.

Let us honor our commitment to protect children from abuse, neglect and rape. Let us put aside politics and do the right thing by moving forward on this bill.

Mr. COATS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am here today for two reasons. One is to manage the bill at hand for the next few hours, and the other is to talk a little bit about Loretta Lynch, and how I hope we can resolve both these issues.

I believe when it comes to the human trafficking bill on the floor, as well as my bill, the safe harbor bill—which is not the one on the floor, but it is also a strong bipartisan bill that passed out of the Judiciary Committee with every single person voting for it, 20 to 0. I want to talk a little bit about the bill so people don't forget it. It is expected to be an amendment to the bill on the floor when we get these issues resolved.

I am hopeful that at some point here—and I hope it is today—we are going to turn the corner on some of the language we have been hearing on the floor. I think it is becoming a sad situation, especially sad for the victims of trafficking, and I think we have a moment in time today and tomorrow where we can actually work on this and try to resolve it. I believe this great august body, which has dealt with many large issues in the past—100 people who I think have come to this place with good will—should be able to resolve it in some way, get through this, and get this bill done.

As we continue to work on the issues with the bill at hand, Senator CORNYN's bill, I also want to talk about the bill I have and why both these bills are important and actually work together.

On trafficking. First, we know the numbers. More than 27 million people around the world are victims of some kind of trafficking each year. It is not always sex trafficking. Sometimes it is labor trafficking and other things. When it comes to sex trafficking, the average age of a victim when she is trafficked is 13 years old. She is not even old enough to go to a high school prom, not even old enough to get a driver's license.

When you look at the statistics around the world, it is the third biggest international criminal enterprise in the world. The first is the illegal trafficking of drugs. I don't think that is a surprise. The second is the illegal trafficking of guns, and the third is the illegal trafficking of children, mostly little girls. But what people don't always realize when they think about trafficking—I think they often think about kids who are found in the bottom of a boat. That does happen, horrible stories like that. But when it comes to the United States of America, 83 percent of the victims—83 percent of the victims—are from our own country. They are from our own country. They are girls such as Tamara Vandermoon of Minnesota. She was 12 when she was first sold for sex. She was not even a teenager. She was just mad at her mom, and she ran away. A pimp found her and made her all kinds of promises—promises that sounded pretty good when you are a scared kid away from home. It happened when she was the most vulnerable. He took advantage of her before she even had a chance to grow up and be an adult. She has worked to change her life around through services and help in our State.

Our State has been the leader in this area. That is one of the things why I introduced the safe harbor bill, which I hope will be the first amendment to this bill after we resolve these issues. My bill also is sponsored with Senator CORNYN. He and I have worked together on this bill.

Another example—because people always use numbers. I used a bunch of numbers at the beginning of this speech, but I think sometimes people know behind those numbers, every single one of those numbers, is a child.

Two weeks ago, out of the U.S. Attorney's office in Minnesota, our case was charged, and it happened a few months ago. It was a 12-year-old in Rochester, MN, which is an idyllic community, a beautiful place. This little 12-year-old got a text. She was with a girl who was a little older than herself. The text invited them to a party. She thought that was pretty cool. She goes to the McDonald's parking lot. She is at the McDonald's parking lot, and this pimp puts her in the car. She thinks she is going to a party. She gets carted up to the Twin Cities. She gets raped. He takes sexually explicit pictures of her. He puts them on Craigslist. She gets sold the next day to two other guys, raped by two other guys.

Finally they were able to track down this perpetrator. He has been charged with a very serious crime by the U.S. Attorney's office. This happened in Minnesota. We can ask Senator HEITKAMP, who has been involved in this issue. It happens in the oil patches in North Dakota. It happens on the streets of Washington, DC. It happens all over this country.

We may say, why is everyone talking about this now in this day and age? I look at this, as a former prosecutor, as back when people viewed domestic violence as a crime that was behind doors, that no one wanted to talk about it, and no one realized it was a crime. They thought of it as a family issue.

When we start seeing kids who are in situations of domestic violence are multiple times more likely to commit crimes themselves because they grow up seeing it, we realize it is not just an issue between two people. As horrible as the injuries are to the immediate victim, it is also an issue for their entire family and for the entire community. We learned that about domestic violence. We learned that about child abuse. Now we are starting to see this about trafficking.

We can't have a 12-year-old who is a criminal, right? The 12-year-old is a victim of this. The 12-year-old doesn't know what they are doing. They are only 12 years old, but they are a victim, they are not a criminal. That is the focus of the Safe Harbor Act.

I want to thank my colleague, Republican ERIK PAULSEN in the House, who has taken this bill on. We have worked together on it. A version of it has passed the House. We like ours a little bit better because it has the national sex trafficking strategy in it, and that is the bill we are going to be putting on as an amendment. ERIK has been a true leader on this issue, and we just talked yesterday about it. This bill actually now has—a version of it, my safe harbor bill—has passed the House twice. It doesn't have the issues with the Hyde amendment. Hopefully it will be the first bill, the first amendment, when we resolve these other issues.

What does the bill do? What it does is looks at what has been working in States across the country. According to a report by Polaris—a group that is among many groups as a leader on sex trafficking—it shows that 15 States across the country have taken these safe harbor laws. The laws basically say we are not going to treat these kids as criminals. We are going to make sure they are treated as victims, that they get the services they need. And mostly then from a law enforcement perspective—from someone who was a prosecutor for 8 years, ran an office of 400 people and saw these cases coming in and out of our doors all the time—what it means is these victims will then better testify against the people whom we want to get. Those are the perps. Those are the people running the rings. Those are the johns who are buying the sex. By having this approach, we have a much better chance of going after the people who are doing this.

The Ramsey County attorney's office out of St. Paul, MN, with their leader John Choi, was able to get a 40-year sentence last year of someone who was running one of these rings. We have had numerous prosecutions in Minnesota.

This idea of having a shelter, a place for the victims to go—because otherwise what is going to happen if they don't think they are going to get help or maybe get some job training, have a place to stay, they are going to go right back to the pimp, and then they are not going to be willing to testify and tell their story. That is what has happened through history, and that has enabled the rings to get worse and worse.

The other thing we know that has enabled them to get worse is the Internet. We love the Internet, but it has allowed people to market things on all kinds of Web sites and in all kinds of devious ways. They are able to sell young girls and young boys on these Web sites. They get a text and they show up and think they are going to a party. That is what is happening. It is behind closed doors and it is hidden. That is one of the reasons we are seeing this increase and these problems coming up, in addition to the realization we are not going to tolerate this anymore.

We have 15 States across the country that already have the safe harbor laws. Another 12 States are making good progress in this direction. It is not starting from scratch. As I said, my home State is one of the first ones, but we are seeing them. What our bill does is create incentives for States to adopt these kinds of laws. It is not involving a lot of money. It is taking existing programs and trying to create incentives so that States will adopt these laws.

The other piece of the bill is that it allows victims of these crimes to qualify for certain Federal job programs that they may not qualify for now. It also creates a national strategy, as I mentioned, to combat human trafficking.

I always found when I was a prosecutor that people didn't care who took on the case, whether it was a local prosecutor or the State AG or the U.S. Attorney's office. They just wanted people to get the job done. They didn't actually understand the jurisdictional divisions. By making this national sex trafficking strategy the idea—and I have seen this with the Violence Against Women Act—it may not be that we are mandating people do a certain thing, but we put out there some best practices that local offices can cover. We look at what is working in certain States. Then we put those out there because we have a national sex trafficking strategy, and we give people ideas of what they can do best.

Those are parts of the bill. It is pretty straightforward. Again, it is not the bill on the floor right now which, of course, has an important purpose, to help fund some of the shelters and pay for it by an increase on the fees on perpetrators, but it is a part of the solution.

Another part of the solution we haven't talked too much about over the last few days, because there have been a lot of other things going on, I think we have to also remember the role of the private sector. We certainly have seen this in our State, where Marilyn Carlson Nelson, who is a wonderful business leader, headed up Carlson Companies for many years. Carlson Companies owns the Radisson Hotels. She has made training of her workforce a major part of this because it is the people on the frontline—and you can see Delta and all the others, American, United, a lot of the airlines are making this a priority as well. They are training their workers because they are on the frontline, and they are going to see this happen. They are going to see the victims. They are going to figure out something is going on that is wrong, so they can at least report it to their hotel's security or whatever authorities they think they need to; they can stop it right there on the ground floor and report it to the authorities.

We shouldn't forget that. Because unless these private sector entities who see it happening come forward—this isn't in any of our bills. This is something they are doing on their own. Unless they do that, we can have all the laws we want on the books, but it is really hard to catch these things from happening. I am proud of the work they have done.

My good friend Cindy McCain, HEIDI HEITKAMP, and I went to Mexico last spring with the major focus on sex trafficking. We met with the attorney general of Mexico and met with the head of their law enforcement in Mexico City about this very topic. Because Mexico, along with many other countries, has girls who do come in and are brought in for purposes of sex trafficking. I do want to emphasize, however, this is not just an international problem, but over 83 percent of the victims are from our country. But they have been coordinating with us on a number of successful prosecutions by giving us information so when the cases come to the United States, we view this. They have their own internal problems with this and other things as well, obviously, in Mexico. We went there not to say you are doing something wrong. We went there to say we have our own problems, and so do you. Let's figure out how we can work together on this issue.

Again, Cindy McCain is an example of someone who on the private side has been very involved with her foundation in working on this issue and helping with shelters and other things. The private sector piece of this, they can be called trafficking facilitators, unknowingly, because they are allowing this to happen. But in a way, they are a major part of the solution. I do not want us to forget that as we go forward and as they work with us to address the needs of the victims, and mostly to be able to catch these cases and bring them to law enforcement.

That is kind of a tour through what the safe harbor bill does. Again, Senator CORNYN and I have talked about it being the first amendment to the bill. I am very aware that we need to work out the issues on the underlying bill, and I am hopeful after days of acrimony that at some point we are going to be able to work together. I am hoping there will be a different flavor to people's discussions about this issue today.

LYNCH NOMINATION

The Loretta Lynch nomination now has been tied into this. I have a little bit of a different approach because I do not think we should be slowing it down anymore. I understand that we have to work out the issues on the sex trafficking, and there is plenty of blame that can go around. But I think the major focus should be on working it out instead of playing this blame game.

Loretta Lynch, on the other hand—I do not understand why our friends on the other side of the aisle have been delaying this for so long. I understand this is a major job, but this is a woman who has had 900 written questions and an 8-hour job interview, to my mind, where members of the Judiciary Committee could ask her whatever they wanted, in several rounds of questions, if they wanted. She also met with members of that committee. I am sure that anyone who wanted to met with her—I know she has met with at least 59 Senators to date. That is a pretty major job interview. Twenty-five U.S. Attorneys from Republican and Democratic administrations have approved and suggested that she is more than fit for this job.

How do I come down on this? I come down on this as a perspective of knowing that Attorney General Holder wants to leave. I think he has done some really good things. I know some

of my colleagues have not been a big fan of his. This is an opportunity for them to put someone new in. We will start with that.

The second thing is this is someone who is highly qualified. Coming from a State where we have indicted 20 people for criminal activity related to al-Shabaab with their terrorist activities in Somalia, we have recently indicted a number of people who decided they were going to go fight with ISIS, coming out of our State. And I am proud of our communities, our Muslim and Somali communities, that have been working with law enforcement on this. This has been an effort, because no kid should be going over there and no parent wants their kid to go join a terrorist organization.

That being said, to keep our communities safe, we have to be very aggressive about these cases. So given that these cases are going on right in my hometown, I would really like to have the support of an Attorney General in place, and one who is nominated before this body. And as the nominee, she is someone who is uniquely qualified to handle these kinds of cases that the citizens in my State want to have handled, these terrorism cases. In fact, her office is No. 1 in the country when it comes to how many terrorism cases they have successfully handled in New York. So she is a seasoned U.S. attorney. She is not someone who comes from a political background; she is someone who comes from a prosecutor background and is a former prosecutor and someone who wants to see that kind of commonsense, no-nonsense mentality in the Attorney General's office.

I highly recommend that my colleagues not only vote for her confirmation but just let this come to the floor as soon as possible.

Some of the critiques I have heard against her from some of my colleagues—some have said she has been lawless, and that doesn't quite make sense to me, especially when we look at who has been backing her from the law enforcement community, such as the 25 U.S. attorneys I mentioned. The New York police commissioner has endorsed her, as has the president of the Federal Law Enforcement Association and the president of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. These people are not exactly known for supporting lawlessness.

The other thing that has been mentioned by many of my colleagues that concerns me as to the reason they gave for blocking her nomination is that she said when she was at a hearing that she would be supportive, as the chief law enforcement person for our country, of the President's policies when it comes to immigration.

Let's start with the law. We know this is now tied up in the courts, and there are different court decisions. One court is upholding the Executive order of the President, and another court has said it is not legal. We have had disputes on it in the courts. All right. But when we look through time, we realize every President since Dwight Eisenhower has done some kind of Executive order of varying degrees. George H.W. Bush did a major Executive order involving many immigrants. When we look at those through history, we realize those Presidents to some degree or other—I know the Liberian community in Minnesota. They have been for decades on an emergency order, and that is why they are in our State. Every year, they have to come back, and sometimes Congress does something and sometimes the President does something. But year after year, they need this Executive order because of the status under which they came to this country. They are law-abiding citizens. They are working throughout our State and have been here for 15 or 20 years. And that is just one example.

These Executive orders on immigration have been going on since Dwight Eisenhower. I don't really have the time to look back and see what every Attorney General did at the time, but my guess is that the Attorneys General under Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon and both Bushes and Bill Clinton all said: OK, this is legal. You can go ahead and do this Executive order.

I am not saying this one is not of more magnitude. It is. But there was a major Executive order when George Bush was President. We know that. So why we would then somehow take that history and extrapolate it into, OK, well, Loretta Lynch is somehow lawless just because she said the President could issue an Executive order—it just doesn't make any sense to me at all.

We have a woman who has been prosecuting these cases of terrorism for years. We have someone who has significant support from Democratic and Republican U.S. attorneys from many administrations. We have someone who really did pass her senatorial job review. I understand that my colleagues feel strongly about immigration and that they didn't like what the President did, and the President himself said he would like to tear up that piece of paper that contained the Executive action if only this body and the House would pass comprehensive immigration reform.

When I look back through this whole story, one of my proudest moments was when the Senate came together on comprehensive immigration reform. I am on the Judiciary Committee, and I believe that was the best moment for the Judiciary Committee in the last few years. Under Chairman LEAHY's leadership, our committee was able to work together across party lines, starting with the Gang of 8 who came up with the base concept, which was half Democrats and half Republicans, including Senator DURBIN, Senator MCCAIN, Senator SCHUMER, Senator BENNET, Senator MENENDEZ, Senator FLAKE, and the work of many other Members, which made it possible to get that bill done.

So the Gang of 8 got that done, and from there we went to the committee with a bill, and we spent days voting on amendments. We voted on amendments that stretched over every part of the bill, whether it was the fence at the border or what would happen with undocumented workers or the work Senator HATCH and I did on making sure we had the green card and visa system up to date. We have a situation in our country right now where we have literally unlimited visas for wild hockey players. We love our hockey team in Minnesota, and they are able to recruit a bunch of Canadians. That is good for us, but doctors from the Mayo Clinic are not able to bring in a spouse if they want to come from another country.

We have to look at this as to the undocumented workers who are here, we have the border issues, and we also have these issues related to agriculture and the innovation economy that make this comprehensive reform so important. Let's remember that when it comes to business issues, we have a case where 200 of our Fortune 500 companies were started by immigrants or kids of immigrants. Ninety of our Fortune 500 companies were started by immigrants. Thirty percent of our U.S. Nobel laureates were born in other countries.

I neglected to add MARCO RUBIO to the Gang of 8 as I recall in my mind everyone who was in it.

That is why I was such a fan of the comprehensive immigration reform—because it was so important to look at all parts of the issue.

So now I get to Loretta Lynch. We passed a bill with pretty strong support here—I think it was like 68 votes or something in that neighborhood—and then it went over to the House and it sat there in a deep freeze. That bill sat there for over a year somewhere between the chocolate ice cream and the frozen peas. We were never able to get it out of the House, and that is what led to the President's Executive order, and now somehow—OK, that is fine, it was bad enough that that all happened, and I am still hopeful we will be able to get this done, but how that story leads to Loretta Lynch's confirmation being held up is beyond belief to me. I think it is time to get her nomination voted on. I don't think it should be related to the present difficulties we are having with this bill that I care so much about and mostly also with my safe harbor legislation, which has been slotted to be the first amendment.

I am hopeful we will be able to work everything out with the bill that is on the floor right now—I truly am—because I don't think it is fitting of the Senate to keep up this fight when there are victims of sex trafficking every single day, such as that 12-year-old girl out of Rochester, MN. How are we going to explain this to that little girl, that we are fighting it out every single day instead of trying to come to a resolution?

I remember when we were down in Mexico—HEIDI HEITKAMP and Cindy

McCain and I—and visited one of the shelters there. We met all the girls who were there. There was one girl there named Paloma. All the other girls had an interpreter and they talked to us through the interpreter, but she spoke a little English. She introduced herself, and then she just started to cry and could not stop crying. As she cried, you just knew that whatever happened to her was so bad, she could not even talk about it.

It reminded me of when Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator GRAHAM, Senator HOEVEN, and I were on a trip and went to a refugee camp in Jordan and met with a group of refugees. One of the women there said that what she had seen happen to her family in Syria was so sad that it would make stones cry. That is what I thought of when I saw Paloma, that what had happened to her—this little, young, beautiful, 12-, 13-year-old girl—what had happened to her was so sad that it would make stones cry.

I hope my colleagues keep this in mind as we work on these two bills. I am tired of talking about how this happened or how we got where we are. There is a way to resolve this problem, and certainly the nomination of the Attorney General of the United States should not be held up because of it.

I yield the floor.

I see my good friend Senator ISAKSON from Georgia is here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I encourage the Members of the Senate to vote favorably on cloture so we can move forward on the important bill on human trafficking.

Mr. President, I come to the floor to ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business.

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

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I don't normally come to the floor and address a question that was asked rhetorically on the floor the night before, but I am compelled to do so today.

There were two instances that happened in the last week where my name and the Coca-Cola name came up, and I thought I should set the record straight.

This weekend, in an op-ed published in USA TODAY, the Democratic leader, HARRY REID, and SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, the Senator from Rhode Island, made the following statement:

> Republicans in Congress who represent great corporations headquartered in their states ignore those corporations—Walmart in Arkansas, Coca-Cola in Georgia, VF Corporation in North Carolina—when they explain the business case for addressing climate change and are already reducing their own pollution.
>
> Republicans in Congress who root boisterously for their state university sports teams ignore the warnings of scientists and researchers at those very universities on climate change.

Then last night on the floor of the Senate, in his 93rd speech on global warming, Senator WHITEHOUSE made the following statement and asked this rhetorical question: ''I don't know whether Coca-Cola has ever spoken about climate change to Senator ISAKSON . . . from Coca-Cola's home State of Georgia.'' So I came to answer that rhetorical question and to answer the reference that was made in the editorial by Senator REID and Senator WHITEHOUSE.

This is a picture of me and Senator COONS in Ghana, Africa. It is 5 years old. At the request of the Coca-Cola Company, he and I traveled the continent of Africa looking at clean water projects all over that continent. African people who never had the opportunity to drink clean water now have sustainable clean water plants thanks to the Coca-Cola Company. These plants are environmentally safe, environmentally friendly, noncarbon-emitting water purification systems.

During the course of the years I have been in the U.S. Senate, the Coca-Cola Company has briefed me on the following things about their business as it deals with climate change or carbon.

They have saved 7 billion gallons of water in the United States with facility improvements in the United States. They have donated 70,000 ingredient drums for reuse as rain barrels, have supported over 100 watershed projects across North America, and have partnered with the National Forest Service to provide water to 60 million Americans.

On energy and climate, they have improved cooling equipment efficiency by 60 percent in their operation since the year 2000. They own the largest heavy-duty hybrid electric truck fleet in North America and have improved energy efficiency in manufacturing by 8 percent since 2008.

In packaging, over 96 percent of total waste is diverted away from landfills.

Since 2007, they have distributed 240,000 public recycling bins. They have achieved a 70 million-pound reduction in packaging material, and innovative packaging avoids 150,000 metric tons of CO_2 emissions—150,000 metric tons of CO_2 emissions.

As far as agriculture, they have invested over $1 million to support sustainable agriculture in Georgia and across the United States. They have supported the planting of 25,000 acres of new orange groves in Florida and 4,100 new jobs in energy efficiency.

That is what the Coca-Cola Company has advised me of since I have been in the U.S. Senate in terms of their commitment to a clean environment for our world and country.

I believe the climate does change, but I don't believe climate change is a religion, I think it is science. I have done everything I can as a Senator to educate myself on the carbon and climate change issue. Seven years ago, I went with Senator BOXER from California to Disko Bay in Greenland with Dr. Ally, the leading glaciologist in the world, to study what he says about the possibility of carbon being the cause of climate change. There are mixed reviews and mixed scientific evidence on that.

I am the first person to say we should reduce our carbon footprint. It is good for the atmosphere and our health. Eight years ago, when I had just entered the U.S. Senate, I bought a hybrid vehicle. I still drive that hybrid Ford Escape today. I did so because I thought it was a good business and a good atmospheric decision. I didn't buy it because someone made me; I bought it because I cared. My wife and I recycle because we think it is a good idea.

There are lots of things we can do to reduce the footprint of carbon, but to infer in USA TODAY or in a speech that we are not cognizant of the things that are done by our corporations to reduce carbon emissions and reduce the danger to the environment is just wrong and it is just unfair.

Senator WHITEHOUSE wrote a great book, which I read, called ''Virtues.'' It is about the great virtues of living a good and healthy life, and one of those virtues is truth. The truth is that all of us care about the environment; we just don't all subscribe to the same theory about what happens.

We should all be praising the good things that corporations are doing and recognize that it is not just Democrats and not just Republicans, but it is American politicians who make the policies that determine where we go in the future.

I think it is very important that we reduce carbon emissions, but I think it is important to be practical in those reductions. We can pass all the great regulations in the world that are good for the environment, but if they shut down the American economy and American business, they are probably not a very good idea.

The environment and business should work in harmony together rather than be adversaries and enemies. Publications like what appeared in USA TODAY over the weekend or speeches like the one that was made last night don't do anything to foster harmony or a good commitment; instead, they raise controversy.

I love SHELDON WHITEHOUSE. He is a great U.S. Senator. I appreciate Leader REID and what he does. But I don't appreciate the references that were made about Coca-Cola or about me in the article they wrote over the weekend or the speech that was made last night.

In fact, as I thought about what I would do in terms of responding to what was said, I sat down last night and made an interesting observation. Monday of this week before I left Georgia to come up here, I met with the Southern Company, and one of the discussions that came up were the solar panels they put out in the Southwest to amend the grid out there with solar energy—something that is environmentally sound and doesn't emit carbon. They talked about Plant Vogtle, where they are adding three or four reactors, which is renewable energy and

recyclable, and it emits no carbon and is now being generated in Georgia—reliable electricity with carbon-free generation through nuclear power.

Yesterday, I had a meeting with the UPS corporation, which just happens to be one of the leaders in the world using nonfossil fuel-burning waste to deliver their packages.

You can go down the list of corporate America and the things they are doing to reduce carbon emissions every single day, and they deserve the credit. But they don't need to be criticized or lectured by Members of the Senate for not lobbying me because they do lobby me. They believe, as I believe, that reducing carbon is good, but it shouldn't be a religion; it should be dealt with scientifically. It is important that we understand that every contribution we can make to a carbonless environment is a good contribution, but we can't abolish it absolutely. Every regulation we pass to improve our environment is important, but if it shuts down American business, it probably is not the right decision to make.

So since the question was asked rhetorically last night on the floor of the Senate, I thought I would come to the floor and answer it in person. I believe truth is a virtue. The truth is the Coca-Cola Company has informed me continuously about the efforts they have made to reduce carbon emissions and to improve their environmental contribution. There is no greater evidence of that than me drinking water that just came out of a purification plant in Ghana, Africa, out of a Coca-Cola cup. I think that is about the best evidence we can possibly find that they have delivered their message. They are doing their job. I am proud of the Coca Cola Company.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I wanted to clarify something I said when I spoke about the work the Senate did on comprehensive immigration reform in relation to the Loretta Lynch nomination. I mentioned the Gang of 8, and I think I got seven of them right. I wish to clarify exactly who was a Member of the Gang of 8: Senator SCHUMER, Senator DURBIN, Senator MENENDEZ, Senator BENNET, Senator MCCAIN, Senator FLAKE, Senator GRAHAM, and Senator RUBIO. That was the starting-off point for the comprehensive immigration reform that passed through the Senate.

I wish to get back to the matter at hand. As I stand in the Chamber today, I am going to keep reminding people of why we are really here, why the bill is on the floor—which is about sex trafficking—and the reason we want to try to resolve these issues and actually focus on the matter at hand and not on extraneous issues and other issues and other fights. My own Republican Congressman who carries my bill, the safe harbor bill—which of course is not the bill at issue but we hope will be the first amendment—has noted that we just need to move on and get these bills done and not play politics as usual. That is going to be my focus today as I manage this bill.

So I thought I would read on the floor a book that has been a national bestseller by Nicholas Kristof of the New York Times and his wife Sheryl WuDunn. It is a book about sex trafficking. It is an incredible book. It focuses more on international sex trafficking. As we know, our bills here—the one that is on the floor and the one I have authored—are about how our own country gets a handle on this, by getting better laws in place and creating incentives and working with the private sector and doings things so our country, I think from my perspective, internationally can be a true leader. We can't be a true leader and tell these states and democracies and countries that aren't even democracies across the world that they need to do a better job if we don't do a better job.

To me, this should be a major tenet of our foreign policy. Once we get women so that they are not treated as slaves and they are not treated as chattel—once we get them to that circumstance—countries always do better. When we have women who can work and own businesses, women who can serve in government, it changes a whole society.

So that is why the sex trafficking bill is on the floor and the one that I have that will be considered as an amendment. The reason we need to get through where we are right now and focus on the real issue at hand is that our country can not only help the victims in our own country, but by shining a light on this, by being a leader on this internationally, it will help us internationally. We want to be able to work with other countries—not saying they are doing something bad when we have our own problem, but saying, Here is what we did and here is how we are handling this and we want to work with you as partners and we want to have women be treated with respect throughout the world.

So this book, as I said, focuses on international sex trafficking. It is called ''Half the Sky.'' I love this name. It is a Chinese proverb. It talks about how women basically are holding up half the sky. That is what it is about. Women are holding up half the sky. We can't forget about half the sky and just let half the sky go and let them be sold into slavery and not be treated equally and expect a society to function.

So this is how the book starts out. It has a great quote from Mark Twain. I like jokes. Listen to this one: ''What would men be without women? Scarce, sir, mighty scarce.''

It is making the point again that women hold up half the sky.

So this is the book and how it starts:

Srey Rath is a self-confident Cambodian teenager whose black hair tumbles over a round, light brown face. She is in a crowded street market, standing beside a pushcart and telling her story calmly, with detachment. The only hint of anxiety or trauma is the way she often pushes her hair in front of her black eyes, perhaps a nervous tic. Then she lowers her hand and her long fingers gesticulate and flutter in the air with incongruous grace as she recounts her odyssey.

Rath is short and small-boned, pretty, vibrant, and bubbly, a wisp of a girl whose negligible stature contrasts with an outsized and outgoing personality. When the skies abruptly release a tropical rain shower that drenches us, she simply laughs and rushes us to cover under a tin roof, and then cheerfully continues her story as the rain drums overhead. But Rath's attractiveness and winning personality are perilous bounties for a rural Cambodian girl, and her trusting nature and optimistic self-assuredness compound the hazard.

When Rath was fifteen, her family ran out of money, so she decided to go work as a dishwasher in Thailand for two months to help pay the bills. Her parents fretted about her safety, but they were reassured when Rath arranged to travel with four friends who had been promised jobs in the same Thai restaurant. The job agent took the girls deep into Thailand and then handed them to gangsters who took them to Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia. Rath was dazzled by her first glimpses of the city's clean avenues and gleaming high-rises, including at the time the world's tallest twin buildings; it seemed safe and welcoming. But then thugs sequestered Rath and two other girls inside a karaoke lounge that operated as a brothel. One gangster in his late thirties, a man known as ''the boss,'' took charge of the girls and explained that he had paid money for them and that they would now be obliged to repay him. ''You must find money to pay off the debt, and then I will send you back home,'' he said, repeatedly reassuring them that if they cooperated they would eventually be released.

Rath was shattered when what was happening dawned on her. The boss locked her up with a customer, who tried to force her to have sex with him. She fought back, enraging the customer. ''So the boss got angry and hit me in the face, first with one hand and then with the other,'' she remembers, telling her story with simple resignation. ''The mark stayed on my face for two weeks.'' Then the boss and the other gangsters raped her and beat her with their fists.

''You have to serve the customers,'' the boss told her as he punched her. ''If not, we will beat you to death. Do you want that?'' Rath stopped protesting, but she sobbed and refused to cooperate actively. The boss forced her to take a pill; the gangsters called it ''the happy drug'' or ''the shake drug.'' She doesn't know exactly what it has, but it made her head shake and induced lethargy, happiness, and compliance for about an hour. When she wasn't drugged, Rath was teary and insufficiently compliant—she was required to beam happily at all customers—so the boss said he would waste no more time on her: She would agree to do as he ordered or he would kill her. Rath then gave in. The girls were forced to work in the brothel seven days a week, fifteen hours a day. They were kept naked to make it more difficult for them to run away or to keep tips or other money, and they were forbidden to ask customers to use condoms. They were battered until they smiled constantly and simulated joy at the sight of customers, because men would not pay as much for sex with girls with reddened eyes and haggard faces. The girls were never allowed out on the street or paid a penny for their work.

''They just gave us food to eat, but they didn't give us much because the customers

didn't like fat girls,'' Rath says. The girls were bused, under guard, back and forth between the brothel and a tenth-floor apartment where a dozen of them were housed. The door of the apartment was locked from the outside. However, one night, some of the girls went out onto their balcony and pried loose a long, five-inch-wide board from a rack used for drying clothes. They balanced it precariously between their balcony and one on the next building, twelve feet away. The board wobbled badly, but Rath was desperate, so she sat astride the board and gradually inched across.

''There were four of us who did that,'' she says. ''The others were too scared, because it was very rickety. I was scared, too, and I couldn't look down, but I was even more scared to stay. We thought that even if we died it would be better than staying behind. If we stayed we would die as well.''

Once on the far balcony, the girls pounded on the window and woke the surprised tenant. They could hardly communicate with him because none of them spoke the language, but the tenant let them into his apartment and then out the front door. The girls took the elevator down and wandered the silent streets until they found a police station and walked inside. The police first tried to shoo them away, then arrested the girls for illegal immigration. Rath served a year in prison under Malaysia's tough anti-immigrant laws, and then she was supposed to be repatriated. She thought a Malaysian policeman was escorting her home when he drove her to the Thai border—but then he sold her to a trafficker, who peddled her to a Thai brothel.

So I say to my colleagues, this is what we are talking about. This story is in another country, but this same story is repeated in our country day in and day out. If we are going to try to lead in Cambodia and try to change the world for these girls, we have to lead in our own country. Certainly we have to lead by focusing on the issue at hand, which is sex trafficking, and what we can do in our country. What can we do? Well, we can have better services for the victims. We can set up our law enforcement system in a way that works by not treating—for so long, these young 12-year-olds and 13-year-olds were thought of as criminals when, in fact, they are victims. How can we say someone is not raped, how can we say the story of this girl, who thought she was going to work to have a better life for herself as a dishwasher, then gets raped—how can we say that is not rape, that it is prostitution or a crime? No. She is a victim.

That is what the safe harbor bill—which I have introduced and which I am hopeful will be the first amendment once we work out these other issues—would do. It would treat these girls and boys as victims.

So I wish to remind my colleagues what we are truly dealing with. This is not supposed to be a fight over abortion. This is a fight about how to help these young girls throughout our country and by virtue of us being a leader throughout the world.

So I am going to continue reading from the book, just so we are all reminded what we are talking about.

Rath's saga offers a glimpse of the brutality inflicted routinely on women and girls in much of the world, a malignancy that is slowly gaining recognition as one of the paramount human rights problems of this century.

The issues involved, however, have barely registered on the global agenda. Indeed, when we began reporting about international affairs in the 1980s—

This is a book by Nicholas Kristof and his wife Sheryl, whose book, ''Half the Sky,'' is a national best seller. The subhead is ''Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide.''

Again, why am I reading this? Because this is what we are supposed to be talking about here. This is a bill we are supposed to be getting done and not talking about extraneous issues that I think we should be able to resolve because they have been resolved in the past. To do that, we have to decide that these girls are important enough to do that.

Continuing on, they talked about how these issues have barely registered on the global agenda:

Indeed, when we began reporting about international affairs in the 1980s, we couldn't have imagined writing this book. We assumed that the foreign policy issues that properly furrowed the brow were lofty and complex, like nuclear nonproliferation. It was difficult back then to envision the Council on Foreign Relations fretting about maternal mortality or genital mutilation. Back then the oppression of women was a fringe issue, the kind of worthy cause the girl scouts might raise money for—

And I hope that is not how we are treating this in the Senate. I hope that is not how we are treating it, and I hope we are not treating it as a political football.

We preferred to probe the recondite ''serious issues.''

So this book is the outgrowth—

The writers write—

of our own journey of awakening as we worked together as journalists for The New York Times. The first milestone in that journey came in China. Sheryl is a Chinese-American who grew up in New York City, and Nicholas is an Oregonian who grew up on a sheep and cherry farm near Yamhill, Oregon. After we married, we moved to China, where seven months later we found ourselves standing on the edge of Tiananmen Square watching troops fire their automatic weapons at prodemocracy protestors. The massacre claimed between four hundred and eight hundred lives and transfixed the world. It was the human rights story of the world. It was the human rights story of the year, and it seemed just about the most shocking violation imaginable.

Then the following year, we came across an obscure but meticulous demographic study that outlined a human rights violation that had claimed tens of thousands more lives. This study found that thirty-nine thousand baby girls die annually in China because parents don't give them the same medical care and attention that boys receive—and that is just in their first year of life. One Chinese family-planning official, Li Honggui, explained it this way: ''If a boy gets sick, the parents may send him to the hospital at once. But if a girl gets sick, the parents may say to themselves, ''Well, let's see how she is tomorrow.''

. . . A similar pattern emerged in other countries, particularly in South Asia and the Muslim world. In India, a ''bride burning''—to punish a woman for an inadequate dowry or to eliminate her so a man can remarry—takes place approximately once every two hours, but these rarely constitute news.

In . . . Pakistan, five thousand women and girls have been doused in kerosene and set alight by family members or in-laws—or, perhaps worse, been seared with acid—for perceived disobedience in the last nine years. Imagine the outcry if the Pakistani or Indian governments were burning women alive at those rates. Yet when the government is not directly involved, people shrug.

Again, how does this apply to the matter at hand? We know there are girls who are victims of trafficking who are put into slavery—sex slavery—every single day in this country. So if we think we can be a leader when it comes to what is going on around the world and we want to hold our Nation up, then we have to be a leader in this Chamber this week and get this bill done and get these extraneous issues behind us that people feel strongly about. But, as I said, somehow we have been able to handle these issues in the past on other bills, and I hope the girls we are talking about here are just as important as those other issues.

When a prominent dissident was arrested in China—

I go back to the book—

we would write a front-page article; when 100,000 girls were routinely kidnapped and trafficked into brothels, we didn't even consider it news. Partly that is because we journalists tend to be good at covering events that happen on a particular day, but we slip at covering events that happen every day—such as the . . . cruelties inflicted on women and girls. We journalists weren't the only ones who dropped the ball on this subject. [A tiny portion] of U.S. foreign aid is specifically targeted to women and girls.

They then go on to quote a Nobel Prize-winning economist who has developed a way to look at gender inequality that is a striking reminder of the stakes involved.

''More than 100 million are missing,'' Sen wrote in a classic essay in 1990 in ''The New York Review of Books,'' spurring a new field of research. Sen noted that in normal circumstances women live longer than men, and so there are more females than males in much of the world. Even poor regions like most of Latin America and much of Africa have more females than males. Yet in places where girls have a deeply unequal status, they vanish. China has 107 males for every 100 females in its overall population . . . India has 108, and Pakistan has 111.

I remember at the McCain Institute, where Cindy McCain and HEIDI HEITKAMP and I spoke on a panel, that Senator MCCAIN had just returned from a trip abroad and had been in a country that was experiencing enormous upheaval. He had asked: ''Where are the girls?'' And someone said to him: ''Most of them have been sold.'' They had been sold. So this is really happening, and the people in this Chamber know it is happening. That is why, again, I get back to the fact that if we want to do something about it here, we need to resolve these issues, we need to do it without going into a blame game, and we need to get this done so we can pass this bill—and not have a dispute

over abortion—that, in fact, helps the very girls we are supposed to help. Only then can we be a leader in the world.

I will go back to the book:

The worst of these abuses tend to occur in poor nations, but the United States and other western countries are not immune. In America, millions of women and girls face beatings or other violence from their husbands or boyfriends and more than one in six undergo rape or attempted rape at some point in her life, according to the National Violence Against Women survey. Then there is forced prostitution. Teenage runaways are beaten, threatened and branded (with tattoos) by pimps in American cities, and thousands of foreign women are trafficked into the United States as well. Still, in poor countries gender discrimination is often lethal in a way that is usually not in America. In India, for example, mothers are less likely to take their daughters to be vaccinated than their sons—that alone accounts for one fifth of India's missing females—while studies have found that, on average, girls are brought to the hospital only when they are sicker than boys taken to the hospital. All told, girls in India from 1 to 5 years of age are 50 percent more likely to die than boys the same age. The best estimate is that a little Indian girl dies from discrimination every four minutes.

A big, bearded Afghan . . . once told us that his wife and son were sick. He wanted both to survive, he said, but his priorities were clear: A son is an indispensable treasure, while a wife is replaceable. He had purchased medication for the boy alone. ''She is always sick,'' he gruffly said of his wife, ''so it's not worth buying medicine for her.''

Again, why is this relevant to the matter at hand? I think these young girls and women in our own country and across the world deserve to be treated seriously. They deserve not to be treated as a political football on extraneous issues this Chamber likes to debate.

This bill needs to be treated just as seriously—and my safe harbor bill—as any other bill. Somehow, the people in charge of these institutions have been able to work out the differences.

Modernization and technology can aggravate the discrimination. Since the 1990s, the spread of ultrasound machines has allowed pregnant women to find out the sex of their fetuses—and then get abortions if they are female.

Again, we are talking about China.

''We don't have to have daughters anymore!'' someone said in China.

To prevent sex-selective abortion, China and India now bar doctors and ultrasound technicians from telling a pregnant woman the sex of her fetus. Yet that is a flawed solution.

According to the book:

Research shows that when parents are banned from selectively aborting female fetuses, more of their daughters die as infants. Mothers do not deliberately dispatch infant girls they are obligated to give birth to, but they are lackadaisical about caring for them. A development economist at Brown University . . . quantified the wrenching trade-off: On average, the deaths of fifteen infant girls can be avoided by allowing 100 female fetuses to [die].

This is what is going on around the world right now.

The global statistics on the abuse of girls are numbing. It appears that more girls have been killed in the last fifty years, precisely because they were girls, than men were killed in all the battles of the twentieth century. More girls are killed in this routine ''gendercide'' in any one decade than people were slaughtered in all the genocides of the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century, the central moral challenge was slavery. In the twentieth century, it was the battle against totalitarianism. We believe that in this century the paramount moral challenge will be the struggle for gender equality around the world.

That will be the struggle to help these girls.

Maybe this is the battle we are having right now. Maybe this institution has to come up to speed. We have 20 Senators who are women. Twenty percent of the Senate are women. That is pretty good. It is the best we have ever gotten. But when you look at the numbers, the numbers aren't frequent when you look back through history. Maybe that is what we are going to have to do to have people take these bills seriously and not play king of the hill with a bill as serious as this one.

I will continue to read ''Half the Sky'' by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

The owners of the Thai brothel to which Rath was sold did not beat her and did not constantly guard her. So two months later, she was able to escape and make her way back to Cambodia.

Upon her return, Rath met a social worker who put her in touch with an aid group that helps girls who have been trafficked start new lives. The group, American Assistance for Cambodia, used $400 in donated funds to buy a small cart and a starter selection of goods so that Rath could become a street peddler. She found a good spot in the open area between the Thai and Cambodian customs offices. . . . Travelers crossing between Thailand and Cambodia walk along this strip, the size of a football field, and it is lined with peddlers selling drinks, snacks and souvenirs.

Rath outfitted her cart with shirts and hats, costume jewelry, notebooks, pens and small toys. Now her good looks and outgoing personality began to work in her favor, turning her into an effective saleswoman. She saved and invested in new merchandise, her business thrived, and she was able to support her parents and two younger sisters. She married and had a son, and she began saving for his education.

In 2008, Rath turned her cart into a stall, and then also acquired the stall next door. She also started a ''public phone'' business by charging people to use her cell phone. So if you ever cross from Thailand into Cambodia at Poipet, look for a shop on your left, halfway down the strip, where a teenage girl will call out to you, smile, and try to sell you a souvenir cap. She'll laugh and claim she's giving you a special price, and she's so bubbly and appealing she'll probably make the sale.

Rath's eventual triumph—

If you remember from the first part of the book that I read, she was sold into slavery when she simply thought she was going to work as a dishwasher; she was sold into sex and repeatedly raped—

is a reminder that if girls get a chance, in the form of an education or a microloan, they can be more than baubles or slaves; many of them can run businesses. Talk to Rath today—after you've purchased that cap—and you'll find that she exudes confidence as she earns a solid income that will provide a better future for her sisters and for her young son.

Many of the stories in this book are wrenching, but keep in mind this central truth: Women aren't the problem but the solution. The plight of girls is no more a tragedy than an opportunity.

I will repeat that:

Women aren't the problem but the solution. The plight of girls is no more a tragedy than an opportunity.

That was a lesson we absorbed in Sheryl's ancestral village, at the end of a dirt road amid the rice paddies of southern China. For many years we have regularly trod the mud paths of the Taishan region to . . . the hamlet in which Sheryl's paternal grandfather grew up. China traditionally has been one of the most oppressive and smothering places for girls, and we could see hints of this in Sheryl's own family history. Indeed, on our first visit, we accidentally uncovered a family secret: a long-lost stepgrandmother. Sheryl's grandfather had traveled to America with his first wife, but she had given birth only to daughters. So Sheryl's grandfather gave up on her and returned her to Shunshui, where he married a younger woman as a second wife and took her to America. This was Sheryl's grandmother, who duly gave birth to a son—Sheryl's dad. The previous wife and daughters were then wiped out of the family memory.

Something bothered us each time we explored [the town] and the surrounding villages: Where were the young women?

This is, by the way, what Senator MCCAIN said when he returned from a country that was repressed.

Young men were toiling industriously in the paddies or fanning themselves in the shade, but young women and girls were scarce. We finally discovered them and we stopped in the factories that were then spreading throughout the [Guangdong] Province, the epicenter of China's economic eruption. These factories produced the shoes, toys, and shirts that filled America's shopping malls, generating economic growth rates almost unprecedented in the history of the world—and creating the most effective antipoverty program ever recorded. The factories turned out to be cacophonous hives of distaff bees.

Eighty percent of the employees on the assembly lines in coastal China are female, and the proportion across the manufacturing belt of East Asia is at least 70 percent. The economic explosion in Asia was, in large part, an outgrowth of the economic empowerment of women. ''They have small fingers, so they're better at stitching,'' the manager of a purse factory explained to us. ''They're obedient and work harder than men,'' said the head of a toy factory. ''And we can pay them less.'' Women are indeed the linchpin of the region's development strategy.

Economists who scrutinized East Asia's success noted a common pattern. These countries took young women who previously had contributed negligibly to the gross national product and injected them into the formal economy, hugely increasing the labor force. The basic formula was to ease repression, educate girls as well as boys, give the girls the freedom to move to the cities and take factory jobs, and then benefit from a demographic dividend as they delayed marriage and reduced childbearing. The women meanwhile financed the education of younger relatives, and saved enough of their pay to boost national savings rates. This pattern has been ''the girl effect.'' In a nod to the female chromosomes, it could also be called ''the double X solution.''

Evidence has mounted that helping women can be a successful poverty-fighting strategy anywhere in the world, not just in the booming economies of East Asia. The Self Employed Women's Association was founded in India in 1972 and ever since has supported the poorest women in starting businesses—raising living standards in ways that have dazzled scholars and foundations. In Bangladesh, Muhammad Yunus developed microfinance at the Grameen Bank and targeted women borrowers—eventually winning a Nobel Peace Prize for the economic and social impact of his work.

I would note here—just a little sidenote, as I am reading through Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn's book, to make everyone in this Chamber remember why we are here. We are here to help girls, not just in the United States, but in the world. We are here to hold up ''Half the Sky.'' We are here to show that this Chamber, at its best, can actually help the people we are supposed to help, the most vulnerable in our society, instead of debating extraneous issues that we are unable to resolve on this bill but that we seem able to resolve on other bills that just must be more important than the girls and the women of this world. That is all I can figure out.

But I would like to note, as I read about one of their suggestions for things that help girls and women around the world, this idea of microcredit. My dad, who is kind of an adventurer and goes around the world, actually wrote a book on microcredit called ''The Miracles of Barefoot Capitalism''—in case he is watching on C-Span, I thought he would like that note—with his wife Susan Wilkes. They are big believers in helping women around the world with microcredit.

So then they go on in the book to talk about helping people through microcredit.

In the early 1990s, the United Nations and the World Bank began to appreciate the potential resource that women and girls represent. Investment in girls' education may well be the highest return investment available in the developing world.

I think it is something that we need to remember in the United States as we look at the low numbers of girls that go into science and technology and head up companies, because for some reason they do not have the confidence to go into those fields or they are not encouraged to go into those fields. If we in the Senate cannot even say they should not be trafficked and we cannot do anything to help them, I do not think we are helping that cause very much.

Larry Summers wrote, when he was the chief economist of the World Bank: ''The question is not whether countries can afford this investment, but whether countries can afford not to educate more girls.''

In 2001, the World Bank produced an influential study, Engendering Development Through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice, arguing that promoting gender equality is crucial to combat global poverty. UNICEF issued a major report arguing that gender equality yields a ''double dividend'' by elevating not only women but also their children and communities. The United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) summed up the mounting research this way: ''Women's empowerment helps raise economic productivity and reduce infant mortality. It contributes to improved health and nutrition. It increases the chances of education for the next generation.''

More and more, the most influential scholars of development and public health—including Sen and Summers, Joseph Stiglitz, Jeffrey Sachs, and Dr. Paul Farmer—are calling for much greater attention to women and development.

Private aid groups and foundations have shifted gears as well. ''Women are the key to ending hunger in Africa,'' declared the Hunger Project. French foreign minister Bernard Kouchner, who founded Doctors Without Borders, bluntly declared of development: ''Progress is achieved through women.'' The Center for Global Development issued a major report explaining ''why and how to put girls at the center of development.'' CARE is taking women and girls as the centerpiece of its antipoverty efforts. The Nike Foundation and the NoVo Foundation are both focusing on building opportunities for girls in the developing world. ''Gender inequality hurts economic growth,'' Goldman Sachs concluded in a 2008 research report that emphasized how much developing countries could improve their economic performance by educating girls. Partly as a result of that research, Goldman Sachs committed $100 million to a ''10,000Women'' campaign meant to give that many women a business education.

I think this is actually a really good book. I just plan to keep reading it whenever I can over the next few days until we get a resolution to this problem.

I am going to take a look at how many pages it is. Well, if you include the notes, it is 296 pages. I will obviously take breaks when our colleagues come down here. But I do think it is really important that we keep the pressure on, that the women and girls of this country demand that this get resolved, because as I said, we have somehow been able to resolve it on other bills. I think this bill and the bill that I have, the safe harbor bill, are just as important. I think our colleagues, in my discussions with them, know several ways we could resolve this problem, including just eliminating this extraneous provision. But there might be other ways as well. We know what they are. I hope they keep working on them.

Concerns about terrorism after the 9/11 attacks triggered interest in these issues as an unlikely constituency: the military and counterterrorism agencies. Some security experts noted that the countries that nurture terrorists are disproportionately those where woman are marginalized. The reason that there are so many Muslim terrorists, they argued, has little to do with the Koran but a great deal to do with the lack of robust female participation in the economy and society of many Islamic countries. As the Pentagon gained a deeper understanding of counterterrorism . . . it became increasingly interested in grassroots projects such as girls' education. Empowering girls, some in the military argued, would disempower terrorists. When the Joint Chiefs of Staff hold discussions of girls' education in Pakistan and Afghanistan . . . you know that gender is a serious topic on the international affairs agenda. That's evident also in the Council on Foreign Relations. The wood-paneled halls that have been used for discussions of MIRV warheads . . . are now employed as well to host well-attended sessions on maternal mortality.

This is now Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn speaking in their book, which has been a national best seller, ''Half the Sky.'' It is about sex trafficking and how important it is to take this issue on—not just in our own country but the world.

We will try to lay out an agenda for the world's women focusing on three particular abuses: sex trafficking and forced prostitution; gender-based violence, including honor killings and mass rape; and maternal mortality, which still needlessly claims one woman a minute. We will lay out solutions such as girls' education and microfinance, which are working right now.

While the most urgent needs are in the developing world, wealthy countries also need to clear up their own neighborhoods. If we are to lead the way we must show greater resolution in cracking down on domestic violence and sex trafficking in our own neighborhoods, rather than just sputter about abuses far away.

It is true that there are many injustices in the world, many worthy causes competing for attention and support, and we all have divided allegiances.

This sounds kind of like us, right? There are a lot of different topics and things that we have to take on, and there are many worthy causes that are calling for our attention and support. We all have divided allegiances. I think that is kind of what is going on in this Chamber. But why do we need to focus on this? Well, I will go back to the book.

We focus on this topic because, to us, this kind of oppression feels transcendent—and so does the opportunity. We have seen that outsiders can truly make a significant difference.

Consider Rath once more.

Now, remember, this was the girl that was sold into sex trafficking in Malaysia.

We had been so shaken by her story that we wanted to locate that brothel in Malaysia, interview its owners, and try to free the girls still imprisoned there. Unfortunately, we could not determine the brothel's name or address. (Rath didn't know English or even the Roman alphabet, so she hadn't been able to read signs when she was there.) When we asked her if she would be willing to return to Kuala Lumpur and help us find the brothel, she turned ashen. ''I don't know,'' she said. ''I don't want to face that again.'' She wavered, talked it over with her family, and ultimately agreed to go back in the hope of rescuing her girlfriends.

Rath voyaged back to Kuala Lumpur with the protection of an interpreter and a local antitrafficking activist. Nonetheless, she trembled in the red light district upon seeing the cheerful neon signs that she associated with so much pain. But since her escape, Malaysia has been embarrassed by public criticism about trafficking, so the police had cracked down on the worst brothels that imprisoned girls against their will. One of those was Rath's. A modest amount of international scolding had led a government to take action, resulting in an observable improvement in the lives of girls at the bottom

of the power pyramid. The outcome underscores that this is a hopeful cause, not a bleak one.

Honor killings, sexual slavery, and genital cutting may seem to Western readers to be tragic but inevitable in a world far, far away. In much the same way, slavery was once widely viewed by many decent Europeans and Americans as a regrettable but ineluctable feature of human life. It was just one more horror that has existed for thousands of years. But then in the 1780s a few indignant Britons, led by William Wilberforce, decided that slavery was so offensive that they had to abolish it. And they did. Today, we see the seed of something similar, a global movement to emancipate women and girls.

By the way, later in the book—since I have read it already, but now I will be able to read it again—they talk about how, in fact, it was the evidence of that brutality of the slavery, of the stench of the people who were slaves who were in the bottom of that ship that really drove action. Yes, the activists and William Wilberforce understandably get a lot of the attention and well-deserved credit for what happened, but it was the evidence that led to Britain, the people and their society, long before many other countries had even thought about abolishing slavery—it was the evidence of the brutality that led them to make a change.

That is one of the things that we need to talk about and why I am talking about this here today. We have to get back on what really matters here, such as the story of the 12-year-old girl in Rochester, MN—a 12-year-old girl who just got a text message and went to a McDonald's parking lot and was shoved into a car and then brought to the Twin Cities and then raped. Then her pictures were taken—sexually explicit pictures—and put on Craigslist. Then she was sold the next day and raped by two men.

That is what this is really about. It is not about these extraneous fights and what has been going on, dragging this Chamber down, and even stopping us from confirming a well-qualified person for the Attorney General of the United States. That is what they are talking about here. It is the evidence that the American people see. They start demanding change. I hope that is happening today.

So let's be clear about this up front. We hope to recruit you to join—

These are the authors.

—an incipient movement to emancipate women and fight global poverty by unlocking women's power as economic catalysts. That is the process underway—not a drama of victimization but of empowerment, the kind that transforms bubbly teenage girls from brothel slaves into successful businesswomen.

This is a story of transformation. It has change that is already taking place, and change that can accelerate if you will just open your heart and join in.

I think we need some opening of hearts here in the Chamber. I am going to take one break to talk to our staff, and then I will be back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am reading the book ''Half the Sky,'' by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. I think it is a beautiful book. It is on sex trafficking around the world and what has been happening around the world. A part of this is that I think we need to make the point that we can lead in our country when it comes to sex trafficking.

We have Senator CORNYN's bill, and we know there is an issue with one of the provisions that needs to be resolved—and I don't think it is a provision that is related to this topic—but we are hopeful people of good will can come together and resolve this issue. The easiest way would be to take it out. We can have other discussions. Somehow, through history, the Senate has been able to come together and take care of this issue with the Hyde amendment and other bills.

I think the point I am trying to make today is this bill is just as important as those bills and that these girls who are victims of sex trafficking are just as important as anyone else in this country.

I am going to continue reading this book. I am hopeful—as I mentioned, it is very long, and I will obviously pause for my colleagues who come to the floor, but I am going to continue reading it until we get this resolved.

We are now on chapter 1, ''Emancipating Twenty-First-Century Slaves.'' The quote on this is actually from Christopher Buckley, one of my favorite authors, from ''Florence of Arabia,'' from the beginning of the chapter: ''Women might just have something to contribute to civilization other than their vaginas.''

That might not have been said on this floor that many times, but he is a humorous writer. Now, let's go on with the book:

The red-light district in the town of Forbesgunge does not actually have any red lights. Indeed, there is no electricity. The brothels are simply mud-walled family compounds along a dirt path, with thatch-roof shacks set aside for customers.

Children play and scurry along the dirt paths, and a one-room shop on the corner sells cooking oil, rice, and bits of candy. Here, in the impoverished northern Indian state of Bihar near the Nepalese border, there's not much else available commercially—except sex.

As Meena Hasina walks down the path, the children pause and stare at her. The adults stop as well, some glowering and the tension rises. Meena is a lovely, dark-skinned Indian woman in her thirties with warm, crinkly eyes and a stud in her left nostril. She wears a sari and ties her black hair back, and she seems utterly relaxed as she strolls among people who despise her.

Meena is an Indian Muslim who for years was prostituted in a brothel run by the Nutt, a low-caste tribe that controls the local sex trade. The Nutt have traditionally engaged in prostitution and petty crime, and theirs is the world of intergenerational prostitution, in which mothers sell sex and raise their daughters to do the same.

Meena strolls through the brothels to a larger hut that functions as a part-time school, sits down, and makes herself comfortable. Behind her, the villagers gradually resume their activities.

''I was eight or nine years old when I was kidnapped and trafficked,'' Meena begins. She is from a poor family on the Nepal border and was sold to a Nutt clan, then taken to a rural house where the brothel owner kept prepubescent girls until they were mature enough to attract customers. When she was twelve—she remembers that it was five months before her first period—she was taken to the brothel.

''They brought in the first client, and they'd taken lots of money from him,'' Meena recounted, speaking clinically and without emotion. The induction was similar to that endured by Rath in Malaysia, for sex trafficking operates on the same business model worldwide, and the same methods are used to break girls everywhere. ''I started fighting and crying out, so that he couldn't succeed,'' Meena said. ''I resisted so much that they had to return the money to him. And they beat me mercilessly, with a belt, with sticks, with iron rods. The beating was tremendous.'' She shook her head to clear the memory. ''But even then I resisted. They showed me swords and said they would kill me if I didn't agree. Four or five times, they brought customers in, and I still resisted, and they kept beating me. Finally they drugged me: They gave me wine in my drink and got me completely drunk.'' Then one of the brothel owners raped her. She awoke, hungover and hurting, and realized what had happened. ''Now I am wasted,'' she thought, and so she gave in and stopped fighting customers.

In Meena's brothel, the tyrant was a family matriarch, Ainul Bibi. Sometimes Ainul would beat the girls herself, and sometimes she would delegate the task to her daughter-in-law or her sons, who were brutal in inflicting punishment.

''I wasn't even allowed to cry,'' Meena remembers. ''If even one tear fell, they would beat me. I used to think that it was better to die than to live like this. Once I jumped from the balcony, but nothing happened. I didn't even break a leg.''

Meena and the others girls were never allowed out of the brothel and were never paid. They typically had ten or more customers a day, seven days a week. If a girl fell asleep or complained about a stomachache, the issue was resolved with a beating. And when a girl showed any hint of resistance, all the girls would be summoned to watch as the recalcitrant one was tied up and savagely beaten.

''They turned the stereo up loud to cover the screams,'' Meena said dryly.

India almost certainly has more modern slaves, in conditions like these, than any other country. There are 2 to 3 million prostitutes in India, and although many of them now sell sex to some degree willingly, and are paid, a significant share of them entered the sex industry unwillingly. One 2008 study of Indian brothels found that of Indian and Nepali prostitutes who started as teenagers, about half said they had been coerced into the brothels; women who began working in their twenties were more likely to have made the choice themselves, often to feed their children. Those who start out enslaved often accept their fate eventually and sell sex willingly, because they know nothing else and are too stigmatized to hold other jobs.

China has more prostitutes than India—some estimates are as high as 10 million or more—but fewer of them are forced into brothels against their will. Indeed, China has few brothels as such. Many of the prostitutes are freelancers working as ding-dong xiaojie (so called because they ring hotel rooms looking for business), and even those working in massage parlors and saunas are typically there on commission and can leave if they want to.

Paradoxically, it is the countries with the most straightlaced and sexually conservative societies, such as India, Pakistan, and Iran, that have disproportionately large numbers of forced prostitutes. Since young men in those societies rarely sleep with their girlfriends, it has become acceptable for them to relieve their sexual frustrations with prostitutes.

The implicit social contract is that upper-class girls will keep their virtue, while young men will find satisfaction in the brothels. And the brothels will be staffed with slave girls trafficked from Nepal or Bangladesh or poor Indian villages. As long as the girls are uneducated, low-caste peasants like Meena, society will look the other way—just as many antebellum Americans turned away from the horrors of slavery because the people being lashed looked different from them.

In Meena's brothel, no one used condoms. Meena is healthy for now, but she has never had an AIDS test. (While HIV prevalence is low in India, prostitutes are at particular risk because of their large number of customers.) Because Meena didn't use condoms, she became pregnant, and this filled her with despair.

''I used to think that I never wanted to be a mother, because my life had been wasted, and I didn't want to waste another life,'' Meena said. But Ainul's brothel, like many in India, welcomed the pregnancy as a chance to breed a new generation of victims. Girls are raised to be prostitutes, and boys become servants to do the laundry and cooking.

In the brothel, without medical help, Meena gave birth to a baby girl, whom she named Naina. But soon afterward, Ainul took the baby away from Meena, partly to stop her from breast-feeding—customers dislike prostitutes who are lactating—and partly to keep the baby as a hostage to ensure that Meena would not try to flee.

''We will not let Naina stay with you,'' Ainul told her. ''You are a prostitute, and you have no honor. So you might run away.'' Later a son, Vivek, followed, and the owners also took him away. So both of Meena's children were raised by others in the brothel, mostly in sections of the compound where she was not allowed to go.

''They held my children captive, so they thought I would never try to escape,'' she said. To some degree, this strategy worked. Meena once helped thirteen of the girls escape, but didn't flee herself because she couldn't bear to leave her children. The penalty for staying behind was a brutal beating for complicity in the escape.

Ainul had herself been a prostitute when she was young, so she was unsympathetic to the younger girls. ''If my own daughters can be prostituted, then you can be, too,'' Ainul would tell the girls. And it was true that she had prostituted her own two daughters. (''They had to be beaten up to agree to it,'' Meena explained. ''No one wants to go into this.'')

That is a good place to stop and talk a little about what we are doing on the floor. No one wants to go into this. That is what these bills are about. These bills are about having a victims fund. These bills are about creating a safe harbor so we don't treat these young victims as criminals, like we have in Minnesota with the safe harbor law. And it is about trying to get something done.

We know an extraneous provision is on this bill and that we need to resolve this one way or another. As I have noted, we have been able to resolve this in the past, and I welcome my colleagues to come and speak about this issue. I hope this blame game is behind us, and that we won't be making accusations but instead we will actually work on getting this bill done. Because lost in all of this is the fact this isn't just some game people can play. These are actual young girls.

As I said, why is this international prostitution relevant to what we are talking about? It is relevant because our country can actually become a leader in this area. We can be a leader. We can actually do something in America to show we are taking this on. Our bill, the safe harbor bill I am leading, which we hope will be the first amendment to this bill, sets up a national sex trafficking strategy. We don't have one right now.

As a former prosecutor, I know when we work between Federal and State and local authorities, and we take on these cases and do it in a smart way, we actually are able to get things done. We did it with the Violence Against Women Act, when everyone thought that was just a situation where you can beat your wife and no one is going to notice. It happened behind closed doors. But we took it on as a country and we changed things and changed things for women in this country. Now we can do this with prostitution.

We can no longer see this as a victimless crime. There is a victim. The victim is 12 years old. She is someone in your State right now. So that is why these bills are so serious and why we need to continue to get them done. I am going to keep talking about this issue because I think at some point we have to realize why we are here and what we are talking about, instead of using it as a political football.

So the story goes on:

Meena estimates that in the dozen years she was in the brothel, she was beaten on average five days a week. Most girls were quickly broken and cowed, but Meena never quite gave in. Her distinguishing characteristic is obstinacy. She can be dogged and mulish, and that is one reason the villagers find her so unpleasant. She breaches the pattern of femininity in rural India by talking back—and fighting back.

The police seemed unlikely saviors to girls in the brothels because police officers regularly visited the brothels and were serviced free. But Meena was so desperate that she once slipped out and went to the police station to demand help.

''I was forced into prostitution by a brothel in town,'' Meena told the astonished officer at the police station. ''The pimps beat me up, and they're holding my children hostage.'' Other policemen came out to see this unusual sight, and they mocked her and told her to go back.

''You have great audacity to come here!'' one policeman scolded her. In the end, the police sent her back after extracting a promise from the brothel not to beat her. The brothel owners did not immediately punish her. But a friendly neighbor warned Meena that the brothel owners had decided to murder her. That doesn't happen often in red-light districts, any more than farmers kill producing assets such as good milk cows, but from time to time a prostitute becomes so nettlesome that the owners kill her as a warning to the other girls.

Fearing for her life, Meena abandoned her children and fled the brothel. She traveled several hours by train to Forbesgunge. Someone there told one of Ainul's sons, Manooj, of her whereabouts, and he soon arrived to beat up Meena. Manooj didn't want her causing trouble in his brothel again, so he told her that she could live on her own in Forbesgunge and prostitute herself, but she would have to give him the money. Not knowing how she could survive otherwise, Meena agreed.

Whenever Manooj returned to Forbesgunge to collect money, he was dissatisfied with the amount Meena gave him and beat her. Once Manooj threw Meena to the ground and was beating her furiously with a belt when a respectful local man intervened.

''You're already pimping her, you're already taking her lifeblood,'' remonstrated her saviour, a pharmacist named Kuduz. ''Why beat her to death as well?''

It wasn't the same as leaping on Manooj to pull him off, but for a woman like Meena, who was scorned by society, it was startling to have anyone speak up for her.

To have anyone speak up for her. That is what I hope we are going to be doing in this Chamber in the next few days, that we are going to speak up for these victims and show that we want to actually get something done and that they have value outside of being a political football.

Manooj backed off, and Kuduz helped her up. Meena and Kuduz lived near each other in Forbesgunge, and the incident created a bond between them. Soon Kuduz and Meena were chatting regularly, and then he offered to marry her. Thrilled, she accepted.

Manooj was furious when he heard about the marriage, and he offered Kuduz 100,000 rupees ($2,500) to give Meena up—a sum that perhaps reflected his concern that she might use her new respectability as a married woman to cause trouble for the brothel. Kuduz wasn't interested in a deal.

''Even if you offered me two hundred fifty thousand rupees, I will not give her up,'' Kuduz said. ''Love has no price.''

After they were married, Meena bore two daughters with Kuduz, and she went back to her native village to look for her parents. Her mother had died—neighbors said she had cried constantly after Meena disappeared, then had gone mad—but her father was stunned and thrilled to see his daughter resurrected.

Life was clearly better, but Meena couldn't forget her first two children left behind in the brothel. So she began making journeys back—five hours by bus—to Ainul Bibi's brothel. There she would stand outside and plead for Naina and Vivek.

''As many times as I could, I would go back to fight for my children,'' she remembered. ''I knew they would not let me take my children. I knew they would beat me up. But I thought I had to keep trying.''

It didn't work. Ainul and Manooj didn't let Meena in the brothel; they whipped her and

drove her away. The police wouldn't listen to her. The brothel owners not only threatened to kill her, they also threatened to kidnap her two young daughters with Kuduz and sell them to a brothel. Once a couple of gangsters showed up at Meena's house in Forbesgunge to steal the two little girls, but Kuduz grabbed a knife and warned: ''If you even try to steal them, I'll cut you into pieces.''

Meena was terrified for her two younger girls, but she couldn't forget Naina. She knew that Naina was approaching puberty and would soon be on the market. But what could she do?

So these stories are pretty raw, and they are stories we usually don't tell on the floor of the United States Senate. But I think we need to, because maybe it is the only way people will remember why we are here and what we are supposed to be doing right now, which is to get these bills done and then hopefully confirm an Attorney General of the United States, which is something else we need to do that seems completely unrelated to these sex trafficking stories of these girls, except for one reason, and that is that we would want to have an attorney general in place so they can enforce the law.

Some of these cases are actually Federal, such as the one we had in Minnesota involving the little girl from Rochester, or the case in Senator HEITKAMP's State of North Dakota involving the incident of a sex trafficking ring in the oil patch. This is going on right now in this country. So what could an Attorney General do? I would ask: What can we do? What we can do is to get this bill done.

Again, I welcome my colleagues to come and talk about this issue, but I hope when they talk about it we will actually focus on the matter at hand—not blame anyone anymore, not talk about the things we disagree on but what we agree on. And then, hopefully, that will lead to the discussions I know are going on to resolve this bill because we can get this resolved.

Continuing to read, this is the writers talking now:

Interviewing women like Meena over the years has led us to change our own views on sex trafficking. Growing up in the United States and then living in China and Japan, we thought of prostitution as something women may turn to opportunistically or out of economic desperation. In Hong Kong, we knew an Australian prostitute who slipped Sheryl into the locker room of her ''men's club'' to meet the local girls, who were there because they saw a chance to enrich themselves. We certainly didn't think of prostitutes as slaves, forced to do what they do, for most prostitutes in America, China, and Japan aren't truly enslaved.

Yet it's hyperbole to say that millions of women and girls are actually enslaved today. (The biggest difference from nineteenth-century slavery is that many die of AIDS by their late twenties.) The term that is usually used for this phenomenon, ''sex trafficking,'' is a misnomer. The problem isn't sex, nor is it prostitution as such. In many countries—China, Brazil, and most of sub-Saharan Africa—prostitution is widespread but mostly voluntary (in the sense it is driven by economic pressure rather than physical compulsion). In those places, brothels do not lock up women, and many women work on their own without pimps or brothels. Nor is the problem exactly ''trafficking'' since forced prostitution doesn't always depend on a girl's being transported over a great distance by a middleman.

The story I told, by the way, of the girl in Rochester, she just went about an hour-and-a-half drive. So this idea the trafficking is just about going from one nation to another or being in the hold of a boat or something like that is not necessarily always the case. So we use the words sex trafficking because people have to understand this is more than just one pimp and one prostitute, that these are usually rings and these girls are usually brought someplace where they do not want to be. But it doesn't necessarily mean they are brought long distances.

So when we talk about the bills on the floor, let's remember that, and I think this is a good reminder from this book.

And, by the way, if I ever mispronounce names or words, my apology to the authors Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. I have to say it is kind of small print, and I am trying my best. I know the Presiding Officer has a good command of English and will help me out or correct me if I make a mistake.

The horror of sex trafficking can more properly be labeled slavery.

The total number of modern slaves is difficult to estimate. The International Labour Organization, a UN agency, estimates that at any one time there are 12.3 million people engaged in forced labor of all kinds, not just sexual servitude. A UN report estimated that 1 million children in Asia alone are held in conditions indistinguishable from slavery. The Lancet, a prominent medical journal in Britain, calculated that ''1 million children are forced into prostitution every year and the total number of prostituted children could be as high as 10 million.''

Antitrafficking campaigners tend to use higher numbers, such as 27 million modern slaves. That figure originated in research by Kevin Bales, who runs a fine organization called Free the Slaves. Numbers are difficult to calculate in part because sex workers can't be divided neatly into categories of those working voluntarily and those working involuntarily. Some commentators look at prostitutes and see only sex slaves; others see only entrepreneurs. But in reality there are some in each category and many other women who inhabit a gray zone between freedom and slavery.

I will note this number—I have always tried to get the right number of how many victims we are talking about—but as I noted at the beginning of my remarks this morning, the 27 million modern slaves includes victims of not just sex trafficking but also labor trafficking.

Back to the book.

An essential part of the brothel business model is to break the spirit of girls through humiliation, rape, threats and violence. We met a 15-year-old Thai girl whose initiation consisted of being forced to eat dog droppings so as to shatter her self-esteem. Once a girl is broken and terrified, all hope of escape squeezed out of her, force may no longer be necessary to control her. She may smile and laugh at passersby, and try to grab them and tug them into the brothel. Many a foreigner would assume that she is there voluntarily, but in that situation complying with the will of the brothel owner does not signify consent.

Our own estimate is that there are 3 million women and girls (and a very small number of boys) worldwide who can be fairly termed enslaved in the sex trade. That is a conservative estimate that does not include many others who are manipulated and intimidated into prostitution. Nor does it include millions more who are under eighteen and cannot meaningfully consent to work in brothels. We are talking about 3 million people who in effect are the property of another person and in many cases could be killed by their owner with impunity.

Technically, trafficking is often defined as taking someone (by force or deception) across an international border. The U.S. State Department has estimated that between 600,000 and 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year, 80 percent of them women and girls, mostly for sexual exploitation. Since Meena didn't cross a border, she wasn't trafficked in the traditional sense. That's also true of most people who are enslaved in brothels. As the U.S. State Department notes, its estimate doesn't include ''millions of victims around the world who are trafficked within their own national borders.''

The bills that we have—the one before us and my bill, the safe harbor bill, which we would like to see as the first amendment, which passed the Judiciary Committee with 20 votes on a bipartisan basis—these bills are focused on sex trafficking within our own borders, although some of the victims will be brought in from other countries. This book, ''Half the Sky,'' is so good because it really is about what is going on all around the world and all these victims around the world. Every country has their own problems. Despite all of the political machinations and extraneous provisions and other things, what we are trying to get done today is to do something real to help the victims of sex trafficking through the fund Senator CORNYN has in his bill and then in my safe harbor bill, which is also a strong bipartisan bill, to make it clear there is a good model we can use across the country that has been used in 15 States and others, and one dozen more are working on them, where Minnesota has been one of the States leading the way to view these girls as victims and not as criminals, when the average age is 12 years old, not even old enough to go to a high school prom, not even old enough to drive the car.

Again, I welcome my colleagues to come down and talk about this issue. I am just going to keep filling in reading this book when no one is on the floor. I only hope that when we talk about this bill and this issue, we do it with some respect for the victims of these crimes and the respect they deserve.

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Again, as I have noted, 83 percent of the victims in the United States are from the United States, and I don't think that is what we think of when we first think about sex trafficking, but those are facts.

In contrast, in the peak decade of the transatlantic slave trade, the 1780s, an average of just under eighty thousand slaves were shipped annually across the Atlantic from Africa to the New World. The average then dropped to a bit more than fifty thousand between 1811 and 1850. In other words, far more women and girls are shipped into brothels each year in the early twenty-first century than African slaves were shipped into slave plantations each year in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries—although the overall population was of course far smaller then. As the journal Foreign Affairs observed: ''Whatever the exact number is, it seems almost certain that the modern global slave trade is larger in absolute terms than the Atlantic slave trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was.''

As on slave plantations two centuries ago, there are few practical restraints on slave owners. In 1791, North Carolina decreed that killing a slave amounted to ''murder,'' and Georgia later established that killing or maiming a slave was legally the same as killing or maiming a white person. But those doctrines existed more on paper than on plantations, just as Pakistani laws exist in the statute books but don't impede brothel owners who choose to eliminate troublesome girls.

While there has been progress in addressing many humanitarian issues in the last few decades, sex slavery has actually worsened. One reason for that is the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and Indochina. In Romania and other countries, the immediate result was economic distress, and everywhere criminal gangs arose and filled the power vacuum. Capitalism created new markets for rice and potatoes, but also for female flesh.

A second reason for the growth of trafficking is globalization. A generation ago, people stayed at home; now it is easier and cheaper to set out for the city or a distant country. A Nigerian girl whose mother never left her tribal area may now find herself in a brothel in Italy. In rural Moldolva, it is possible to drive from village to village and not find a female between the ages of sixteen and thirty.

I believe this is one of the countries that Senator MCCAIN visited, when I talked to him after he came back last Easter, where he simply didn't see the girls. He asked: Where are the girls? And they said: Well, the girls—many of them have been sold into sex. So these are things that are happening right now in this world and in our own country.

A third reason for the worsening situation is AIDS. Being sold to a brothel was always a hideous fate, but not usually a death sentence. Now it often is. And because of the fear of AIDS, customers prefer younger girls whom they believe are less likely to be infected. In both Asia and Africa, there is also a legend that AIDS can be cured by sex with a virgin, and that has nurtured demand for young girls kidnapped from their villages.

These factors explain our emphasis on sex slaves as opposed to other kinds of forced labor. Anybody who has spent time in Indian brothels and also, say, at Indian brick kilns knows that it is better to be enslaved working a kiln. Kiln workers most likely live together with their families, and their work does not expose them to the risk of AIDS, so there's always hope of escape down the road.

Inside the brothel, Naina and Vivek were beaten, starved, and abused. They were also confused about their parentage. Naina grew up calling Ainul [the brothel's owner] Grandma, and Ainul's son Vinod, Father. Naina sometimes was told that Vinod's wife, Pinky, was her mother; at other times she was told her mother had died and that Pinky was her stepmother. But when Naina asked to go to school, Vinod refused and described the relationship in blunter terms.

''You must obey me,'' he told Naina, ''because I am your owner.''

The neighbors tried to advise the children. ''People used to say that they could not be my real parents, because they tortured me so much,'' Naina recalled. Occasionally, the children heard or even saw Meena coming to the door and calling out to them. Once Meena saw Naina and told her, ''I am your mother.''

''No,'' Naina replied. ''Pinky is my mother.''

Vivek remembers Meena's visits as well. ''I used to see her being beaten up and driven away,'' he says. ''They told me that my mother was dead, but the neighbors told me that she was my mother after all, and I saw her coming back to try to fight for me.''

Naina and Vivek never went to a day of school, never saw a doctor, and were rarely allowed out. They were assigned chores such as sweeping floors and washing clothes, and they had only rags to wear—and no shoes, for that might encourage them to run away. Then, when Naina was twelve, she was paraded before an older man in a way that left her feeling uncomfortable. ''When I asked 'Mother' about the man,'' Naina recalled, ''she beat me up and sent me to bed without dinner.''

A couple of days later, ''Mother'' told Naina to bathe and took her to the market, where she bought her nice clothes and a nose ring. ''When I asked her why she was buying me all these things, she started scolding me. She told me that I had to listen to everything the man says. She also told me, 'Your father has taken money from the man for you.' I started crying out loudly.''

Pinky told Naina to wear the clothes, but the girl threw them away, crying inconsolably. Vivek was only eleven, a short boy with a meek manner. But he had inherited his mother's incomprehension of surrender. So he pleaded with his ''parents'' and his ''grandma'' to let his sister go, or to find a husband for her. Each appeal brought him only another beating—administered with scorn. ''You don't earn any income,'' ''Father'' told him mockingly, ''so how do you think you can look after your sister?''

Yet Vivek found the courage to confront his tormenters again and again, begging for his sister's freedom. In a town where police officers, government officials, Hindu priests, and respectable middle-class citizens all averted their eyes from forced prostitution, the only audible voice of conscience belonged to an eleven-year-old boy who was battered each time he spoke up. His outspokenness gained him nothing, though. Vinod and Pinky locked him up, forced Naina into the new clothes, and the girl's career as a prostitute began.

So I think that is a pretty good place to break for a minute as we talk about ''the only audible voice of conscience belonged to an eleven-year-old boy.'' I think we have an opportunity in the Senate to be an audible voice of conscience and to move on this bill.

When I came to the floor today, my job was to just manage the bill for 4 hours; then I just decided, after being somewhat disgusted by all of the anger that I have heard in this Chamber, that maybe I would just start reading from this book. I had no plan to do it. I happened to have it with me because I have used it when I have given speeches. This isn't an official filibuster, as I guess we have been asked. I am just going to keep reading from the book. When my colleagues want to come down, I welcome them. But I only ask them one thing—if maybe they could just focus on the issue at hand and stop all of this vengeance and anger, and then maybe we will have an opportunity, if we stop throwing darts, to get this done—and then also to confirm the next Attorney General of the United States, which is completely unrelated to this.

So let me continue on with this story, as we have an 11-year-old boy in the story whose voice was the only voice of conscience.

''My 'mother' was telling me not to get scared, as he is a nice man,'' Naina remembered. ''Then they locked me inside the room with the man. The man told me to lock the room from the inside. I slapped him. . . . Then that man forced me. He raped me.''

Once a customer gave Naina a tip, and she secretly passed on the money to Vivek. They thought that perhaps Vivek could use a phone, a technology that they had no experience with, to track down the mysterious woman who claimed to be their real mother and seek help from her. But when Vivek tried to use the telephone, the brothel owners found out and both children were flogged.

Ainul thought that Vivek could be distracted with girls, and so he was told to try to have sex with the prostitutes. He was overwhelmed and intimidated at the thought, and when he balked, Pinky beat him up. Seething and fearful of what would become of his sister, Vivek decided that their only hope would be for him to run away and try to find the person who claimed to be their mother. Somewhere Vivek had heard that the woman's name was Meena and that she lived in Forbesgunge, so he fled to the train station one morning and used Naina's tip to buy a ticket.

''I was trembling because I thought that they would come after me and cut me into pieces,'' he recalled. After arriving in Forbesgunge, he asked directions to the brothel district. He trudged down the road to the red-light area and then asked one passerby after another: Where is Meena? Where does she live?

Finally, after a long walk and many missed turns, he knew he was close to her home, and he called out: Meena! Meena! A woman came out of one little home—Vivek's lip quivered as he recounted this part of the story—and looked him over wonderingly. The boy and the woman gazed at each other for a long moment, and then the woman finally said in astonishment: ''Are you Vivek?''

The reunion was sublime. It was a blessed few weeks of giddy, unadulterated joy, the first happiness that Vivek had known in his life. Meena is a warm and emotional woman, and Vivek was thrilled to feel a mother's love for the first time. Yet now that Meena

had news about Naina, her doggedness came to the surface again: She was determined to recover her daughter.

''I gave birth to her, and so I can never forget her,'' Meena said. ''I must fight for her as long as I breathe. Every day without Naina feels like a year.''

Meena had noticed that Apne Aap Women Worldwide, an organization that fights sex slavery in India, had opened an office in Forbesgunge. Apne Aap is based in Kolkata, the city formerly known as Calcutta, but its founder—a determined former journalist named Ruchira Gupta—grew up partly in Forbesgunge. Other aid groups are reluctant to work in rural Bihar because of the widespread criminality, but Ruchira knew the area and thought it was worth the risk to open a branch office. One of the first people to drop in was Meena. ''Please, please,'' Meena begged Ruchira, ''help me get my daughter back!''

There had never been a police raid on a brothel in Bihar State, as far as anyone knew, but Ruchira decided that this could be the first. While Ainul Bibi's brothel had warm ties with the local police, Ruchira had strong connections with national police officials. And Ruchira can be every bit as intimidating as any brothel owner.

So Apne Aap harangued the local police into raiding the brothel to rescue Naina. The police burst in, found Naina, and took her to the police station. But the girl had been so drugged and broken that at the station she looked at Meena and declared numbly: ''I'm not your daughter.'' Meena was shattered.

Naina explained later that she had felt alone and terrified, partly because Ainul Bibi had told her that Vivek had died. But after an hour in the police station, Naina began to realize that maybe she could escape the brothel, and she finally whispered, ''Yes, you're my mother.''

So Apne Aap whisked Naina off to a hospital in Kolkata, where she was treated for severe injuries and a morphine addiction. The brothel had drugged Naina constantly to render her compliant, and the morphine withdrawal was brutal to watch. In Forbesgunge, life became more difficult and dangerous for Meena and her family. Some of the brothel owners there are related to Ainul and Manooj, and they were furious at Meena. Even those in the Nutt community who didn't like prostitution disapproved of the police raid, and so the townspeople shunned Apne Aap's school and shelter. Meena and her children were stigmatized, and a young man working with Apne Aap was stabbed. Threats were made against Meena's two daughters with Kuduz. Yet Meena was serene as she walked about the streets. She laughed at the idea that she should feel cowed.

''They think that good is bad,'' she scoffed, speaking of the local villagers. ''They may not speak to me, but I know what is right and I will stick to it. I will never accept prostitution of myself or my children as long as I breathe.'' Meena is working as a community organizer in Forbesgunge, trying to discourage parents from prostituting their daughters and urging them to educate their sons and daughters alike. Over time the resentment against her has diminished a bit, but she is still seen as pushy and unfeminine.

Apne Aap later started a boarding school in Bihar, partly with donations from American supporters, and Meena's children were placed there. The school has a guard and is a much safer place for them. Naina now studies at that boarding school and hopes to become a teacher, and in particular to help disadvantaged children.

One afternoon, Meena was singing to her two young daughters, teaching them a song.

This is how it went:

India will not be free,
Until its women are free.
What about the girls in this country?
If girls are insulted and abused and enslaved in this country,
Put your hand on your heart and ask,
Is this country truly independent?

The next part of the chapter: ''Fighting Slavery from Seattle.'' This is a book, ''Half the Sky,'' by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. It is about sex trafficking, and I am reading it, one, because it is a really good book and so people understand the issue, two, so people will refocus on why we have these bills on the floor and work together. We all know some potential ways to resolve this on both sides of the aisle so we can pass this bill and resolve this Hyde amendment provision which should not be on this bill. But there are ways to resolve this, and we know what they are, and then, also, hopefully, pass my safe harbor bill which was the bill that in addition to Senator CORNYN's bill passed through our Committee on the Judiciary unanimously. Every single person voted for it. It is slated to be the first amendment vote on this bill, and it establishes safe harbor incentives so that other States will do what Minnesota and about 15 States have done, which is not to consider these victims as criminals but to consider them as victims. Then not only do we help these girls so they have a chance of turning their lives around but also so that we actually make better criminal cases.

I know as a former prosecutor, running an office of 400 people for 8 years—seeing some of these major cases come in our doors—the best way to make these cases, if you have victims who feel that they are protected, who feel they have another life they can lead, who feel they can do something with their lives between going back to their pimp and going back to the person who has beaten them up and gotten them hooked on drugs, is by doing something like that. So those are two worthy bills that are on the floor.

Again, my colleagues are welcome to come down here and join me. I think it would be nice for a change if people focused on the issue at hand instead of a partisan fight that has been going on, because I think this institution is better than what we have seen in the last week.

The next part of the chapter: ''Fighting Slavery from Seattle.''

People always ask how they can help. Given concerns about corruption, waste, and mismanagement, how can one actually help women like Meena and defeat modern slavery? Is there anything an ordinary person can do?

That is a good question. I finally decided to start reading this book because I was sick of what was going on here. I think ordinary people around the country can do something about sex slavery by supporting strong laws and making sure Congress gets its job done but also doing work on their local and State level.

The authors say:

A starting point is to be brutally realistic about the complexities of achieving change. To be blunt, humanitarians sometimes exaggerate and oversell, eliding pitfalls. They sometimes torture frail data until it yields the demanded ''proof'' of success. Partly this is because the causes are worthy and inspiring; those who study education for girls, for example, naturally believe in it. As we'll see, the result is that the research isn't often conducted with the same rigor as is found in, say, examinations of the effectiveness of toothpaste. Aid groups are also reluctant to acknowledge mistakes, partly because frank discussion of blunders is an impediment in soliciting contributions.

The reality is that past efforts to assist girls have sometimes backfired. In 1993, Senator Tom Harkin wanted to help Bangladeshi girls laboring in sweatshops, so he introduced legislation that would ban imports made by workers under the age of fourteen. Bangladeshi factories promptly fired tens of thousands of young girls, and many of them ended up in brothels and are presumably now dead of AIDS.

Again, I am reading from the book ''Half the Sky,'' by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, which is a great book about sex trafficking in order to refocus this Chamber on what we should be doing, which is getting these bills done and coming up with a way to resolve timeworn disputes which we somehow have been able do with other bills.

I am trying to make the case here that these girls, as reflected in some of these stories, are just as important as some of the other work that we do in the Senate and deserve our greatest efforts.

Yet many forms of assistance—particularly in health and education—have an excellent record. Consider the work of Frank Grijalva, the principal of the Overlake School in Redmond, Washington, a fine private school with 450 students in grades five through twelve. Annual tuition hovers around $22,000, and most of the kids are raised in a sheltered upper-middle class environment. Grijalva was looking for a way to teach his students about how the other half lives.

''It became clear that we, as a very privileged community, needed to be a bigger, more positive force in the world,'' Grijalva recalled. Frank heard about Bernard Krisher, a former Newsweek correspondent who was so appalled by poverty in Cambodia that he formed an aid group, American Assistance for Cambodia. Rescuing girls from brothels is important, Krisher believes, but the best way to save them is to prevent them from being trafficked in the first place—which means keeping them in school. So American Assistance for Cambodia focuses on educating rural children, especially girls. Bernie Krisher's signature program is the Rural School Project. For $13,000, a donor can establish a school in a Cambodian village. The donation is matched by funds from the World Bank and again by the Asian Development Bank.

Grijalva had a brainstorm. His students could sponsor a school in Cambodia and use it as a way of emphasizing the importance of public service. Initially the response from students and parents was polite but cautious, but then the attacks of 9/11 took place, and suddenly the community was passionately concerned with the larger world and engaged in this project. The students conducted bake sales, car washes, and talent shows, and also

educated themselves about Cambodia's history of war and genocide. The school was built in Pailin, a Cambodian town on the Thai border that is notorious for cheap brothels that cater to Thai men.

In February 2003, the school construction was completed, and Grijalva led a delegation of nineteen students from Overlake School to Cambodia for the opening. A cynic might say that the money for the visit would have been better spent on building another Cambodian school, but in fact that visit was an essential field trip and a learning opportunity for those American students. They lugged along boxes of school supplies, but as they approached Pailin by car, they realized that Cambodia's needs were greater than they ever could have imagined. The dirt-and-gravel road to Pailin was so deeply rutted that it was barely passable, and they saw a bulldozer overturned beside a crater—it had hit a land mine.

When the Americans reached the Cambodian school, they saw a sign declaring it the OVERLAKE SCHOOL in English and Kmer script. At the ribbon cutting, the Americans were welcomed by a sea of excited Cambodians—led by a principal who was missing a leg, a land-mine victim himself. Cambodian men then had an average of only 2.6 years of education, and Cambodian women averaged just 1.7 years, so a new school was appreciated in a way the Americans could barely fathom.

The school dedication—and the full week in Cambodia—left an indelible impression on the American students. So Overlake students and parents decided to forge an ongoing relationship with its namesake in Cambodia. The Americans funded an English teacher at the school and arranged for an Internet connection for e-mail. They built a playground and sent books. Then, in 2006, the American school decided to send delegations annually, dispatching students and teachers during spring vacation to teach English and arts to the Cambodian pupils. And in 2007, the group decided to assist a school in Ghana as well, and to send a delegation there.

''This project is simply the most meaningful and worthwhile initiative that I have undertaken in my thirty-six years in education,'' Frank Grijalva said. The Overlake School in Cambodia is indeed an extraordinary place. A bridge has washed out, so you have to walk across a stream to reach it, but it looks nothing like the dilapidated buildings that you see in much of the developing world. There are 270 students, ranging in age from six to fifteen. The English teacher is university educated and speaks good English. Most stunning of all, when we dropped by, the sixth graders were busy sending e-mails from their Yahoo accounts—to the kids at Overlake School in America.

One of those writing an e-mail was Kun Sokkea, a thirteen-year-old girl who would soon be the first in her family ever to graduate from elementary school. Her father had died of AIDS, and her mother was sick with the same disease and needed to be nursed constantly. Kun Sokkea is rail-thin, a bit gangly, with long, stringy black hair. She is reserved, and her shoulders sag with the burdens of poverty.

''My mom encourages me to stay in school, but sometimes I think I should go out and earn money,'' Kun Sokkea explained. ''I have no dad to support Mom, so maybe I should provide for her. In one day, I could earn seventy baht, [a bit more than two dollars] cutting hay or planting corn.''

To address these financial pressures, American Assistance for Cambodia started a program called Girls Be Ambitious, which in effect bribes families to keep girls in school. If a girl has perfect attendance in school for one month, her family gets $10. A similar approach has been used very effectively and cheaply to increase education for girls in Mexico and other countries. Kun Sokkea's family is now getting the stipend. For donors who can't afford to fund an entire school, it's a way to fight trafficking at a cost of $120 per year per girl. The approach helps because it is typically girls like Kun Sokkea who end up trafficked. Their families are desperate for money, the girls are poorly educated, and a trafficker promises them a great job selling fruit in a distant city.

Kun Sokkea showed us her home, a rickety shack built on stilts—to guard against flooding and vermin—in a field near the school. The house has no electricity, and her possessions were in one small bag. She never has to worry about choosing what to wear: She has just one shirt, and no shoes other than a pair of flip-flops. Kun Sokkea has never been to a dentist and to a doctor only once, and she gets the family's drinking water from the nearby creek. That's the same creek in which Kun Sokkea washes the family clothes (she borrows someone else's shirt to wear when she has to wash her own). She shares a mattress on the floor with her brother, as three other family members sleep a few feet way. Kun Sokkea has never touched a phone, ridden in a car, or had a soft drink; when she was asked if she ever drank milk, she looked confused and said as a baby she had drunk her mother's milk.

Yet one thing Kun Sokkea has beside her bed is a photo of the American Overlake students on their campus. In the evenings before she goes to sleep, she sometimes picks up the photo and studies the smiling families and neat lawns and modern buildings. In her own shack, with her mother sick and often crying, her siblings hungry, it is a window into a magical land where people have plenty to eat and get cured when they fall ill. In such a place, she thinks, everybody must be happy all the time.

For one thing, we know that is not quite true in our country. As we know, we have these same crimes occurring in our country every single day. Every single day, we have thousands of girls who are victims of sex trafficking. We had it happen in Minnesota. We have had it happen across the country. We have it happen when some girls are brought in from other countries. We know it is going on every day in our own Nation. We have an opportunity to do something about it, to tell the rest of the world that this place is a place where good things get done. But somehow we have gotten bogged down in a political game again with blame going back and forth and back and forth, and I just don't think that is dignified for the Senate.

While we can battle it out—and we should—on issues such as the budget and on issues where we don't have an agreement when it comes to our country's international affairs, this is an issue on which we actually agree, but somehow we found a way to not agree, and I think we need to find our way back. That is why I am going to continue to read from this book.

Someone asked me if this is a filibuster. It is not a filibuster because obviously I don't mind if my colleagues come down. I would like them to come down and talk about this important topic. But I will point out that at least when it comes to this issue of sex trafficking, we can stop going back and forth on who is to blame and who knew what when and what people did wrong and instead just focus on resolving this issue and getting a bill passed and certainly not attaching it to the Attorney General of the United States.

I will say that it is attached to the Attorney General in one way, and that is when it comes to Federal sex trafficking cases. Most of these cases are on the local level, county level, State level, the DA's office, but there are cases that are handled federally. I know from talking to the nominated Attorney General, Loretta Lynch, that she cares very much about these cases. It would be good to have her in place so we can start working on this national sex trafficking strategy. So in that way they are connected, but they certainly are not connected, in my mind, procedurally.

I know some of my colleagues have addressed this. I have spoken out for her several times. Not everyone knows about Loretta Lynch's background. Loretta Lynch is someone who grew up in a neighborhood—her family didn't have a lot of money. Her dad was a pastor at the church.

When she was in elementary school, she took a test and did really well on that test. The teacher came to her and said: You know what, we don't really know if that was really you who took that test or if that was really your score. So she took the test again, and she scored even higher the second time.

When Loretta Lynch graduated from high school, she was actually the valedictorian. The principal of that school came up to Loretta Lynch and said: You know what, it is a bit controversial to have you as our valedictorian, so you will have to share it with a White student. That happened to Loretta Lynn, and she just waited it out, and that is what she is going to do with this Chamber. She is going wait it out, and in the end she will be confirmed as the next Attorney General.

Why is this relevant? Because some of our friends on the other side of the aisle are attaching it to the sex trafficking issue, and I don't think it should be attached to the sex trafficking issue. I think we should get her confirmed.

But most importantly and the reason I am here on the floor reading from this book is just to say, can we just stop going back and forth and the vengeance and get this bill done?

From the very beginning, Senator CORNYN and I have worked on my bill, the safe harbor bill—which is not the bill on the floor—together. While I was not involved in the beginning of the drafting of his bill, I believe that idea of helping victims in some way with some kind of funding with shelters is a really good idea as well.

I hope we can resolve the issue on his bill, the Hyde amendment provision,

and that we can then go on to pass my bill as the amendment. As we know, there is significant support in the House for these bills, and they are very important bills.

I will continue with the book:

Kun Sokkea and her family are not the only beneficiaries. The Americans themselves have been transformed as much as the Cambodians. And that is something you see routinely: Aid projects have a mixed record in helping people abroad, but a superb record in inspiring and educating the donors. Sometimes the lessons are confusing, as Overlake found when it tried to help Kun Sokkea get to middle school after graduating from elementary school. She needed transport because the middle school was far away, and young men in the area often harassed girls on their way to school.

So, at the teacher's suggestion, Overlake bought Kun Sokkea a bicycle, and for several months that worked very well. Then an older woman, a neighbor, asked to borrow Kun Sokkea's bicycle; the girl felt she couldn't say no to an older person. The woman then sold the bicycle and kept the money she received for it. Frank Grijalva and the American students were beside themselves, but they learned an important lesson about how defeating poverty is more difficult than it seems at first. The Americans decided they couldn't just buy Kun Sokkea another bicycle, so the girl returned to walking an hour each way to school and back. Perhaps in part because of the distance involved and the risks of getting to school, Kun Sokkea began to miss a fair number of days. Her grades suffered. In early 2009, she dropped out of school.

America's schools rarely convey much understanding of the 2.7 billion people (40 percent of the world's population) who today live on less than $2 a day. So while the primary purpose of a new movement on behalf of women is to stop slavery and honor killings, another is to expose young Americans to life abroad so that they, too, can learn and grow and blossom—and then continue to tackle the problems as adults.

''After going to Cambodia, my plans for the future have changed,'' said Natalie Hammerquist, a seventeen-year-old at Overlake who regularly e-mails two Cambodian students. ''This year I'm taking three foreign languages, and I plan on picking up more in college.''

Natalie's Cambodian girlfriend wants to be a doctor but can't afford to go to university. That grates on Natalie: A girl just like me has to abandon her dreams because they're unaffordable. Now Natalie plans on a career empowering young people around the world: ''All anyone should do is to use their gifts in what way they can, and this is how I can use mine. That is the weight of how valuable seeing Cambodia was for me.''

This is now chapter 2 of Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn's book ''Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide.'' And I noted that really most of the book is about sex trafficking and prostitution and why this is such a major problem worldwide.

Look at what happened that night when those girls were doing nothing but learning at a school and Boko Haram came in and broke into that school and took those girls away. Their parents had nothing but motorcycles and bicycles and bows and arrows to try to chase them. They were never able to get their daughters back, and now Boko Haram said they sold many of those children into sex slavery.

This should not be happening, but it is going on right now—and not just internationally. It is going on everywhere in this country, and that is why it is important. It is important not just for the victims in America, it is also important because of the victims internationally. We have an opportunity in this country to actually stand up and say: We want to be a leader on this internationally. We are going to cast this dysfunction aside and actually get this done and show the world we can be a leader when it comes to elevating girls and young women, when it comes to holding up half the sky.

Chapter 2, ''Prohibition and Prostitution.'' It starts with a quote by Abraham Lincoln:

Although volume upon volume is written to prove slavery a good thing, we never hear of the man who wishes to take the good of it, by being a slave himself.

After visiting Meena Hasina and Ruchira Gupta in Bihar, Nick crossed from India into Nepal at a border village with stalls selling clothing, snacks, and more sinister wares. That border crossing is the one through which thousands of Nepali girls are trafficked into India on their way to the brothels of Kolkata. There they are valued for their light skin, good looks, docility, and inability to speak the local language. As Nick filled out some required paperwork at the border post, Nepalis streamed into India, without filling out a form.

While sitting in the border shack, Nick began talking to one Indian officer who spoke excellent English. The man said he had been dispatched by the intelligence bureau to monitor the border.

''So what exactly are you monitoring?'' Nick asked.

''We're looking for terrorists, or terror supplies,'' said the man, who wasn't monitoring anything very closely, since one truck after another was driving past. ''After 9/11, we've tightened things up here. And we're also looking for smuggled or pirated goods. If we find them, we will confiscate them.''

''What about trafficked girls?'' Nick asked. ''Are you keeping an eye out for them? There must be a lot.''

''Oh, a lot. But we don't worry about them. There's nothing that we can do about them.''

''Well, you could arrest the traffickers. Isn't trafficking girls as important as pirating DVDs?''

The intelligence officer laughed genially and threw up his hands. ''Prostitution is inevitable.'' He chuckled. ''There has always been prostitution in every country. And what's a young man going to do from the time he turns eighteen until he gets married at thirty?''

''Well, is the best solution really to kidnap Nepali girls and imprison them in Indian brothels?''

The officer shrugged, unperturbed. ''These girls are sacrificed so we can have harmony in society. So that good girls can be safe.''

It is unfortunate. I hope that is not what we are going to be saying in this body—from the Senate to the rest of the world and to trafficked girls and to those groups who are advocating so hard, especially over the last 2 years, in trying to get this done. I hope we will not say: It is unfortunate. We were not able to resolve this. These are major fights, and this person did this, and this person knew about this, and this person didn't know about that.

That is what has been going on over this past week, and we are better than that. People keep backstabbing and going after each other, but personally I have had it. So if anyone wants to join me here—I know the women in the Senate have always worked together—and at least talk about this issue instead of simply fighting with each other, I think we would really improve our chances of getting it done.

''But many of the Nepali girls being trafficked are good girls, too.''

''Oh, yes, but those are peasant girls. They can't even read. They're from the countryside. The good Indian middle-class girls are safe.''

Nick, who had been gritting his teeth, offered an explosive suggestion: ''I've got it! You know, in the United States we have a lot of problems with harmony in society. So we should start kidnapping Indian middle-class girls and forcing them to work in brothels in the United States! Then young American men could have fun, too, don't you think? That would improve our harmony in society!''

There was an ominous silence, but finally the police officer roared with laughter.

''You are joking!'' the officer said beaming. ''That's very funny!''

Nick gave up.

People get away with enslaving village girls for the same reason that people got away with enslaving blacks 200 years ago: The victims are perceived as discounted humans. India had delegated an intelligence officer to look for pirated goods because it knew that the United States cares about intellectual property. When India feels that the West cares as much about slavery as it does about pirated DVDs, it will dispatch people to the borders to stop traffickers.

The tools to crush modern slavery exist, but the political will is lacking. That must be the starting point of any abolitionist movement. We're not arguing that Westerners should take up this cause because it is the fault of the West; Western men do not play a central role in prostitution in most poor countries. True, American and European sex tourists are part of the problem in Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Belize, but they are still only a small percentage of the johns. The vast majority are local men. Moreover, Western men usually go with girls who are more or less voluntary prostitutes, because they want to take the girls back to their hotel rooms, while forced prostitutes are not normally allowed out of the brothels. So this is not a case where we in the West have a responsibility to lead because we are the source of the problem. Rather, we single out the West because even though we are peripheral to the slavery, our action is necessary to overcome a horrific evil.

One reason the modern abolitionist movement has not been more effective is the divisive politics of prostitution. In the 1990s, the American left and right collaborated and achieved the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, which was a milestone in raising awareness of international trafficking in the global agenda. The anti-trafficking movement then was unusually bipartisan, strongly backed by some liberal Democrats, such as the late senator Paul Wellstone, and by some conservative Republicans, such as Senator Sam Brownback.

I do want to pause from this book for a second to note that when I was at the McCain Institute out in Arizona, Cindy

McCain and HEIDI HEITKAMP and I spoke about this issue to all of those gathered. At the end, a guy came up to me and said that he was with the State Department under a Republican administration, and he talked to me about how when Paul Wellstone died, they put forward some kind of a scholarship in his honor for students who wanted to work in the area of combating sex trafficking and trying to eliminate sex trafficking.

It was at that moment last spring that I actually found out that Paul Wellstone, the Senator from Minnesota, whom we miss so dearly, who died in that tragic plane crash, had taken on this issue. He had taken on so many other issues, speaking for the voiceless, from mental health to domestic violence, that I did not know—and I think this shows how sometimes this issue gets second shrift—that he was such a hero when it came to sex trafficking.

I think part of that was Paul always believed that there were a lot of causes around this building that had people advocating for them, that keep people busy at meetings all day or that they get called up for that are so important, but, in fact, those who can't afford that kind of help—the victims of domestic violence or those with mental illness or victims of sex trafficking—they don't have a lot of lobbyists coming over here to meet with people and they need someone to stand up for them, and they should not be forgotten or dismissed or marginalized in becoming a political football, that maybe they need someone advocating on their behalf.

The other thing about Paul is he always embraced that immigrant experience. He believed that no matter where one comes from in this country, or no matter what one's roots were, they should be able to rise up. He also believed that everyone should be treated with dignity.

I will never forget when I first came to the Senate, Darrell, the train driver who recently retired, came up to me and I told him I am a Senator from Minnesota, and all he said was, ''Paul Wellstone,'' because he remembered him. Whether it was the cops at the front desk or the secretaries, they remember Paul. So it is no surprise that Paul Wellstone, along with conservative Republican Sam Brownback, actually took this issue on.

In this book, ''Half the Sky,'' Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn continue talking about who worked on this when people were actually working together. They say:

> Hillary Rodham Clinton was also a leader on this issue, and no one has been a greater champion than Carolyn Maloney, a Democratic Congresswoman from New York.

In fact, Congresswoman MALONEY, in conjunction with Congressman POE, a Republican Congressman, are sponsoring a bill that is not exactly the same as Senator CORNYN's bill, but similar. They are also cosponsors of the bill I am carrying, the safe harbor bill that ERIK PAULSEN is carrying in the House. So we can see this work has continued. Some of the people are the same, but somehow back then, we were able to reach some kind of an agreement, and this was treated as a serious issue and a serious bill which we need to do.

They go on to talk about who else worked on this.

They say:

> . . . Paul Wellstone, Sam Brownback, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Carolyn Maloney, a Democratic Congresswoman from New York. Likewise, one of George W. Bush's few positive international legacies was a big push against trafficking. Vital Voices and other liberal groups were stalwart on sex trafficking, as were International Justice Mission, and other conservative evangelical groups. Yet, while the left and the right each do important work fighting trafficking, they mostly do it separately. The abolitionist movement would be far more effective if it forged unity in its own rank.

Now we get back to something I always remember MIKE ENZI talking about, about how we can have disagreement on something like 20 percent of the things, but we have agreement on 80 percent. Maybe that is what we have to remember with this bill. We know how Senator ENZI always worked well with Ted Kennedy, as did Senator HATCH, even with how different they were politically. But they were able to find some common ground.

Certainly this bill should not be devolving into a fight over abortion. There is so much we agree on in this bill. There is also so much we agree on in the safe harbor bill which doesn't contain the Hyde provision.

So this idea that we are going back and forth and dwelling on whose fault this was and how it happened—frankly, I think: Enough. I think we need to resolve this. I know there are ways to resolve this. I hope that is continuing to go on today. We have a lot of things, in addition to passing this bill, we need to get done. We need to get the vote on the next Attorney General of the United States. We have a major budget that we need to get done. The budget needs to be approved. I am looking at our staff and I know they are looking forward to one of those nights where we are going until 3 or 4 in the morning. Maybe we wouldn't have to do that if we could stop these kinds of fights.

This is kind of a practical argument for getting this done, I know that, but one has to be slightly practical as we look at the fights before us on important matters that we need to resolve. One of the fights shouldn't be this. This is a fight against evil. This is a fight against those who are trafficking in little girls. It shouldn't be a fight across the aisle.

The authors talk about the groups that have worked on it and how we would be more effective if we forged unity.

They continue:

> One reason for discord is a dispute about how to regard prostitution. The left often refers nonjudgmentally to ''sex workers'' and tends to be tolerant of transactions among consenting adults. The right . . . refers to ''prostitutes'' or ''prostituted women''.

Do my colleagues know what is so interesting about this—let me see when this book was written: 2009. So even since that time, what is sort of a cool thing is that we have gotten some agreement now on the fact that when we see a Republican House of Representatives being able to pass the safe harbor bill—the bill I wrote in the Senate, the bill that is not yet on the floor, to make clear, but the bill that would be considered as the first amendment—we have gotten some agreement here in these two Houses that these younger victims are, in fact, victims. I think that is really important for our country to hear that. Because when we do things such as that—such as when we pass the Violence Against Women Act, it changes the whole way people think about these crimes. Who is committing the crime? It is the people running the ring. It is the johns. It is not the victims.

So I think that is why as we move forward, trying to get these bills passed, it is so important beyond the immediate bills.

OK. So they are talking about this debate. I don't think we should dwell on debate. We have had enough of them in this Chamber, but that is what this part of the book is about.

They continue:

> What policy should we pursue to try to eliminate that slavery? Originally, we sympathized with the view that a prohibition won't work any better in prostitution today than it did against alcohol in America in the 1920s. Instead of trying fruitlessly to ban prostitution, we believed it would be preferable to legalize and regulate it. That pragmatic ''harm reduction'' model is preferred by many aid groups because it allows aid workers to pass out condoms and it permits access to brothels so that they can be more easily checked for underage girls.
>
> Over time, we've changed our minds. That legalize-and-regulate model simply hasn't worked very well in countries where prostitution is often coerced.

This is a change. I think we remember back decades ago where people were talking about legalizing prostitution. I think what we have realized, those of us who have worked as prosecutors, is that so often prostitution is not consensual. So often there are reasons—either the pimp is keeping someone hooked on drugs to keep someone being a prostitute or they are threatening their lives or threatening their family lives—and this is something that we don't want to have be legal.

I am going to finish this paragraph, and then I see we have been joined by the great Senator from New Jersey who I am really happy has come so I can sit down and drink some water.

It continues:

> That legalize-and-regulate model simply hasn't worked very well in countries where prostitution is often coerced. Partly, that is because governance is often poor so the regulation is ineffective, and partly it is because the legal brothels tend to attract a parallel

illegal business in young girls and forced prostitution. In contrast, there's empirical evidence that crackdowns can succeed, when combined with social services such as job retraining and drug rehabilitation, and that is the approach we have come to favor. In countries with widespread trafficking, we favor a law enforcement strategy that pushes for fundamental change in police attitudes and regular police inspections to check for underage girls or anyone being held against their will. That means holding governments accountable not just to pass laws but also to enforce them, and monitoring how many brothels are raided and pimps are arrested. Jail-like brothels should be closed down, sting operations should be mounted against buyers of virgin girls, and national police chiefs must be under pressure to crack down on corruption as it relates to trafficking. The idea is to reduce the brothel owners' profit.

With that, I will take a pause from this book. I will say that Senator BOOKER has done not only an amazing job as a Senator, but he also knows a little bit about being a mayor. He knows the struggle of poverty and also understands that to govern, we have to have a change of tone. I have always appreciated the work he has done across the aisle and the tone he brings to the Senate. We are really trying to push today as we try to come together to work on this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for those incredibly generous words. I recognize the Presiding Officer, Senator PERDUE. I am grateful to be able to serve with him, and it is great seeing him in the captain's chair, to use my ''Star Trek'' parlance. I am happy to have the chance to formally welcome the Senator from Georgia to the Senate. It is good to serve with him as well.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. President, I am honored to stand on the Senate floor to express my strong support for the historic nomination of Loretta Lynch to be the Attorney General of the United States. Our Nation is fortunate to have Ms. Lynch as the nominee for Attorney General. She is seasoned, competent, wise, extraordinarily dedicated, and has already served this Nation for many years, receiving accolades from across the country. She is historic in and of herself and exceptionally well qualified. I wish to tell everyone a little bit more about her.

First, though, I want to ask—and this should not be necessary, but I want to ask: Why do we almost have a double standard for Ms. Lynch's nomination? She is the first African-American woman appointed to head the Department of Justice. She has had her nomination pending on the Senate floor longer than any nominee for Attorney General going back three decades. Ms. Lynch has had to wait 81 days for a hearing in committee—longer than any of President George W. Bush's nominees for Attorney General had to wait; more than twice as long for Attorneys General John Ashcroft and Michael Mukasey; and 24 days longer than Alberto Gonzalez. She waited 27 days for a committee vote after her hearing, again longer than any of George Bush's nominees to be Attorney General. Now her nomination has lingered on the Senate floor without a vote for 20 days, which is again longer than the wait for any of the last five Attorneys General combined. Her historic nomination has now been pending in the Senate for more than 130 days since the President first nominated her. I have not heard a single good reason germane to her qualifications, to her values, to her views, and to the kind of service she has rendered or will render, as to why she should not be promptly confirmed.

She comes before the Senate having been twice appointed by two different Presidents and twice unanimously confirmed by this very body, to be a U.S. attorney. She has been a career Federal prosecutor for almost a decade, a partner at a prestigious law firm, and led one of the finest Federal prosecuting offices in the country, the Eastern District of New York.

Her nomination has the support of dozens of law enforcement organizations, civil rights organizations, and outspoken citizens from across the country.

So, again, I wonder why are we here today still waiting? Why does this President's exceptionally well-qualified nominee deserve such unfair treatment?

Attorneys General are important because they lead the Department that keeps us safe and secure and protects our rights. From securing the right to vote to combating the violence of organized crime, to bringing terrorists to justice, this position is too important for any kind of political games and for any kind of delay.

Seventy-five years ago, another Attorney General, Robert H. Jackson, spoke eloquently about the qualities of a good Federal prosecutor and hence a good Attorney General, when he said: ''The citizen's safety lies in the prosecutor who tempers zeal with human kindness, who seeks truth and not victims, who serves the law and not factional purposes, and who approaches her task with humility.''

This is the type of prosecutor Ms. Lynch has always been and the type of Attorney General she will be.

This appointment is historic. Once confirmed, Ms. Lynch will be the first Black woman to serve in the Nation's highest law enforcement position. She will be only the second woman and second African American to be Attorney General. Her story is our story. It is an American story. It reflects a long history of our Nation, the distance we have traveled as a country.

It is a story of a Black woman who grew up in the Jim Crow South, the daughter of a fourth-generation minister and segregation-fighting mother who overcame discrimination and achieved the American dream despite the early obstacles she faced. Once, while a student at a predominantly White elementary school, her standardized test scores were so high that the disbelieving school demanded she retake her test. The great thing about that story is she retook the test and got a higher score. On one other occasion, she was named the valedictorian of her high school class which was a predominantly White high school, but the White administrators in the school did not think it was appropriate to have a Black girl as the top student, so they asked her to share that honor with a White student, and she did so with dignity and grace.

She would go on to earn an Ivy League education, climb the highest ladders of her profession, and stand today nominated by the President of the United States of America, and when confirmed by the Senate, she will be our 83rd Attorney General. Only in this great Nation can a story such as this be possible, can a story such as this be told.

Today, we continue our efforts. All of us—Republicans and Democrats—in this body are committed to building a more perfect Union. I know this confirmation will inspire people all across our country—people who may have lost their faith in law enforcement or in our government's ability to get things done, to know that despite the odds or challenges, we are still a great nation, that we are devoted to overcoming our challenges.

We celebrate someone who has broken glass ceilings, who has broken barrier after barrier, and now as a qualified candidate will hopefully soon ascend to this position. It is a reaffirmation of the American dream.

While history is important, I don't want to overshadow those qualifications. I want to reiterate them.

She is a well-qualified nominee. She graduated with Harvard College and Harvard Law School degrees, and went on to gain exceptional experience as a prosecutor and as a manager. As U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, she led one of the Nation's most challenging prosecutorial offices. I know this. I live right across the river from where she works. Her tough approach to fighting crime became almost legendary. She won acclaim throughout our metropolitan region as well as in the law enforcement community.

In that office she established a record that would make any prosecutor proud. She led an office that had the tenacity to take on violent criminals, to confront political corruption, and to disrupt organized crime.

At a time when the Senate is considering legislation to combat human trafficking, we need an Attorney General who will vigorously, unapologetically, and courageously prosecute traffickers. Ms. Lynch has been a leader on that very issue. Her

office prosecuted over 100 child exploitation cases and brutal global trafficking cases. Her office tried more terrorism cases since 9/11 than any other office in the country.

I was impressed when she first came to my office. She was candid, straightforward, and down to earth. What is clear from Ms. Lynch's record is not just that she is a tough prosecutor but that she is a leader with a vision and the right values to be Attorney General.

Too many Americans distrust the ability of law enforcement to fairly enforce our laws. Ms. Lynch believes in the principles of equality and justice first and foremost, and she will restore even more faith in our system. In her committee testimony she articulated a vision about how in a great time of tension in our country we can rebuild the trust between dedicated, committed law enforcement officers on the streets and the communities they serve. Too many Americans, as I said time and again, go to prison for far too long. The majority of people incarcerated today in Federal prisons are there for nonviolent offenses. We have a nation that leads the globe in incarcerating people, and we do it often in a way that is discriminatory against poor people and minorities.

Ms. Lynch has a vision of alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent offenders that are based on facts and based on her experience. She supported her district's drug court with a diversion program taking first-time nonviolent offenders out of the prosecution system and giving them access to drug treatment. Her innovation and successes speak volumes about her commitment to saving taxpayer dollars and addressing our swelling prison population while also driving down crime.

So I say in conclusion, she has sterling character. She has incredible credentials. She has unflappable integrity. I am confident that as Attorney General she will ensure that the Department leads in a way that will make us proud.

The road to building a more perfect Union in this country has been long, and the work still continues. We are at a time in this Nation when cynicism with government is at an all-time high. One of the highest-ranked concerns that Americans have right now—issues of employment and education are now being caught up to by concerns that Americans have about whether their very government will work together to do what is right.

The delay in her nomination undermines the integrity of this body. It gives a signal to all those who are cynical to further surrender to that emotion. This great candidate passed through committee in bipartisan fashion. She is a great woman, a great African American, and most of all a great American and she should not be delayed on the sidelines when there is work to be done, when her very delay begins to undermine what we say this body can do when we all work together and put petty partisan politics aside and stand up for something far more important, which is the work to make this country a more perfect Union.

We can do that together, all of us in the Senate, by confirming Ms. Lynch who will use that post to do the very same.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I wholeheartedly echo the passionate and cogent presentation that my colleague from New Jersey has just given, that this body can be well served—very well served—for us to go immediately to the confirmation of Loretta Lynch. The delay in this critical position is unacceptable, does a disservice to the individual, a disservice to the office, a disservice to the executive branch, and a disservice to justice in America.

Let's have that vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the committee-reported amendment to S. 178.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the committee-reported amendment to S. 178.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to reconsider.

The motion was agreed to.

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 trafficking, shall be brought to a close, upon reconsideration?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 74 Leg.]

YEAS—57

Ayotte	Ernst	Moran
Barrasso	Fischer	Murkowski
Blunt	Flake	Paul
Boozman	Gardner	Perdue
Burr	Graham	Portman
Capito	Grassley	Risch
Casey	Hatch	Roberts
Cassidy	Heitkamp	Rounds
Coats	Heller	Rubio
Cochran	Hoeven	Sasse
Collins	Inhofe	Scott
Corker	Isakson	Sessions
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Kirk	Sullivan
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Cruz	Lee	Tillis
Daines	Manchin	Toomey
Donnelly	McCain	Vitter
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker

NAYS—41

Baldwin	Hirono	Reed
Bennet	Kaine	Reid
Blumenthal	King	Sanders
Booker	Klobuchar	Schatz
Boxer	Leahy	Schumer
Cantwell	Markey	Shaheen
Cardin	McCaskill	Stabenow
Carper	Menendez	Tester
Coons	Merkley	Udall
Durbin	Mikulski	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Franken	Murray	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Nelson	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	

NOT VOTING—2

Alexander	Brown

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 57, the nays are 41.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion, upon reconsideration, is rejected.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have had the opportunity in the 40 years I have been in the Senate to lead with others of both parties many efforts to help support victims—crime victims, domestic violence victims, victims of child abuse, and human trafficking victims.

One of the things I have learned during that time is we have to pay attention to what the survivors tell us when they tell us what they need. None of us have walked in their shoes.

We can offer advice, but we can't second-guess them. We can't assume we know best. Our job is to listen and try to help them rebuild their lives.

If we would all just stop the political rhetoric and listen, the message from these survivors is clear.

Earlier this week, the National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence Against Women—this, incidentally, is a coalition of thousands of organizations representing millions of survivors of domestic and sexual violence—wrote:

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 the do the same.

I agree with them. I worked very closely with this group for more than 2 years as we drafted the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. They are some of the most dedicated advocates I have ever worked with and I listen to what they say. I believe they are showing us the way forward.

The House version of the very bill we are debating today does not contain the unnecessary destructive provision that wreaks such havoc here. Speaker JOHN BOEHNER found a way to bring the House together—Republicans and Democrats—and passed a bill without injecting abortion politics into the discussion. Now, if that deeply divided body can do it, I would assume we can do it here in the Senate.

Some are being very casual about the divisive partisan provision that Senate Republicans injected into this Senate bill. They call it boilerplate. Well, it is not. It places limitations on the health care services victims can use as they access money collected from the very people who trafficked them.

We are not talking about taxpayers' money. We are not talking about taxpayers' dollars. We are talking about traffickers' money. This is the money traffickers would pay in fines.

Criminals have already taken away so many choices for these young women and girls, and we shouldn't be taking away their right to make their own health care choices. We certainly should not require these survivors to have to prove they were raped. That is offensive. It is wrong.

Mr. DURBIN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. LEAHY. I yield to the Senator for a question.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator for coming to the floor. I know how much he supports this bill to end human trafficking, sex trafficking, and what a frustration he must feel—and which I share—that we have been unable to bring a bill before us that has strong bipartisan support and with few amendments is likely to be considered and would pass very quickly in the Senate.

I thank him for pointing out what I tried to point out this morning. In this 112-page bill, there is one sentence related to the Hyde amendment, which changes what we have been doing here for more than 30 years and which is holding up the passage of this important bill. What we have been pleading with the Republican leaders to do is to remove this sentence, and then let's pass this bill.

Mr. LEAHY. I say to the Senator from Illinois, that the Republican House of Representatives passed this Act without this provision, and Democrats and Republicans here in the Senate should do the same.

Mr. DURBIN. Well, there may be partisan differences over this one sentence, but there is bipartisan support for ending the trafficking and helping the victims.

Thank you, because I know you want to offer another amendment about runaways, which is very important. I have met so many of them, as you have. It is a heartbreaking story how so many are abused and exploited. Thank you for your leadership and for bringing this issue to our attention today.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the Senator from Illinois, who has worked on this throughout his career, both in the House and in the Senate. It means a lot. I will state what one survivor, Tina Frundt, a survivor of human trafficking who now helps counsel other young trafficking victims, said:

It is not for us to judge the type of services a survivor of sex trafficking needs. We need the basic rights of medical services without judgment.

I think, instead of our trying to be political about this, we should listen to survivors such as Tina. We can't pass a bill that ignores the requests of the various survivors it is designed to help.

Experts across the political spectrum who treat survivors of trafficking are telling us to remove the language.

I heard, for example, from a group called HEAL Trafficking, an organization of health care professionals who treat survivors. These are physicians, nurses, and counselors. They wrote a letter to me and said: ''We implore the Senate to pass S. 178 without the inclusion of Hyde amendment language, which would place limits on trafficking survivors' access to vital health services.''

I also heard from the service providers, whom I know and respect, at the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth. They work with young people who are exceptionally vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. They wrote: ''There should be no doubt that legislation involving the well-being of individuals who have been victimized by the most base of human behavior should be free of partisan wrangling.''

It is time to listen to the people this bill is supposed to help. They say: Take out the provision; pass the bill.

I hope that we will.

I can only imagine what these victims of trafficking go through. I have said several times on the floor—I remember so vividly; I remember as though it were yesterday, listening to some of the victims when we were trying to prosecute the people who trafficked them or harmed them or exploited them. I thought, wouldn't it be great if we had some help to stop this horrible crime from happening in the first place.

But at least we did not have politicians telling us: Well, you can offer this service, but you cannot offer that service. They simply said: Find the best experts you can and use their advice.

The experts are there day by day by day. Let them do their work. Don't play politics with them.

I have said before, when we considered the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, a victim is a victim is a victim. We ought to do what we can to help them.

SSCI STUDY OF THE CIA'S DETENTION AND INTERROGATION PROGRAM

Mr. President, on another matter which goes into an interesting area, each year, Sunshine Week reminds us we cannot take for granted our democratic system of government. Our Nation's Founders understood that to maintain a true democracy, we have to have an open government. Only an open government can be truly accountable to the people.

But pulling back the curtain on the internal workings of governmental agencies is not always easy. Sometimes, it is not even popular. In some cases, it generates great controversy, as was the case of Senator FEINSTEIN's hard-fought efforts last year to declassify the executive summary of the Senate Intelligence Committee's historic torture report.

This extraordinary report thoroughly reviewed the CIA's use of torture during the Bush administration and revealed that it was far more brutal than we knew. Now, shedding light on the CIA's actions demonstrates to the world that America is different. We acknowledge our mistakes, so that we can learn from them. We do not sweep them under a rug and pretend they never happened. But some seem to want just that.

When Senator FEINSTEIN publically released the executive summary, she also provided the full report, which totaled, I am told, more than 6,700 pages. She provided the full report to the President and the relevant executive branch agencies. The report details the failures that allowed this program to happen. She rightly put these details in the hands of those officials who had appropriate clearances who could learn from the mistakes and ensure that they do not happen again—whether it is a Republican or a Democratic administration.

Unfortunately, some of the program's defenders will stop at nothing in an effort to erase this ugly history. Immediately after the report was issued, there was an unabashed campaign to discredit it and an attempt to portray what happened as something other than what we all know it was—torture.

I have had enough of the disingenuous euphemisms and acronyms used to mask the truly brutal nature of what was done to other human beings. We should acknowledge what it was. It was torture. The President has acknowledged that. And Attorney General nominee Loretta Lynch did during her hearing, when she stated clearly and unequivocally that waterboarding is torture. Instead, defenders of this brutality call it something else. They claim it was justified, but then they

offer no evidence to support their assertions and insist outright that they would do it again. Even though they have no evidence that it helped, they imply as much.

But if that wasn't bad enough, some now want to make the report itself disappear. In January, the incoming chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee asked the President and the agencies to return the full report to the Senate.

That is essentially saying: let us pretend we made no mistakes. Let us erase history. Let us be able to open the history book and just see blank pages. We did nothing wrong.

Well, that is outrageous. Neither this historic Senate report nor the shameful truths it reveals can be wiped out of existence.

It is also appalling to learn that several of the agencies that received the full report in December haven't even opened it. In a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit seeking release of the full report, Justice Department and State Department officials submitted declarations stating that their copies remain locked away in unopened, sealed envelopes. So they can say: I see nothing. It is locked up. It is sealed.

I don't know if this was done in an attempt to bolster the government's position in the FOIA lawsuit or to otherwise avoid Federal records laws. I certainly hope not. But regardless of the motivation, it was a mistake that should be rectified.

The executive summary of the torture report, which they have seen, makes clear that both the State Department and the Justice Department have much to learn from the history of the CIA's torture program. Both agencies were misled by the CIA about the program. Both should consider systemic changes in how they deal with covert actions. Yet neither agency has bothered to open the final, full version of the report or, apparently, even those sections most relevant to them.

The fight for government transparency and accountability is never complete. I have joined with the distinguished Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN, over the years to write and pass tougher provisions in FOIA. I think the importance of the public release of this report's executive summary cannot be overstated. It is one of the most important oversight achievements of this body. Now we must ensure the full report, containing the results of years of painstaking work, is put to good use by those within the executive branch.

So today, as we recognize Sunshine Week, I send this message to the executive branch agencies who received the full Intelligence Committee torture report: Do not return your copy to the Senate. Ensure that the appropriate people in your agencies, with appropriate clearances, have access to it and learn from it. Initiate a process to consider the lessons your agency should learn from this experience. Follow the example of FBI Director Comey, who last week testified he would designate appropriate people to consider the report and what improvements could be made, because there are no instances when torture is acceptable.

The Convention Against Torture does not make exceptions. There is no doubt that if these actions were committed against American soldiers, by a hostile government, we would immediately condemn them as torture and a violation of international law. We have to make clear to the rest of the world we follow international law. We don't torture. We have to ensure that America never allows this to happen again.

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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, again today, just like yesterday, we saw all but four Senate Democrats filibuster a bill that passed the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously, including nine Democratic Senator votes. This is a bill that is cosponsored by 12 Democrats and a bill that came to the floor by unanimous consent of the Senate—all 100 Senators. Any single Senator could have barred that from happening and forced us to go through procedural hoops. I would like to believe they did so because all of us agree—Democrat and Republican alike—that helping the victims of human trafficking should be our sole and solitary focus in this legislation. And that is what this bill does.

This bill is probably the last bill you would imagine would be controversial—certainly one that people would be loath to politicize—but, indeed, that is exactly what has happened. I just can't explain it. Maybe some of our colleagues who have done this can. How can you cosponsor a bill, how can you vote for it and then come to the floor of the Senate on two occasions and vote to kill it?

Well, as I said earlier, we have four Senate Democrats who have joined with Republicans to pass this piece of legislation, then reconcile it with the House bill, and send it on to President Obama, where I am confident he would sign it. I am confident he would sign it because this is an issue where, if we can't do a bill to help victims of human trafficking, I wonder what we can possibly accomplish. If politics and the divisiveness here in Washington so polarizes people on this bill, how are we going to do the other things we need to do, such as pass a budget? How are we going to take care of our national security needs? How will we deal with the immigration issue? How will we deal with other things that are far more controversial?

Just to reiterate what this bill does, it focuses on the people on the demand side of sex trafficking and the sex trade. In other words, the people who actually pay for the services provided by these 12-to-14-year-old girls and the pimps that basically manage them.

This takes the money from the people who create the demand. Once they have been convicted and penalized, they pay into a crime victims compensation fund. We estimate, if our calculations are correct, that could generate as much as $30 million a year—$30 million a year. That money would then be subject to grants to help organizations that are set up to help the victims of human trafficking.

So not only are we interested in trying to rescue these children from the grasp of these criminal organizations that run human trafficking rings, we want to find a way to help them heal and get better. We have all heard story after story about the tragedy of human trafficking. I have talked to the distinguished ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, who, as a former prosecutor, understands this issue and the human wreckage left in the wake of the people who purchase these services and help facilitate these criminal organizations. So somehow, some way, we need to find a way to help the victims. Our focus ought to be on them and them alone.

We have heard a lot of, to my mind, phony excuses about this bill. I actually had some Senators tell me they didn't know of this provision that limits the use of the fines and penalties. This is a rule that has prevailed for 39 years, known as the Hyde amendment. They say they didn't know it was there. They didn't read the bill, apparently.

I don't actually quite believe that. I know that staff on both sides in the Judiciary Committee and generally the staff in the Senate are highly professional people. They are not going to let something slip by. But if there is a reason why they did, I believe it is because this language has become routine. It has become routine. It has been in literally every appropriations bill since 1976. It had been in things such as the Children's Health Insurance Program. It has been in Defense authorization bills. It has been in ObamaCare. All of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have voted for this sort of language over and over and over again.

I happen to be proudly pro-life, but we have many colleagues who consider themselves pro-choice who have said: Well, I don't think we ought to appropriate tax dollars to pay for abortions. I agree with the Hyde amendment. So they have clearly had an opportunity to read and understand the bill. I don't believe 12 Senators on the other side would cosponsor a bill they hadn't read and didn't understand. I don't believe nine members of the Senate Judiciary Committee on the other side would vote for it, including the distinguished ranking member, without knowing what was in the bill.

The reason why this was so unremarkable is because, as I said, it

has become routine, and virtually all the legislation that touches on this area has passed since 1976. So why here and why now? Why are we threatening to kill this important piece of legislation to help the most vulnerable victims that exist in America?

It is estimated that about 100,000 children are sex trafficked a year in the United States. It happens in Texas, sadly; it happens in Vermont; and it happens everywhere. The fact of the matter is, most Americans are simply unaware of it because this is an underbelly of life, a criminality that is really unbeknownst to most of us because it happens outside of our view and outside of our experience. But we have thousands of scared and abused children who need our help.

By killing this bill, as our friends across the aisle have done, with the exception of four brave exceptions, instead of our helping hand we are giving them a shrug of indifference. We are saying: You know what. Our political fights here in Washington are more important than your future and your life and the fact that you have been treated as human baggage.

I happen to believe—and I know many share this belief—that we are all created in the image of God, and it is a terrible sin and it is an evil thing to treat a human being created in the image of God as a commodity, as a thing to be bought and sold.

We went through a terrible period in our Nation's history where we had African Americans treated as less than human. We fought a civil war, where 600,000 people died, and then we passed a constitutional amendment and other important legislation to try to heal those wounds that existed from the very beginning of our Nation. Indeed, it has not yet finished healing even today.

Knowing what we know about human slavery and what that has been in our history, why in the world wouldn't we want to do something about modern-day human slavery to try to rectify, to try to rescue, to try to help heal these victims, which is what this legislation does?

To summarize: We have a piece of legislation that contains a provision that has been the law of the land for 39 years. We have a bill on the floor that was cosponsored by 12 Democrats on the other side of the aisle. Unfortunately, most of them have voted to filibuster this bill now that it has come to the floor because of this provision they said they didn't know about or they weren't aware of or they object to.

We have a piece of legislation that will not cost taxpayers anything because it is financed by the fines and penalties assessed against people who demand and purchase these illicit services. That is why this is the sort of bipartisan consensus legislation I think the American people would like to see us pass.

We need to overcome this obstacle. I know the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, is determined to give those who are filibustering this bill a chance to change their mind and a chance to let us finish this piece of legislation. Indeed, we need two, maybe three more Senators on that side. I would think that among the 12 people who cosponsored the bill, among the 9 who voted for it already in committee, we could find at least 3 more who would vote for this legislation and allow us to finish it.

I know the distinguished ranking member from Vermont has an amendment he wants to offer on the bill, and he has that right. He should have that right. But we can't do it unless we get past this hurdle of the filibuster. This bill is simply too important to let politics get in the way of helping the innocent victims who need our support.

So the Senate being the way it is, which is somewhat broken these days, how in the world do we get to the point where we can actually help the victims of human trafficking, given the filibuster? Well, Senator MCCONNELL has said he is going to keep bringing this bill back again and again—and, indeed, this is now the second vote we have had on this—until we can recruit at least two more Democrats to vote to close off debate to allow us to finish the bill. He has also said we are not going to be able to get to the confirmation of Attorney General Loretta Lynch, which has been voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee, until we finish this bill. I agree with that. I think the majority leader has made the right call, because, apparently, if the cries and the needs of the innocent victims of human trafficking aren't enough to move our friends across the aisle to let us finish this bill, then we are going to have to look for whatever leverage we can.

Indeed, I would say this does not bode well for the future of the 114th Congress if this is the way we are going to be operating. I don't know how many nominations will be voted out of committee and be eligible for floor action that will not be considered on the Senate floor because we are stuck in situations such as this—where we know what the right thing to do is, all of the Senators know what the right thing to do is, but somehow we can't quite seem to get it done. We have to get it done. We have to get all of the Senate's business done, including considering the President's nominees.

So I hope we do. I look forward to having another opportunity, perhaps tomorrow, to vote to close off debate. My hope is that overnight, sometime during the next 24 hours, at least 2 more of our colleagues—we would be glad to have more—can examine their conscience, can think about why it is they actually ran for the Senate, why it is they are here. Is it to try to actually do something good to help people who can't help themselves? I believe it is. I think that is why all of us came here, to try to do that. But somehow, some way, we have gotten off track, and some people think that political games and obstruction are more important than actually doing what we got elected to do and the reason why we actually volunteered to serve in the United States Senate.

So I hope we have at least two more Senators on the other side examine their conscience and reconsider their ''no'' vote and decide to close off debate by providing the votes. We need to do that tomorrow.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I totally agree with the senior Senator from Texas that the Hyde amendment has been in a number of bills that spend tax dollars. I have been in the Appropriations Committee for nearly 40 years. I am aware of that. But as the distinguished senior Senator from Texas just stated, there are no tax dollars in this matter. The way he has drafted this bill, it would take moneys from fines levied against those who are convicted of sex exploitation.

This would be the first time, to my knowledge—and I would stand corrected if I am wrong, but I cannot think of a time in the past 40 years that we have applied the Hyde amendment to such funds. I think that is probably why—because there are tax dollars in the House companion bill—that the House of Representatives did not include the Hyde amendment.

I have voted for appropriation bills with the Hyde amendment in it so we could move them to the floor. But to go to this expansion when all these different groups who have written in to us tell us please don't do this, and the groups who actually work with victims—they say don't include it. I agree with them.

I think there can be a way forward. We came together in this body to pass the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, with the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act as an amendment. We worked for some time, but we passed it.

I also want to say that—again, based on my experience here—I cannot think of a time, whether the Senate was under Democratic control or Republican control, that a piece of legislation has been used like this to hold up a key member of the President's Cabinet. Loretta Lynch has been held up longer than the past four Attorney General nominees—four men—put together. She is still being held up. I think that is unfortunate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say to my friend and colleague, the Senator from Vermont, whom I have worked with closely on a number of pieces of legislation and whom I would love to be able to work with to find a solution to the current impasse that we have on this legislation—I would say to my friend that if the objection is

that this fund is not subject to the appropriations process, then that is something we ought to discuss and talk about.

Why the fund is so important to me is because the fines and penalties that go into this save the taxpayers money. It actually takes the money from the people who create the demand and uses that to help heal and save and rescue the victims.

I guess I would have a little difference of opinion—and maybe it is just semantics—that once the fines and penalties are paid to the Treasury, my view is they become public dollars although they technically aren't derived from taxes, per se. But beyond that point, I would say once this money is paid into the fund, I think we could come up with a mechanism that would then allow the Appropriations Committee to play its traditional role in directing the money to the purposes for which Congress designates. And I know, as a long-time member of the Appropriations Committee, the Senator believes—and I respect—that is an important part of the process.

It is important, though, to note that this would still be subject to the same rule which has prevailed for 39 years, and that is the Hyde amendment. Here is where I don't understand the principle of the objection—because the Hyde amendment has an exception, as the Senator knows, for the physical health and mental health of the mother, as certified by a physician, and also in cases of rape. I can't imagine any case where a potential beneficiary of this fund would be excluded from services that would be allowed under the legislation as written. But I would say if the Senator thinks that might be a fruitful area for us to continue conversations and to figure a way to structure this so that it would be subject to an annual appropriation process—subject to those limitations that have prevailed now since 1976—I think there might be some room for discussion.

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.

Ms. WARREN. 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 remarks of Ms. WARREN pertaining to the introduction of S. 793 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Ms. WARREN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I was here for nearly 3 hours this morning when there was some spare time on the floor to get us refocused on the issue at hand, which is the issue of the victims of sex trafficking.

As I noted this morning, this is now the third biggest criminal enterprise in the world. The first is illegal drugs, the second illegal guns, and the third is the illegal sale of children. The average age of a victim of sex trafficking is 12 years old—not even old enough to go to their first prom or not even old enough to get a driver's license. That is what we are talking about here.

As I said, we have seen it in every part of the country. Just last week, there was a case out of Rochester, MN, of a 12-year-old girl who was charged by the U.S. Attorney's office. She got a text and went to a McDonald's parking lot. She thought she was going to go to a party. She got shoved in a car and got brought up to the Twin Cities, got raped. Sexually explicit pictures were taken and posted on Craigslist by the pimp. She was sold for sex to two men, raped by two men. Finally, the guys got caught and they have charged the case. So that is what we are talking about here.

I know there are disagreements on the issues of our time, whether they are the issues of our economy and the budget fight that is going to be coming up next week, or whether it is the issues of foreign relations, but there shouldn't be a disagreement about this. This is a bipartisan bill. There is a provision in this bill that I don't believe needs to be in this bill. There are some potential solutions here and I hope my colleagues are talking about them.

We have to refocus our efforts on what matters. That is what we have to remember. I am tired of looking back at who is blaming who and whose fault it is and now, somehow, it has gotten tied to the confirmation of the next Attorney General of the United States. This makes no sense at all. If these issues are connected at all, it is simply because the Attorney General of the United States helps to enforce the sex trafficking laws. Their office sometimes takes on Federal cases such as we saw in the oil patch of North Dakota. They enforce our other laws, such as what we care about right now in Minnesota where we have had a number of people indicted for going to help ISIS, or we have had 20 people indicted and 9 convictions for helping al-Shabaab, and here we have an Attorney General who is immensely qualified and who literally has the highest number out of her office of terrorism prosecutions in the Nation. So let's just get Loretta Lynch confirmed. That is for starters.

As to this bill, I would like to see a different tone as we discuss it. I would like to see people on both sides of the aisle talk about solutions and remember what we are dealing with here. We have been able to deal with this issue on other bills. I don't understand why we can't deal with it on this bill. Are these girls less important? Is this something that can just be a political football back and forth? I don't think so.

I want to remind people that in addition to the bill that is on the floor, Senator CORNYN's bill, which sets up a victims fund, there is another bill, and that is the Stop Exploitation Through Trafficking Act. That is my bill. Senator CORNYN is the cosponsor. There are 19 bipartisan cosponsors. It is a bill that went through the Judiciary Committee a few weeks ago—unanimously on the vote. Every single Senator voted for it. A similar version led by Representative ERIK PAULSEN of Minnesota has gone through the House. I like ours a little better because it includes a national sex trafficking strategy. Those two bills will be easily resolved to get this done.

My hope is—my bill is supposed to be the first amendment once we can go on to this bill, once we get the fix of the bill—the provision of the bill that is in controversy. I want to remind people that this bill is equally important. It sets a standard—the safe harbor bill—so other States will start looking at Minnesota and what about 15 other States have done. It says these 12-year-olds are not criminals; they are victims.

How can you say a 12-year-old is a criminal? They are victims. Once you start thinking like that, it changes the way you handle the cases. As a former prosecutor, what matters to me is that when you change the way you look at the case, you have a better case because then you have a victim who feels they have some place to go—a shelter. They can get a job. They can get an education. They are much more likely to turn on the pimp and to turn on the perpetrator that is running the sex ring.

In Minnesota, last year we got a 40-year sentence against a guy. John Choi, the chief attorney for Ramsey County, got a guy that was running one of these rings. That is what is going on here when we talk about this bill and the importance of passing this bill.

We have the 20 women Senators who came together and asked for a hearing on sex trafficking. We got that done. Now is the time where I hope we can come together and resolve this.

So one of the things I have taken to doing is reading Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn's great book ''Half the Sky.''

''Half the Sky'' refers to women holding up half the sky. It refers to the fact that we have countries and systems that marginalize women and don't treat them as equal. This is not good for our world.

We have seen countries that do it the worst, that treat them as sex slaves, that allow that to happen. Those countries tend to have very poor human rights records. They tend not to be good partners for our country. If we

want to lead the way for the world, we have to start on our own turf, where 86 percent of the victims in sex trafficking in the United States are from the United States.

If we are going to reach out to other countries, such as HEIDI HEITKAMP, Cindy McCain, and I did last spring—we went down to Mexico to work with them on some of the issues of cases on which they have actually helped in the United States with the U.S. attorney's office. We need to be able to show that our country is doing the right thing, and this is an opportunity to do that.

So I have been reading from this book in part in the hope that we can change the tone and remember who we are here to protect. It is also a great book. They have actually written another book as well that is focused on domestic sex trafficking that I will be reading from tomorrow as well.

I note this is not an official filibuster, but whenever I have time and there is time on the floor, I am simply going to come down here to remind people of the importance of getting this bill done.

So we are talking in the book—I was in the chapter on ''Prohibition and Prostitution.'' I talked about the fact that ''the tools to crush modern slavery''—I am reading from the book—''but the political will is lacking.''

That seems to be what is going on in this Chamber when extraneous bills are in the way of getting this done. When my Republican coauthor over in the House has said that these kinds of politics don't belong on these bills, I agree.

The tools to crush modern slavery exist, but the political will is lacking. That must be the starting point of any abolitionist movement. We're not arguing that Westerners should take up this cause because it's the fault of the West; Western men do not play a central role in prostitution in most poor countries. True, American and European sex tourists are part of the problem in Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Belize, but they are still only a small percentage of the johns. The vast majority are local men. Moreover, Western men usually go with girls who are more or less voluntary prostitutes, because they want to take the girls back to their hotel rooms, while forced prostitutes are not normally allowed out of the brothels. So this is not a case where we in the West have a responsibility to lead because we're the source of the problem. Rather, we single out the West because, even though we're peripheral to the slavery, our action is necessary to overcome a horrific evil.

So that is my argument here, that by doing something here in this Chamber and by showing that we care about these girls in the United States, then we show we care internationally and it should be a major tenet of our foreign policy.

One reason the modern abolitionist movement hasn't been more effective is the divisive politics of prostitution.

I talked about this earlier today. The issue that we have is that a number of people way back—including the late great Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, Senator Brownback of Kansas, Hillary Rodham Clinton, CAROLYN MALONEY, whom I just left on the Joint Economic Committee, and George W. Bush—showed great leadership in this area. So we have seen time and again people being able to come together across party lines to get this done.

So they talk about how things have changed, and they say that ''over time, we've changed our minds'' about how we look at this. They talk about the fact that it used to be: Well, let's legalize prostitution and regulate. That will really work. I think we have learned that it will never really work. It doesn't work in those countries that have tried it, and it certainly doesn't work for these young girls who are victims of the sex trade. So they talk about how we, in fact, through law enforcement, need to go after the profits and we have to take this on. That is what the bills we are considering help to do. They give State and local prosecutors and shelters the tools that they need.

They say:

We won't eliminate prostitution. In Iran, brothels are strictly banned, and the mayor of Tehran was a law-and-order hard-liner until, according to Iranian news accounts, he was arrested in a police raid on a brothel where he was in the company of six naked prostitutes. So crackdowns don't work perfectly, but they tend to lead nervous police to demand higher bribes, which reduces profitability for the pimps. Or the police will close down at least those brothels that aren't managed by other police officers. With such methods, we can almost certainly reduce the number of fourteen-year-old girls who are held in cages until they die of AIDS.

This is happening in our world.

''It's pretty doable,'' says Gary Haugen, who runs International Justice Mission. ''You don't have to arrest everybody. You just have to get enough that it sends a ripple effect and changes the calculations. That changes the pimps' behavior. You can drive traffickers of virgin village girls to fence stolen radios instead.''

Many liberals and feminists are taken aback by the big stick approach we advocate, arguing that it just drives sex establishments underground. They argue instead for a legalize-and-regulate model based on empowerment of sex workers, and they cite a success: The Sonagachi Project.

Sonagachi, which means ''golden tree,'' is a sprawling red-light district in Kolkata. In the 1700s and 1800s, it had been a legendary locale for concubines. Today it has hundreds of multistory brothels built along narrow alleys, housing more than six thousand prostitutes. In the early 1990s, health experts were deeply concerned about the spread of AIDS in India, and in 1992 they started [this project]. . . . A key element was to nurture a union of sex workers . . . which would encourage condom use and thus reduce the spread of AIDS through prostitution.

DMSC seemed successful in encouraging the use of condoms. It publicized its role as a pragmatic solution to the public health problems of prostitution. One study found [this project] increased . . . condom use by 25 percent.

They go on to explain it.

But then they say—and this is key to our approach to trying not to allow prostitution to continue:

As we probed the numbers, however, we saw that they were flimsier than they at first appeared. HIV prevalence was inexplicably high among new arrivals . . . 27.7 percent among sex workers aged twenty or younger. Research had also shown that, initially, all sex workers interviewed . . . claimed to use condoms nearly all the time. But when pressed, they admitted lower rates. . . .

This goes on and they talk about the problem with this. What we are talking about here is underage girls and what is really going on.

I am going to quote from one story they told when they went to this brothel.

While the madam spoke with others in the room, gushing about the group's success, the three of us on the bed asked the prostitute in Hindi to tell us if those things were true. Afraid and timid, the prostitute remained silent until we assured her that we wouldn't get her in trouble. Barely audible, she told us that almost none of the prostitutes . . . came with aspirations of being a sex worker. Most of them like herself were trafficked. . . . When I asked her if she wanted to leave Sonagachi, her eyes lit up; before she could say anything, the DMSC official put her hand on my back and said that it was time to move on. . . .

These are stories about how it doesn't really work to have this model of allowing the prostitution to continue and regulate.

In the developing world, however, this difficult, polarizing debate is mostly just a distraction. In India, for example, brothels are technically illegal—but, as we said earlier, they are ubiquitous—the same is true in Cambodia. In poor countries, the law is often irrelevant, particularly outside the capital. Our focus has to be on changing reality, not changing laws.

Congress took an important step in that direction in 2000 by requiring the State Department to put out an annual Trafficking in Persons report—the TIP report.

I will remind again that this was done on a bipartisan basis. We didn't see the kind of fights we are having now because people decided that here is one thing that we could agree on—from Paul Wellstone to Sam Brownback—and that perhaps without having outside political debates, we can agree that we do not want young girls aged 12 to be sex trafficked.

What did this report do?

The report ranks countries according to how they tackle trafficking, and those in the lowest tier are sanctioned. This meant that for the first time U.S. embassies abroad had to gather information on trafficking. American diplomats began holding discussions with their foreign ministry counterparts, who then had to add trafficking to the list of major concerns such as proliferation and terrorism. As a result, the foreign ministries made inquiries of the national police agencies.

Simply asking questions put the issue on the agenda. Countries began passing laws, staging crackdowns, and compiling fact sheets. Pimps found that the cost of bribing police went up, eroding their profit margins.

This approach can be taken further. Within the State Department, the trafficking office has been marginalized, even relegated to another building. If the secretary of state publicly and actively embraced the trafficking office—

I think we see this has happened since this book was written—since 2009

under Secretary Clinton and Secretary Kerry.

. . . that would elevate the issue's profile. The President could visit a shelter . . .

And, by the way, that is something that HEIDI HEITKAMP, Cindy McCain, and I did when we went to Mexico.

Europe should have made trafficking an issue in negotiating the accession of Eastern European countries wishing to enter the European Union, and it can still make this an issue for Turkey in that regard.

The big-stick approach should focus in particular on the sale of virgins. Such transactions, particularly in Asia, account for a disproportionate share of trafficker profits and kidnappings of young teenagers. And the girls, once raped, frequently resign themselves to being prostitutes until they die. It is often rich Asians, particularly overseas Chinese, who are doing the buying—put a few of them in jail, and good things will happen: The market for virgins will quickly shrink, their price will drop, gangs will shift to less risky and more profitable lines of business, the average age of prostitutes will rise somewhat, and the degree of compulsion in prostitution will diminish as well.

This is from ''Half the Sky,'' written by New York Times reporter Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. They have a more recent book that they have written called ''A Path Appears,'' and this is about domestic prostitution, which I will also be reading from. But I thought I would start that tomorrow, as we continue to focus on this, so people understand what we are really talking about.

As we all know, the bills before the Senate today are about domestic trafficking. They are about what is happening in the United States right now in every town in this country.

We talked earlier this morning about why this is happening, why we are seeing this kind of increase, and we are talking about it more. The reason is that more and more because of the Internet people can anonymously advertise. They can send instant messages and texts. It is just more hidden, and it is harder to track down for law enforcement. That is part of why we are seeing this going on right now and why this is such a major issue in our country.

I would tie it into our international theme, because, again, first of all, we have a percentage of these victims—mostly girls—who come from foreign countries. So it matters to us what goes on in foreign countries with their law, which is the focus of ''Half the Sky.''

But it also matters to us because we want a better world, and we want these countries to do better. We don't want to put all our money in military spending. We want these countries to become democracies, to become trading partners, to become places that we can work with. Instead, if we allow these girls to be subjugated and we allow them to be chattel and we allow them to be treated like slaves, they are never going to get the kind of democracy that we want them to get to and that will allow for a better country. You are not going to have a woman elected to the Senate in one of these countries if they believe that women can be treated as chattel, as we are seeing in so many of these places.

So I am going to go to the next part of the chapter, which is called ''Rescuing Girls Is the Easy Part.''

We became slave owners in the twenty-first century the old-fashioned way: We paid cash in exchange for two slave girls and a couple of receipts. The girls were then ours to do with as we liked.

Rescuing girls from brothels is the easy part, however. The challenge is keeping them from returning. The stigma that the girls feel in their communities after being freed, coupled with drug dependencies or threats from pimps, often lead them to return to the red-light district. It's emotionally dispiriting for well-meaning aid workers who oversee a brothel raid to take the girls back to a shelter and give them food and medical care, only to see the girls climb over the back wall.

That is what I talked about earlier. That is why, when we look at it from a U.S. perspective, what these bills focus on is trying to turn these girls' lives around and trying to set that standard. We are not mandating it in other States; we are simply creating some incentives and giving them some funding so that States can start doing these cases in a different way and start seeing them as victims and making it easier to go after the people who are running the ring.

Back to the book:

Our unusual purchase came about when Nick—

Referring here to Nick Kristof—

traveled with Naka Nathaniel, then a New York Times videographer, to an area in northwestern Cambodia notorious for its criminality. Nick and Naka arrived at the town of Poipet and checked into an $8-a-night guest house that doubled as a brothel. They focused their interviews on two teenage girls, Srey Neth and Srey Momm, each in a different brothel.

Neth was very pretty, short and light-skinned. She looked fourteen or fifteen, but she thought she was older than that; she had no idea of her actual birth date. A woman pimp brought her to Nick's room, and she sat on the bed, quivering with fear. She had been in the brothel only a month, and Nick would have been her first foreign customer. Nick needed his interpreter present in the room as well, and this puzzled the pimp, who nevertheless accommodated.

Black hair fell over Neth's shoulders and onto her tight pink T-shirt. Below, she wore equally tight blue jeans, and sandals. Neth had plump cheeks, but the best of her was thin and fragile; thick makeup caked her face in a way that seemed incongruous, as if she were a child who had played with her mother's cosmetics.

After some awkward conversation through the interpreter, as Nick asked Neth about how she had grown up and about her family, she began to calm down. She stopped trembling and mostly looked in the direction of the television in the corner of the room, which Nick had put on to muffle the sound of their voices. She responded to questions briefly and without interest.

Now we have been joined—I am going to stop reading from the book for a while. Senator FEINSTEIN has come to the floor. Senator FEINSTEIN has been a true leader on this issue of sex trafficking. She is a senior member of the Judiciary Committee—the only other woman on the Judiciary Committee besides me, with, I think, 20-some guys. She knows how important this issue is. I know she is going to talk a little bit about that as well as some other things. I welcome her to the floor.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for such time as I may consume.

As Senator KLOBUCHAR stated, I come to the floor to speak on the sex trafficking bill. I know it is now held up by certain language, which I will go into in the details of my remarks, but briefly, I would like to begin by describing the bill's highlights. The bill clarifies that a person who buys a sex act from a minor or other trafficking victim can be prosecuted under the Federal commercial sex trafficking statute. The bill authorizes block grants for State and local governments to develop programs to rescue trafficking victims and investigate and prosecute traffickers. The bill also includes nearly all of the provisions from the Combat Human Trafficking Act which Senator PORTMAN and I introduced in January.

I am very grateful to the authors—Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator CORNYN—for adding these. Those provisions establish a minimum period of 5 years of supervised release for a person who conspires to violate the commercial sex trafficking statute.

It would require the Justice Department to train on investigating and prosecuting buyers, on seeking restitution, and on connecting victims with health services. It would require reporting on sex trafficking prosecutions. It would expand wiretap authority to cover all human trafficking offenses. It would expand the rights of crime victims—something I have been interested in since Senator Kyl and I did the Crime Victims' Bill of Rights.

The bill, which is not controversial, should pass, except for the surreptitious inclusion—I use this word considered—of a provision that is known as the Hyde amendment. The provision was not included by language but by cross-reference to provisions in another previously enacted appropriations bill.

Here is what it says:

Limitations. Amounts in the Fund, or otherwise transferred from the Fund, shall be subject to the limitations on the use or expending of amounts described in sections 506 and 507 of division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113–76; 128 Stat. 409) to the same extent as if amounts in the Fund were funds appropriated under division H of such Act.

This provision was not included in the bill Senator CORNYN introduced last Congress, which I cosponsored. His staff approached my staff and staffs of other Senators early in 2015. They asked if I would cosponsor again. My staff asked whether the bill was identical to last year's bill and for an explanation of any changes that were

made. Senator CORNYN's staff then sent back an email with a list of changes—seven changes in all. That list did not include the Hyde amendment language that had been added. That language was not mentioned to my staff at any point.

In other words, an important and sensitive change was made to the bill and was not disclosed upon request. That does not excuse us for not catching this, but if you see the complicated and sort of obfuscated nature of this—I am not saying it is intended obfuscation, but all of the numbers that are in there—I think it makes it understandable.

If the Hyde amendment—which is what this is—if that language comes out, this bill will pass easily.

Let me address for a moment the enormous problem we are trying to address with this bill. Today, high demand and easy access fuels a huge amount of sex trafficking. Human trafficking today is the second largest criminal industry in the world. It is only behind illegal drugs.

In 2005, human trafficking was a $32 billion criminal enterprise. Today, some 9 years later, it is a $150 billion estimate of illegal gains. Two-thirds of the proceeds from human trafficking come from sex trafficking.

Children as young as 12, 13, and 14 can be found on the street or over the Internet. It is not an exaggeration to say that this is modern-day slavery. Those victims are moved against their will to cities throughout the country and even to other countries, wherever demand is high.

Trafficking rings are also run by gangs. In San Diego, for example, profits are so great and the risk of being caught so minimal that rival gangs do not fight each other over sex trafficking, as they do when drugs are involved.

Some traffickers make as much as $33,000 per week. These are numbers gathered by the Urban Institute: Atlanta, gross take per trafficker per week, $32,833; Denver, $31,200; Seattle, $18,000; Miami, $17,741; Dallas, $12,025; Washington, DC, $11,588; and San Diego, $11,129. This is weekly gross cash intake per individual trafficker.

Traffickers lure victims through promises of love and money or sometimes use an older trafficked girl as a recruiter. Those criminals prey on the most vulnerable children in our society, including those who are homeless or in the foster care system. They target children who have been victims of sexual abuse. Once they have a victim under their control, they may traffic him or her from city to city based on demand.

For example, this is a slide of California. It is from the Orange County Human Trafficking Task Force, and it shows the route traffickers take to move victims around the State of California to meet demand. You can see these circles from Oakland to Sacramento and then down into the Inland Empire and then from Los Angeles all the way around into the Inland Empire. So you can actually track various routes. Orange County did this. The orange center here is meant to be Orange County.

This particular task force is comprised of a number of Federal and local law enforcement agencies in Orange County, including Anaheim and Huntington Beach police departments, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, and the District Attorney's Office.

Now, here it comes: Regardless of how children are first trafficked, one thing is almost universal—victims will be advertised on the Internet. By one estimate, 76 percent of child sex trafficking victims—76 percent of them are sold over the Internet.

My staff and I have spoken with a number of law enforcement officials in California about the Internet's role in connecting sellers of underage children with buyers. Nearly every single official we spoke with said the Internet is the primary means to connect sellers with buyers. So this is where we next must take decisive steps to stop sex trafficking. Purveyors of these online ads must be held accountable. Senator KIRK and I have an amendment that will do that.

There are at least 19 distinct Web sites that accept ads relating to trafficking underage boys and girls. Here they are: Backpage.com; EscortAds.xxx; ErosAds.com; EscortsInCollege.com; AsianEscortSF.com; EscortsInThe.us; LiveEscortReviews.com; MyProviderGuide.com; EroticMugShots.com; NaughtyReviews.com; EscortPhoneList.com; RubAds.com; Eros.com; TheEroticReview.com; RubMaps.com; APerfectSin.com; EscortDater.com; MyRedBook.com; and NightShift.com. Nineteen Web sites act as purveyors of child sex trafficking in this country. They ought to be ashamed of themselves.

This site I am going to show you, Backpage.com, allows a purveyor to post an advertisement for an escort or a body rub. In fact, nearly all of these ads are for commercial sex acts; many of them depict minors. When you view an ad for an escort or a body rub, you will see pictures of young girls, often with few or no clothes on.

Now I am going to show you two girls. The first is a missing 17-year-old girl. She is here as a runaway. This is a listing of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a very legitimate organization which I am fully in support of. It is entitled ''Endangered Runaway,'' and it is information about her, her date of birth, her age, her sex, her race, and all of it, and where you can get in touch if you have any information.

I wish to show how this is also used. This is the same girl on Backpage, and this essentially says:

Hello Texas,
Are you looking for an unforgettable experience? Look no further!
I am 100% Great service provider!
I am very down to earth, warm, sensitive, passionate,
and genuinely interested in giving you a great experience.

And it goes on and on.

This is the same picture of this same girl.

We blocked out the image, and it is shocking. It is simply shocking that this is going on to the extent it is in our country, right in a ribald way on the Internet.

Law enforcement officials and anti-trafficking organizations say there are a number of key indicators that allow them to identify ads that are likely for trafficking victims.

In this advertisement we see three of those key indicators. First, the title states the victim is ''New to your City.'' Anti-trafficking organizations say this is code for being underage. You may also see girls in ads described as ''new,'' ''fresh,'' or ''new in town'' to indicate they are underage. Second, we see a victim is listed from outside the area. Here she is listed as from Miami for a posting that is in the Houston area.

Third, the victim also has an out-of-area phone number.

Those are three indicators of what this ad is for—to sell sex with children. Law enforcement and experts confirm this point.

The Cook County Sheriff's Office in Illinois found that 100 percent of women claiming to be massage therapists or platonic escorts on one Web site, Backpage, were being sold for sex. This isn't mine, this is the Cook County Sheriff's Office.

The sheriff's office set up so-called dates with 618 girls via Backpage. All 618 agreed to provide sex for money.

The sheriff's office concluded: ''This presents irrefutable evidence that Backpage is indeed a haven for pimps and sex solicitors who are victimizing women and girls for their own gain. Any notion that Backpage employs a legitimate business model simply does not stand up to the facts.''

This is a direct letter from Sheriff Tom Dart, Cook County, IL.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a memorandum to Sheriff Tom Dart.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Date: 6/9/2014.
To: Sheriff Thomas J. Dart.
From: Deputy Chief Michael Anton, Cook County Sheriff's Police.
Subject: Backpage.com Arrests.

Per Sheriff Dart's direction, the Cook County Sheriff's Police Vice Unit has utilized Backpage.com as its primary forum for recovering victims of human trafficking in Cook County. Please find our year-to-year Backpage arrest statistics

Cook County Sheriff's Police Arrests Off of Backpage:
2009: 142
2010: 108
2011: 63

2012: 121
2013: 135
2014 (through the end of May): 49
Total: 618

Additionally, the Cook County Sheriff's Police Vice Unit has made 42 arrests for Involuntary Servitude, Human Trafficking or Prostitution since 2007, with many of those investigations originating from responses to Backpage ads.

It is important to note that 100% of the women claiming to be massage therapists or platonic escorts on Backpage have accepted the offer of money for sex from our undercover male officers. Our team has set up ''dates'' with 618 via this website—all 618 have turned out to be prostitutes. This presents irrefutable evidence that Backpage is indeed a haven for pimps and sex solicitors who are victimizing women and girls for their own gain. Any notion that Backpage employs a legitimate business model simply does not stand up to the facts.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. A study of ads placed in this year's Super Bowl in Phoenix concludes that 65 percent of the ads placed on Backpage's Phoenix Web site around the weekend of the game had indicators that the ad was for a victim of sex trafficking.

Simply put, there are Internet companies that are profiting off the rape and abuse of children. This must stop.

One way we can combat sex trafficking over the Internet is to make it a crime for a person such as the owner of a Web site to knowingly advertise a commercial sex act with a minor. As I said, Senator KIRK and I have introduced such an amendment. It would create a new offense of knowingly advertising a commercial sex act with a minor on the Internet.

The amendment is identical to a House bill that has 52 cosponsors and passed that Chamber by voice vote.

If we come to a point where we are voting on amendments to Senator CORNYN's bill, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I know Senator KIRK and I would bring it to the floor.

Last October, 53 attorneys general offered a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee in support of the bill that Senator KIRK and I introduced last June that is similar to the amendment. This is the list of the attorneys general.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter of 53 attorneys general.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL,
Washington, DC, October 20, 2014.

Hon. PATRICK LEAHY,
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN LEAHY AND RANKING MEMBER GRASSLEY: We, the undersigned state and territorial attorneys general, urge you to join us in the fight against human trafficking in the United States. We commend your recent action to pass legislation to increase federal penalties and victim restitution and encourage you to act to protect children from being trafficked on the Internet by passing S. 2536, the Stop Advertising Victims of Exploitation Act (SAVE Act).

Human trafficking is tied as the second largest and is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world, generating roughly $150 billion each year. According to a study of Department of Justice human trafficking task force cases, 83 percent of sex trafficking victims identified in the United States were U.S. citizens. Shockingly, there are numerous cases nationally of children being used in prostitution as young as 12.

Every day, children in the United States are sold for sex. The use of the ''adult services sections'' on websites such as Backpage.com has created virtual brothels where children are bought and sold using euphemistic labels such as ''escorts.'' The involvement of these advertising companies is not accidental—these companies have constructed their business models around income gained from those participating in commercial sex. In just one week this June, law enforcement arrested 281 alleged sex traffickers and took 168 children out of prostitution in a nationwide FBI crackdown where many child victims were offered for sale on ''escort'' and other ''adult services'' websites. Organized crime groups as well as street gangs are involved with human trafficking, and many of these perpetrators use the Internet to sell their victims.

The undersigned attorneys general respectfully request that the Senate Judiciary Committee pass the SAVE Act so that these websites that are facilitating trafficking through their very business model will have to take steps to verify the identity of individuals posting advertisements and the age of those who appear in these advertisements.

We thank you in advance for your continued dedication to the eradication of human trafficking.

Greg Zoeller, Indiana Attorney General; Luther Strange, Alabama Attorney General; Tom Horne, Arizona Attorney General; Kamala Harris, California Attorney General; George Jepsen, Connecticut Attorney General; Irvin Nathan, District of Columbia Attorney General; Robert W. Ferguson, Washington Attorney General; Michael Geraghty, Alaska Attorney General; Dustin McDaniel, Arkansas Attorney General; John W. Suthers, Colorado Attorney General; Joseph R. ''Beau'' Biden III , Delaware Attorney General; Pamela Jo Bondi, Florida Attorney General; Samuel S. Olens, Georgia Attorney General; David Louie, Hawaii Attorney General; Lisa Madigan, Illinois Attorney General; Derek Schmidt, Kansas Attorney General; James ''Buddy'' Caldwell, Louisiana Attorney General; Douglas F. Gansler, Maryland Attorney General.

Bill Schuette, Michigan Attorney General; Lenny Rapadas, Guam Attorney General; Lawrence Wasden, Idaho Attorney General; Tom Miller, Iowa Attorney General; Jack Conway, Kentucky Attorney General; Janet Mills, Maine Attorney General; Martha Coakley, Massachusetts Attorney General; Lori Swanson, Minnesota Attorney General; Jim Hood, Mississippi Attorney General; Tim Fox, Montana Attorney General; Catherine Cortez Masto, Nevada Attorney General; John Jay Hoffman, New Jersey Attorney General (Acting); Eric T. Schneiderman, New York Attorney General; Wayne Stenehjem, North Dakota Attorney General; Michael DeWine, Ohio Attorney General; Chris Koster, Missouri Attorney General; Jon Bruning, Nebraska Attorney General; Joseph Foster, New Hampshire Attorney General.

Gary King, New Mexico Attorney General; Roy Cooper, North Carolina Attorney General; Gilbert Birnbrich, Northern Mariana Islands Attorney General (Acting); Scott Pruitt, Oklahoma Attorney General; Ellen F. Rosenblum, Oregon Attorney General; César R. Míranda Rodriguez, Puerto Rico Attorney General; Alan Wilson, South Carolina Attorney General; Herbert H. Slatery, III, Tennessee Attorney General; Sean Reyes, Utah Attorney General; Mark R. Herring, Virginia Attorney General; Peter K. Michael, Wyoming Attorney General; Kathleen Kane, Pennsylvania Attorney General; Peter Kilmartin, Rhode Island Attorney General; Marty J. Jackley, South Dakota Attorney General; Greg Abbott, Texas Attorney General; William H. Sorrell, Vermont Attorney General; Patrick Morrisey, West Virginia Attorney General.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. The attorneys general wrote:

The use of the ''adult services sections'' on websites such as Backpage.com has created virtual brothels where children are bought and sold using euphemistic labels such as ''escorts.''

This is a quote from a letter to this effect—I don't want anybody to think this is what I am saying, it is what they are saying.

The use of the term ''adult services sections'' on websites such as Backpage.com has created virtual brothels where children are bought and sold using euphemistic labels such as ''escorts.''

Put simply, if you have knowledge that an advertisement placed on your Web site is for commercial sex with a minor, then you should be prosecuted. That is what our amendment would do.

I have no doubt that prohibiting misconduct by a Web site owner is constitutional. As the Supreme Court has held on several occasions: ''Offers to engage in illegal transactions are categorically excluded from First Amendment protection.''

In fact, the Supreme Court in 1973 wrote: ''We have no doubt that a newspaper constitutionally could be forbidden to publish a want ad proposing a sale of narcotics or soliciting prostitutes.''

This amendment targets illegal conduct—commercial sex with minors—that would not be protected by the First Amendment.

It imposes liability on Web sites that know that their sites are being used to advertise minors for sex.

In conclusion, the Internet has made this industry what it is, the second largest criminal industry in the world, second only to drugs, and it is up to us to do something about it.

One of our duties in this body is to protect the most vulnerable of individuals. That includes children, and this is what this amendment does.

Some say other parts of the bill will help stop sex trafficking, and we don't need to touch the Internet. That makes no sense to me. Seventy-six percent of sales of sex trafficking victims begin on the Internet. So you can just touch

a small part of it—this touches 76 percent of victims.

We cannot allow these Web sites to continue to operate with impunity. It is time to take a stand, stop the ads, and stop the exploitation of children.

I look forward to Senator KIRK coming to the floor, presenting our amendment, assuming we can get past this block. This is so much more important than putting the Hyde amendment, cloaked in difficult language, in this bill, when the House bill doesn't contain it. The House understands that it is going to have difficulty passing it with this in the bill. Why isn't that recognized in this House? If they take that out, this bill swims through.

Mr. CORNYN. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I yield to the Senator.

Mr. CORNYN. I was in my office and watching the Senator on TV, so I thought I would come to the floor and maybe we could get to the bottom of this. There seems to be a ship passing in the night, it seems to me.

I know the Senator from California cares passionately about this issue, and I don't question that for a moment. It is very clear to me. But I ask the Senator from California, she graciously agreed to cosponsor this legislation?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I did.

Mr. CORNYN. She voted for it in the Senate Judiciary Committee that passed unanimously. It does contain, on page 50 and 51 of this bill, the language that the Senator referred to. I saw it on my TV screen in my office, which incorporates the limitation that was contained in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. It incorporates that into the bill by reference.

Not only—I believe the Senator voted for the bill in committee and cosponsored it. The Senator also voted for that limitation in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. This is the same or similar language of what was contained in the Affordable Care Act, contained in the Defense authorization bill, and contained in literally every appropriations bill since 1976.

This is what I would love to have my friend, the Senator from California, explain to me: Why is it that it all of a sudden becomes objectionable on this legislation—when you care and I care so passionately about getting help for these victims—that this is the reason to derail the legislation?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Because of what this legislation is. This legislation is the raping and the misconduct, sexually, with young girls, girls 14, 15, and 16. What if they are impregnated? Should they be entitled to be able to go and get an abortion? Does this body really want them to be forced to bear somebody else's child?

So this offers the opportunity for some funding. These aren't wealthy girls. They don't live in Beverly Hills, Hyde Park, or any of these places that are prominent. They are on the streets. They are lost, maybe lost mentally, lost physically. They may have been abused, and now they are caught up in an industry where they are held hostage in the night.

I have read of some in a neighborhood in my city being handcuffed at night, stripped, so they don't have clothes and can't run away. They are put out on the streets, they are watched. They are moved around. If it becomes too hot in one area, they are moved to another. They are moved to another State, and they come from other countries.

It just seems to me to have this in this bill—and, Senator, I have great respect for you. I have wanted to work with you on this. I know you are sincere.

It is not in the House bill. So maybe the House understands this. I can't speak for the House.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I am pleased to do so.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Otherwise, we are going to have to keep addressing questions through the Chair and keep asking for permission. I think it is great to have an honest conversation with my friend.

So it is clear that the Senator from California has voted for this restriction on use of taxpayer funding for abortions previously, correct?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Not to my knowledge. Let me put it that way. Now you can blame me and say I should have known—I am not the only one on our committee, Senator, who is in this position, either, who communicated with your staff and was under the impression that the bill was identical to last year, with the exception of seven pieces, which are not this. The seven were detailed to us.

Mr. CORNYN. I am not going to engage in a debate about whether the Senator should have known or how she voted in the past. I believe the record would demonstrate that she and others voted for the Affordable Care Act, which actually National Abortion Rights Action League says is an expansion of the Hyde amendment.

I ask the Senator, you rightly point out that these child victims of sexual assault will have been raped, either statutory rape—they are below the age of consent—or they are adults and they have been assaulted, criminally assaulted.

Isn't it your understanding of the Hyde amendment that the exclusion to the Hyde amendment would still allow them to gain access to the services that you believe they need or deserve?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Yes. I think that is correct. I suppose we could change this to have a rape implication, but the gauntlet has been thrown down. And it is not up to me alone to remove it. There was no open discussion in our committee when we discussed this that there was a highly sensitive issue in it, Senator.

Now, I will plead mea culpa. And guess what. I will wave a whip and get my staff and say: Look henceforth at every code change. But my colleague and I both know that occasionally things slip through. I will plead mea culpa on that. But once I found out, I had an obligation to do something about it.

So I am pleading with my colleague, let's just take it out. Let's just pass this bill. Let's put the Kirk-Feinstein amendment in. Let's go after the Internet purveyors. Let's go after 19 sites that put pictures of girls 12, 13, and 14 to be sold all around the United States, to be sold after big football games in various areas of the country. Let's go after them. Isn't that more important?

I would like to ask my colleague a question.

Mr. CORNYN. That is the reason I am so confused by the filibuster of this legislation by people, including my friend, who are cosponsors of the legislation and who already voted for it.

I am not about pointing fingers in terms of what staff or Members should have read or understood about the legislation, but I believe the reason it was not debated at the Judiciary Committee level is because it had become a routine matter since 1976, when the Hyde amendment was passed. Every appropriation of Labor-HHS or other funding that could arguably use tax dollars for abortions has been limited by the Hyde amendment language.

I had a couple of Senators in my office yesterday afternoon who are proudly pro-choice. I am proudly pro-life. But even my pro-choice friends said we still believe taxpayer funds should not be used for abortions except in the case of rape or to protect the health of the victim.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Well, why then, if I may ask a question, respectfully.

Mr. CORNYN. Sure.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Why isn't it in the House language?

Mr. CORNYN. I would say to my friend that I can't vouch for the House's product. I can just say what the Congress as a whole has done since 1976, and it has limited the expenditure of funds for this purpose under the terms of the Hyde amendment.

That was the reason we referred in the legislation, on page 50, which my colleague has blown up here, referring to the language in the Committee on Appropriations, which I am confident my friend, the Senator from California, voted for, just as she did in the limitation that was contained in the Affordable Care Act and all the other times that Hyde has been part of our process. This has become so unremarkable and so routine that it hardly seems like something someone would point out because this language doesn't change the status quo at all.

So we have talked about ways to get past this impasse, and I would just

have to say I think abandoning the Hyde amendment would be a dramatic mistake and something I am not willing to be a part of. It has become this one area, in a divisive area of abortion, where there has been bipartisan consensus for 39 years, at least to the point it has remained the law of the land effectively. To take it out and say somehow we are going to depart from that today or this week would, to me, be a dramatic expansion of taxpayer funding for this purpose that I can't support.

So I would say, if there are ways we can deal with this fund, as a fund that can be appropriated on an annual basis subject to the normal restrictions—that is something I talked about with the ranking member, our friend from Vermont, that possibility—I think there are ways we might be able to get to a solution. But stripping out this limitation, which has been the law of the land for 39 years, is not acceptable because it would represent a huge expansion on the use of taxpayer funding for abortions in ways many of my prochoice friends don't support.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Well, I guess I disagree with that. Those of us who believe a woman should control her own reproductive system, in concert with her family and her doctor, have objection to the government getting involved and telling us what to do. It is actually not your reproductive system—and I say ''you'' generically, as a man—it is our reproductive system. In a sense this has been a battle for our identity.

I sat on a term-setting and paroling authority in California in the 1960s, when abortion was illegal. I sentenced women to State prison for abortion. It had then an indeterminate sentence of between 6 months and 10 years. I saw abortionists come back to prison. I asked one, when I was setting the sentence: Why do you keep doing this? Her first name was Anita. And she said: Because I feel so sorry for the women.

That was the way it was. I remember passing the plate at Stanford for a young woman to go to Tijuana for an abortion. The morbidity that was done to women through back-alley abortions, this has opened a Pandora's box of big emotional issues for women.

As to the Hyde amendment, if there is rape and you can prove it, that is right; and then there is a 12-year-old, a 13-year-old who is out on the streets as a prostitute, which is a different thing—sort of the same but sort of different. The overwhelming evil of this trade overcomes any of this, because you take a young woman, and you probably change their life for the worse for the rest of her life.

Imagine your daughter being out on the street; my daughter, my granddaughters being out on the street like this and what it would do to them being handcuffed and moved and traded around the country and girls brought from Nepal through India, all over Europe. This is what is going on in the world today, and we are sitting here arguing essentially about the availability of an abortion in this area. To me, that is so secondary to the enormous harm that is being done.

I have great respect for my colleague. He has been a very distinguished jurist in his State. He makes sense when he speaks on the Judiciary Committee. We have listened to each other for more than a decade now. Let this drop. Let us get on with the work of this bill—and the work of this bill isn't completed until we get some of the amendments that relate to the bill—and then I think we can debate this another day.

I would say I plead a mea culpa. I wish I had known. All I can say is I did not know. Is that my fault? Probably. But I didn't know. So if you don't know, and you make a mistake, isn't the right thing to try to set that right? That is what we have tried to do, and women on our side, and some on my colleague's side, feel very strongly about this.

My colleague knows over the years we have lost virtually every battle that has been on this floor and we are tired of it. So we are taking a stand and we are going to hold that stand.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I obviously don't agree with my friend from California, but I respect her for answering the questions I have posed here today. I just find it a terrible shame we are going to relitigate what has been the law of the land for 39 years on this bill in a way that would block help to the very people I know the Senator from California cares so passionately about.

If we are going to undo the Hyde amendment, which the Senator has voted for in some form or another repeatedly over the years, then we are not going to make any progress. If we can find some other way to structure the funds so the appropriators will have a more direct role in appropriating the fines and penalties paid into this fund on an annual basis, I think maybe there is some room to talk. But I thank the Senator for her courtesy in answering my questions. I am sorry we find ourselves at this loggerhead, but I hope at some point that can be resolved.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. May I say one more thing? It is my understanding—breaking news coming here—that there is no language in Federal statute on sex trafficking that defines a trafficking survivor as a victim of rape. So the victim would have to prove she is a victim of rape.

Now, look at what happens. I don't know if in my colleague's legal career it took him close to very young victims of this who cover up and who don't want to let people know. I am sure my colleague knows all of the vicissitudes, the hard life. We are asking someone to prove it.

Mr. CORNYN. I would say to my friend that when I was attorney general of Texas for 4 years, I had responsibility for administering the Crime Victims' Compensation Fund as part of my duties of office, and we worked very directly with victims groups, including those who took care of very young children who had been sexually assaulted, sometimes by members of their own family—just the worst, the most reprehensible sorts of crimes.

But if I can ask the Senator just one last question. Of course, we have had the procedural vote on the floor, twice now, where Democrats have blocked our ability to both vote on amendments, including amendments the Senator may have with the Senator from Illinois, Mr. KIRK. Why is there an objection to processing those amendments and allowing the Senate to work its will? Why can't we vote on them? Why can't the Democratic minority take up the majority leader's offer for a vote to strip the language out that your side objects to?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Can I answer that as honestly as I feel?

Mr. CORNYN. I wish the Senator would.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Because there are many of us who believe this is one small step for womankind. It is one battle we can win, and we have had loss after loss after loss.

You know, many of us ran on the right to choose. I was one of them. I am old enough to have seen the way it was before, to have sentenced women who committed illegal abortions with coat hangers. That is sort of the systemic root of all of this. It is our history, Senator. We are trying to change that history, and we keep losing. So there is one small thing in this.

My colleague is right, we didn't see it, and we have to live with that. I understand that. But now we see it and we are trying to do something about it and, thankfully, our party is standing up with us. So we say make that small change and we pass this bill, and maybe we can even strengthen it with amendments.

My colleague has done a superior job in putting the bill together. Let it go.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would just say, in conclusion, that I think it is a terrible shame that my colleague's side of the aisle has decided to take this bill hostage to try to litigate something that has been the law of the land for 39 years. I understand she feels passionately about it. I don't question that for a minute—the sincerity of my colleague's deeply held personal views.

But why in the world would my colleagues take as a hostage a piece of legislation that is going to help those 100,000 children who are sex-trafficked each year? Why should they suffer so my colleagues can make a point on this particular piece of legislation?

I don't understand that and I think it is a terrible shame.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Well, let me answer a question with a question. Why doesn't my colleague just take it out? It is not in the House bill. Then we don't have to conference it, we don't

have to have another fight, we can get the amendments in the bill to strengthen the bill, and we can move on, with the two parties together doing something that is right for the Nation. Why don't we do it?

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say to my friend, I don't blame her for asking, but why in the world would we change settled law for 39 years in order to accommodate the minority's view on this bill, and to change, as I said, what has been the law of the land?

Since the Senator voted for this very language previously this year in the Judiciary Committee—since she cosponsored it, I don't really understand it since she voted for the legislation that is referred to here that has that amendment. Does the Senator see this as breaking new ground? Is she trying to expand or eliminate the Hyde amendment?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I see it for standing up for a principle. I know something about these girls. I know something about the history of abortion in this country. I am old enough to have gone through it and know that I don't want to go back to those days. I don't want young women who take the law now so much for granted to have to return back.

This is just one small step. There is nothing wrong with accommodating the minority on what is a relatively small point. In the House, 435 people over there didn't want it in. So why not accommodate the minority? The Senator just comes out a bigger person.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would say to my friend I appreciate her courtesy and her indulgence in having this conversation. I also feel on principle this limitation on tax dollars is an appropriate one. I understand the Senator disagrees and she would like to eliminate this from this point forward. But I am simply unable on principle to accommodate the Senator in that request.

As I said, I do appreciate her courtesy.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I appreciate it, too. And I appreciate the discussion. Principle doesn't know minority and majority. Principle is deeply held.

I thank the Senator very much.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

DEMOCRACY RESTORATION ACT

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, I support the Democracy Restoration Act. This important legislation would restore a voice in our democracy for millions of Americans who cannot vote simply because they have a criminal conviction. I thank Senator CARDIN for his leadership on this issue. I am honored to be an original cosponsor of this important criminal justice reform legislation.

The right to vote for all is a principle that goes to the very heart of all democracy. Voting is a fundamental right because it is the right from which all other rights derive. Participation in the political process is about giving a voice to the voiceless. It is about who we are as a Nation and whether we want citizens that contribute to our society to have a say in who represents them in the Federal Government.

The road to extend voting rights to all Americans has been long and not without bumps. Our country was founded at a time when African Americans were denied the right to vote. For over a hundred years, we silenced entire populations of Americans and deemed them unworthy of participating in the political process merely because of their race.

During his famous Gettysburg Address, President Lincoln called for the country to have a ''new birth of freedom.'' After the Civil War, the States ratified the Civil War Amendments to the Constitution to honor President Lincoln's promise. One of those amendments, the Fifteenth Amendment, gave African Americans the right to vote. Decades later, the Nineteenth Amendment gave women suffrage.

Despite this progress, many States passed laws during the Jim Crow era to disenfranchise African Americans, including literacy tests, poll taxes, and grandfather clauses. These States also passed laws that banned people with certain convictions from voting. With the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, many of these State disenfranchising laws were outlawed. But the ban on voting for people with certain convictions was not touched and it remains the law in many States.

Today, 35 States restrict voting rights of persons who were formerly incarcerated. In fact, felony disenfranchisement laws prevent 5.85 million Americans from voting. This is a staggering number of Americans that do not have a say in our political process.

Punishment is a legitimate goal of our justice system. But once someone has served their time and been released, we must help our fellow citizens get back on their feet. As President George W. Bush said in his State of the Union Address in 2004, ''America is the land of second chance, and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life.'' To further punish people who are back in the community by denying them the right to vote counters the expectation that citizens have rehabilitated themselves after a conviction.

The Democracy Restoration Act would restore voting rights in Federal elections to millions of disenfranchised Americans who have been released from prison. It would require prisons receiving Federal funds notify people about their right to vote in Federal elections upon leaving prison or being sentenced to probation. It would empower the Department of Justice and former offenders harmed by a violation of this legislation with the right to sue.

This bill corrects a civil rights wrong. It would sweep away the last vestige of Jim Crow laws. It would outlaw State disenfranchisement laws that have a disparate impact on racial minorities. It would provide a uniform standard to govern the restoration of voting rights.

This bill reforms the criminal justice system. Every year, over 600,000 people leave prison. We must find ways to reintegrate them back into the community. Civic participation gives ex-offenders a stake in government, which motivates law-abiding behavior and reduces the likelihood of future crimes. No evidence exists that denying voting rights to people after release from prison reduces crime. To the contrary, it makes sense that people who have paid their debt to society should reclaim their rights.

This bill builds off of the progress in the States. Recently, 8 States have either repealed or amended lifetime disenfranchisement laws. Two states expanded voting rights to persons on probation or parole. Ten States eased the restoration process for people seeking to have their right to vote restored after the completion of their sentence. The Federal Government should follow their lead.

Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come. This Congress can remedy the barriers to full citizenship faced by millions of formerly incarcerated people in our country, if this bill is enacted into law. Restoring the right to vote is good public policy.

To protect basic public safety and strengthen the core of our democracy, I urge my fellow Senators to support the Democracy Restoration Act and quickly pass this important legislation.

CONGRATULATING NANCIE ATWELL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the inspiring accomplishments of Nancie Atwell from Southport, ME, who was awarded the first Global Teacher Prize by the Varkey Foundation. This international, nonprofit organization is committed to improving the quality of education worldwide. Nancie's selection as the foundation's first ever prize recipient is a testament to her outstanding contributions to the teaching profession and her effect on countless students and teachers. The $1 million prize was awarded at a ceremony in Dubai attended by former President Bill Clinton and Sheikh Mohammed

bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates.

Heralded as the ''Nobel Prize of Teaching,'' the prestigious Global Teacher Prize shines a spotlight on the critical role that teachers play in our society. Nancie was selected from more than 5,000 nominations received from 120 countries. The candidates were evaluated based on their innovative teaching practices, including their ability to prepare students to be global citizens.

The pool of thousands was narrowed down to a group of 10 remarkable nominees, including teachers from Afghanistan, India, Kenya, Haiti, Malaysia, Cambodia, and the United States. Within this elite group, Nancie Atwell rose above the rest. Nancie has been a teacher since 1973. In 1990, she used money from her own pocket to found the Center for Teaching & Learning, an independent demonstration school that educates students from kindergarten through eighth grade in the small town of Edgecomb. Her vision was to foster a more meaningful education for Maine students. The center serves a close-knit population of approximately 75 students who travel from several surrounding towns because they are attracted to the school's small class sizes, research-based curriculum, and teacher outreach programs.

In a gesture that exemplifies her deep commitment to her students, Nancie announced that she intends to donate every last penny of the $1 million prize back to her school to support its resources, scholarships, library, and to replace its worn out furnace.

Nancie, who has authored many books and articles about education and hosted 140 education workshops, embodies a teaching philosophy based on student engagement, not just assignments. She encourages her pupils to identify and pursue their passions. By enabling students to choose to read and write about what interests them, the center has created an environment where children are excited to learn and eager to demonstrate their knowledge.

In addition to teaching students, the center does remarkable work teaching teachers. Educators from other schools regularly visit the center for professional development. Once there, they observe school-wide morning meetings, libraries in every classroom, and student-driven writing workshops. The center facilitates a teacher internship program that pairs visiting educators with teachers at the school. These intern-teachers observe and confer about instruction methods and leave equipped to make substantive changes back in their own schools.

In her acceptance speech, Nancie said:

> When children are engaged, when learning is joyful, those are the lessons that stick. Those are the lessons that are worthwhile and meaningful and hang around.

This philosophy has inspired teachers and students alike. In fact, it was one of Nancie's former students who nominated her for the prize.

Under Nancie's leadership, the Center for Teaching & Learning has earned national praise. How wonderful it is that Nancie's work has now earned global recognition. The people of Maine—and especially its students—are fortunate to have such a pioneering and driven educator fighting for a brighter future. Nancie is a remarkable ambassador for both the State of Maine and our country, and I congratulate her on this outstanding accomplishment.

RECOGNIZING TONY ALEXANDER

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Tony Alexander, executive chairman of the board of FirstEnergy Corporation. Tony's 43-year career at FirstEnergy and its predecessor companies was characterized by a commitment to superior customer service, greater value to shareholders, and more opportunities for employees. As FirstEnergy's longest serving chief executive officer, Tony's vision, drive, and leadership helped propel the company to the forefront of the energy industry.

Through Tony's management, Akron-based Ohio Edison quadrupled in size to become today's FirstEnergy. Over the course of his career, he guided the company through significant mergers, acquisitions, and divestitures; complex regulatory and environmental challenges; and a wide range of operational and financial issues. His willingness to push hard for important ideas and policies made him a strong advocate during one of the most challenging periods in the history of the electric industry.

Tony's principled leadership has also shown through his tireless work to improve his community. As a recognized leader in his community, he currently serves as an advisor to the boards of trustees for Akron Tomorrow, Team NEO, and the University of Akron. Additionally, he serves on the board of directors and President's Advancement Council of the Austen BioInnovation Institute.

Tony's service has not gone without notice. He has been awarded the Dr. Frank L. Simonetti Distinguished Business Alumni Award from the University of Akron—a testament to his community leadership.

I congratulate Tony, his wife Becky, and their four sons for the profound impact he has made throughout his community and the energy industry.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:09 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1029. An act 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.

H.R. 1191. An act 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.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1029. An act 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; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 1191. An act 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.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–941. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Dimethomorph; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9923–59) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–942. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Boscalid; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9921–01) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–943. A communication from the Chief of the Planning and Regulatory Affairs Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Professional Standards for State and Local School Nutrition Programs Personnel as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010'' (RIN0584–AE19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–944. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Gypsy Moth Generally Infested Areas; Additions in Minnesota, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin'' (Docket No. APHIS–2014–0023) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–945. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Homeland Defense and Global Security), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a consolidated

budget justification display that includes all programs and activities of the Department of Defense combating terrorism program (OSS–2015–0286); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–946. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General James L. Huggins, Jr., United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–947. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report describing activities under the Secretary of Defense personnel management demonstration project authorities for Department of Defense Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories (STRLs) for calendar year 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–948. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of nine (9) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–949. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the ''National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–950. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 on April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–951. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a transaction involving U.S. exports to South Korea; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–952. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Removal of Obsolete Section 8 Rental Assistance Certificate Program Regulations'' (RIN2577–AC93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–953. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to discretionary appropriations legislation; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC–954. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the status of all extensions granted by Congress regarding the requirements of Section 13 of the Federal Power Act; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–955. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Connecticut; Low Emission Vehicle Program'' (FRL No. 9915–05–Region 1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–956. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, South Coast Air Quality Management District and Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District'' (FRL No. 9923–07–Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–957. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Coal- and Oil-Fired Electric Steam Generating Units'' (FRL No. 9923–98–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–958. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties, Issuance of Compliance or Corrective Action Orders, and the Revocation, Termination or Suspension of Permits; Correction'' (FRL No. 9922–62–OECA) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–959. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Region 4 States; 2008 Lead, 2008 Ozone and 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide Prevention of Significant Deterioration Infrastructure Plans'' (FRL No. 9924–47–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–960. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Minor NSR for Title V and FESOP Sources'' (FRL No. 9924–22–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–961. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Illinois; Amendments to Gasoline Vapor Recovery Requirements for Illinois'' (FRL No. 9922–71–Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–962. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standards of Performance for New Residential Wood Heaters, New Residential Hydronic Heaters and Forced-Air Furnaces'' (FRL No. 9920–50–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–963. A communication from the Chief Counsel for Administrative Law, Office of the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy United States Trade Representative, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–964. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Reporting for Premium; Basis Reporting by Securities Brokers and Basis Determination for Debt Instruments and Options'' ((RIN1545–BL46 and RIN1545–BM60) (TD 9713)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–965. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Empowerment Zone Designation Extension'' (Notice 2015–26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–966. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Beginning of Construction for Sections 45 and 48'' (Notice 2015–25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–967. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Rulings and Determination Letters'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–968. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2015 Calendar Year Resident Population Figures'' (Notice 2015–23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–969. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Notice Under Section 529A'' (Notice 2015–18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–970. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Safe Harbor Method for Determining a Wagering Gain or Loss from Slot Machine Play'' (Notice 2015–21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–971. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''User Fees and Change of Address for Submission of Applications for Approval of Section 403(b) Pre-approved Plans'' (Rev. Proc. 2015–22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–972. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Health Insurance Providers Fee'' ((RIN1545–BM52) (TD 9711)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–973. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Alternative Simplified Credit Election'' ((RIN1545–BL78) (TD

9712)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–974. A communication from the Chair of the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Report to Congress on Medicaid and CHIP''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–975. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0274); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–976. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2015–0275); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–977. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report prepared by the Department of State on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1, 2014, through November 30, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–978. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Legislative Affairs, U.S. Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the waiver of the restrictions contained in Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act of 1992; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–979. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–143); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–980. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2015–0026—2015–0028); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–981. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Procedures for the Handling of Retaliation Complaints Under Section 806 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, as Amended'' (RIN1218–AC53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 17, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–982. A communication from the Director of the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act: Transmission of Documents and Information'' (RIN1240–AA09) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–983. A communication from the General Counsel, National Endowment for the Humanities, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chairperson, National Endowment for Humanities, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–984. A communication from the Deputy Director, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Official Symbol, Logo and Seal'' (45 CFR Part 18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–985. A communication from the Chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2012 and fiscal year 2013 FAIR Act Commercial and Inherently Governmental Activities Inventory; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–986. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Examination of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Receiving Local District Funds to Provide Homeless Services in fiscal year 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–987. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Executive Summary of the 2014 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts'' and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Office's 2014 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. SHELBY, from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, without amendment:

S. 792. An original bill to expand sanctions imposed with respect to Iran and to impose additional sanctions with respect to Iran, 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. VITTER (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KING, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KIRK, Ms. COLLINS, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 768. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiary access to eye tracking accessories for speech generating devices and to remove the rental cap for durable medical equipment under the Medicare Program with respect to speech generating devices; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. THUNE):

S. 769. A bill to streamline the permit process for rail and transit infrastructure; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 770. A bill to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 771. A bill to emphasize manufacturing in engineering programs by directing the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in coordination with other appropriate Federal agencies including the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and National Science Foundation, to designate United States manufacturing universities; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 772. A bill to secure the Federal voting rights of persons when released from incarceration; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MURRAY (for herself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 773. A bill to prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. DAINES, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. PORTMAN, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 774. A bill to amend the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BURR, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S. 775. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from the definition of health insurance coverage certain medical stop-loss insurance obtained by certain plan sponsors of group health plans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 776. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY:

S. 777. A bill to permit employees to request, and to ensure employers consider requests for, flexible work terms and conditions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, Mrs. ERNST, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 778. A bill to prohibit the provision of certain foreign assistance to countries receiving certain detainees transferred from United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 779. A bill to provide for Federal agencies to develop public access policies relating to research conducted by employees of that agency or from funds administered by that agency; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 780. A bill to permit the televising of Supreme Court proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. SCOTT):

S. 781. A bill to improve knowledge about the best practices for teaching financial literacy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 782. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a bison management plan for Grand Canyon National Park; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 783. A bill to provide for media coverage of Federal court proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 784. A bill to direct the Secretary of Energy to establish microlabs to improve regional engagement with national laboratories; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. REED, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HIRONO, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 785. A bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to repeal a certain exemption for hydraulic fracturing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. REED, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 786. A bill to provide paid and family medical leave benefits to certain individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 787. A bill to streamline the collection and distribution of government information; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 788. A bill to require the termination of any employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs who is found to have retaliated against a whistleblower; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. 789. A bill to establish the Social Work Reinvestment Commission to provide independent counsel to Congress and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on policy issues related to recruitment, retention, research, and reinvestment in the profession of social work, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. PAUL (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. 790. A bill to provide for the establishment of free market enterprise zones in order to help facilitate the creation of new jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities, enhanced and renewed educational opportunities, and increase community involvement in bankrupt or economically distressed areas; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 791. A bill to free the private sector to harness domestic energy resources to create jobs and generate economic growth by removing statutory and administrative barriers; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. SHELBY:

S. 792. An original bill to expand sanctions imposed with respect to Iran and to impose additional sanctions with respect to Iran, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; placed on the calendar.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. REED, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. UDALL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 793. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 794. A bill to extend whistleblower protections for defense contractor employees to employees of contractors of the elements of the intelligence community; to the Select Committee on Intelligence.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 795. A bill to enhance whistleblower protection for contractor and grantee employees; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S.J. Res. 10. A joint resolution disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act of 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S.J. Res. 11. A joint resolution disapproving the action of the District of Columbia Council in approving the Human Rights Amendment Act of 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. Res. 103. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Social Work Month and World Social Work Day; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. MCCAIN):

S. Res. 104. A resolution to express the sense of the Senate regarding the success of Operation Streamline and the importance of prosecuting first time illegal border crossers; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 139

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 139, a bill to permanently allow an exclusion under the Supplemental Security Income program and the Medicaid program for compensation provided to individuals who participate in clinical trials for rare diseases or conditions.

S. 170

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to increase the maximum age for children eligible for medical care under the CHAMPVA program, and for other purposes.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 301

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) 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 names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 308, a bill to reauthorize 21st century community learning centers, and for other purposes.

S. 314

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) 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. 319

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 319, a bill to designate a mountain in the State of Alaska as Mount Denali.

S. 396

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 396, a bill to establish the Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Committee.

S. 423

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) 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. 565

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 565, a bill to reduce the operation and maintenance costs associated with the Federal fleet by encouraging the use of remanufactured parts, and for other purposes.

S. 590

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the names of the Senator from Utah

(Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 590, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual violence, and for other purposes.

S. 616

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 616, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide recruitment and retention incentives for volunteer emergency service workers.

S. 650

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 650, a bill to extend the positive train control system implementation deadline, and for other purposes.

S. 677

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 677, a bill to prohibit the application of certain restrictive eligibility requirements to foreign nongovernmental organizations with respect to the provision of assistance under part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. 682

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 682, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage orginator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 686

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 686, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a limitation on certain aliens from claiming the earned income tax credit.

S. 697

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) were added as cosponsors of S. 697, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to reauthorize and modernize that Act, and for other purposes.

S. 751

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 751, a bill to improve the establishment of any lower ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes.

S. 753

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of 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.

S. 756

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 756, a bill to require a report on accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Syria.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 87

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 87, a resolution to express the sense of the Senate regarding the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and to encourage greater cooperation with the European governments, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in preventing and responding to anti-Semitism.

AMENDMENT NO. 300

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) 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 Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 779. A bill to provide for Federal agencies to develop public access policies relating to research conducted by employees of that agency or from funds administered by that agency; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 779

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 ''Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the Federal Government funds basic and applied research with the expectation that new ideas and discoveries that result from the research, if shared and effectively disseminated, will advance science and improve the lives and welfare of people of the United States and around the world;

(2) the Internet makes it possible for this information to be promptly available to every scientist, physician, educator, and citizen at home, in school, or in a library; and

(3) the United States has a substantial interest in maximizing the impact and utility of the research it funds by enabling a wide range of reuses of the peer-reviewed literature that reports the results of such research, including by enabling computational analysis by state-of-the-art technologies.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION OF FEDERAL AGENCY.

In this Act, the term ''Federal agency'' means an Executive agency, as defined under section 105 of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 4. FEDERAL RESEARCH PUBLIC ACCESS POLICY.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO DEVELOP POLICY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, each Federal agency with extramural research expenditures of over $100,000,000 shall develop a Federal research public access policy that is consistent with and advances the purposes of the Federal agency.

(2) COMMON PROCEDURES.—To the extent practicable, Federal agencies required to develop a policy under paragraph (1) shall follow common procedures for the collection and depositing of research papers.

(b) CONTENT.—Each Federal research public access policy shall provide for—

(1) submission to the Federal agency of an electronic version of the author's final manuscript of original research papers that have been accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals and that result from research supported, in whole or in part, from funding by the Federal Government;

(2) the incorporation of all changes resulting from the peer review publication process in the manuscript described under paragraph (1);

(3) the replacement of the final manuscript with the final published version if—

(A) the publisher consents to the replacement; and

(B) the goals of the Federal agency for functionality and interoperability are retained;

(4) free online public access to such final peer-reviewed manuscripts or published versions as soon as practicable, but not later than 6 months after publication in peer-reviewed journals;

(5) providing research papers as described in paragraph (4) in formats and under terms that enable productive reuse, including computational analysis by state-of-the-art technologies;

(6) production of an online bibliography of all research papers that are publicly accessible under the policy, with each entry linking to the corresponding free online full text; and

(7) long-term preservation of, and free public access to, published research findings—

(A) in a stable digital repository maintained by the Federal agency; or

(B) if consistent with the purposes of the Federal agency, in any repository meeting conditions determined favorable by the Federal agency, including free public access, interoperability, and long-term preservation.

(c) APPLICATION OF POLICY.—Each Federal research public access policy shall—

(1) apply to—

(A) researchers employed by the Federal agency whose works remain in the public domain; and

(B) researchers funded by the Federal agency;

(2) provide that works described under paragraph (1)(A) shall be—

(A) marked as being public domain material when published; and

(B) made available at the same time such works are made available under subsection (b)(4); and

(3) make effective use of any law or guidance relating to the creation and reservation of a Government license that provides for the reproduction, publication, release, or other uses of a final manuscript for Federal purposes.

(d) EXCLUSIONS.—Each Federal research public access policy shall not apply to—

(1) research progress reports presented at professional meetings or conferences;

(2) laboratory notes, preliminary data analyses, notes of the author, phone logs, or other information used to produce final manuscripts;

(3) classified research, research resulting in works that generate revenue or royalties for authors (such as books) or patentable discoveries, to the extent necessary to protect a copyright or patent; or

(4) authors who do not submit their work to a journal or works that are rejected by journals.

(e) PATENT OR COPYRIGHT LAW.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect any right under the provisions of title 17 or 35, United States Code.

(f) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than October 1 of each year, the head of each Federal agency shall submit a report on the Federal research public access policy of that Federal agency to—

(A) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives;

(C) the Committee on Science and Technology of the House of Representatives;

(D) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(F) any other committee of Congress of appropriate jurisdiction.

(2) CONTENT.—Each report under this subsection shall include—

(A) a statement of the effectiveness of the Federal research public access policy in providing the public with free online access to papers on research funded by the Federal agency;

(B) the results of a study by the Federal agency of the terms of use applicable to the research papers described in subsection (b)(4), including—

(i) a statement of whether the terms of use applicable to such research papers are effective in enabling productive reuse and computational analysis by state-of-the-art technologies; and

(ii) an examination of whether such research papers should include a royalty-free copyright license that is available to the public and that permits the reuse of those research papers, on the condition that attribution is given to the author or authors of the research and any others designated by the copyright owner;

(C) a list of papers published in peer-reviewed journals that report on research funded by the Federal agency;

(D) a corresponding list of papers made available by the Federal agency as a result of the Federal research public access policy; and

(E) a summary of the periods of time between public availability of each paper in a journal and in the online repository of the Federal agency.

(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—A Federal agency shall make the statement under paragraph (2)(A) and the lists of papers under subparagraphs (B) and (C) of paragraph (2) available to the public by posting such statement and lists on the website of the Federal agency.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 780. A bill to permit the televising of Supreme Court proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 780

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 ''Cameras in the Courtroom Act''.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO TITLE 28.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 45 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting at the end the following:

''§ 678. Televising Supreme Court proceedings

''The Supreme Court shall permit television coverage of all open sessions of the Court unless the Court decides, by a vote of the majority of justices, that allowing such coverage in a particular case would constitute a violation of the due process rights of 1 or more of the parties before the Court.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The chapter analysis for chapter 45 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting at the end the following:

''678. Televising Supreme Court proceedings.''.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 783. A bill to provide for media coverage of Federal court proceedings; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this week is Sunshine Week, when we affirm the public's right to know how their government is run. Sunshine Week, which began as Sunshine Sunday in 2002, emphasizes the importance of transparency and accountability in a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. In the spirit of government transparency, we are pleased to introduce the Sunshine in the Courtroom Act of 2015. This important piece of bipartisan legislation furthers the public's access to court proceedings by permitting federal judges at all federal court levels to open their courtrooms to television cameras and radio broadcasts.

Openness in our courts improves the public's understanding of what happens inside our courts. Our judicial system remains a mystery to too many people across the country. That doesn't need to continue. Letting the sun shine in on Federal courtrooms will give Americans an opportunity to better understand the judicial process. Courts are the bedrock of the American justice system. Granting the public greater access to an already public proceeding will inspire greater faith in and appreciation for our judges who pledge equal and impartial justice for all.

For decades, States such as my home State of Iowa have allowed cameras in their courtrooms with great results. As a matter of fact, all 50 States and the District of Columbia now allow some news coverage of proceedings.

The bill I am introducing today, along with Senator SCHUMER and a number of cosponsors from both sides of the aisle, including Judiciary Committee Ranking Member LEAHY, will greatly improve public access to federal courts by letting federal judges open their courtrooms to television cameras and other forms of electronic media.

The Sunshine in the Courtroom Act is full of provisions that ensure that the introduction of cameras and other broadcasting devices into courtrooms goes as smoothly as it has at the state level. First, the presence of the cameras Federal trial and appellate courts is at the sole discretion of the judges—it is not mandatory. The bill also provides a mechanism for Congress to study the effects of this legislation on our judiciary before making this change permanent through a 3-year sunset provision. The bill protects the privacy and safety of non-party witnesses by giving them the right to have their faces and voices obscured. The bill prohibits the televising of jurors. Finally, it includes a provision to protect the due process rights of each party.

We need to open the doors and let the light shine in on the Federal Judiciary. This bill improves public access to and therefore understanding of our Federal courts. It has safety provisions to ensure that the cameras won't interfere with the proceedings or with the safety or due process of anyone involved in the cases. Our States have allowed news coverage of their courtrooms for decades. It is time we join them.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows.

S. 783

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 ''Sunshine in the Courtroom Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL APPELLATE AND DISTRICT COURTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) PRESIDING JUDGE.—The term ''presiding judge'' means the judge presiding over the court proceeding concerned. In proceedings in which more than 1 judge participates, the presiding judge shall be the senior active judge so participating or, in the case of a circuit court of appeals, the senior active circuit judge so participating, except that—

(A) in en banc sittings of any United States circuit court of appeals, the presiding judge shall be the chief judge of the circuit whenever the chief judge participates; and

(B) in en banc sittings of the Supreme Court of the United States, the presiding judge shall be the Chief Justice whenever the Chief Justice participates.

(2) APPELLATE COURT OF THE UNITED STATES.—The term ''appellate court of the United States'' means any United States circuit court of appeals and the Supreme Court of the United States.

(b) AUTHORITY OF PRESIDING JUDGE TO ALLOW MEDIA COVERAGE OF COURT PROCEEDINGS.—

(1) AUTHORITY OF APPELLATE COURTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under subparagraph (B), the presiding judge of an appellate court of the United States may, at the discretion of that judge, permit the photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising to the public of any court proceeding over which that judge presides.

(B) EXCEPTION.—The presiding judge shall not permit any action under subparagraph (A), if—

(i) in the case of a proceeding involving only the presiding judge, that judge determines the action would constitute a violation of the due process rights of any party; or

(ii) in the case of a proceeding involving the participation of more than 1 judge, a majority of the judges participating determine that the action would constitute a violation of the due process rights of any party.

(2) AUTHORITY OF DISTRICT COURTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—

(i) AUTHORITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except as provided under clause (iii), the presiding judge of a district court of the United States may, at the discretion of that judge, permit the photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising to the public of any court proceeding over which that judge presides.

(ii) OBSCURING OF WITNESSES.—Except as provided under clause (iii)—

(I) upon the request of any witness (other than a party) in a trial proceeding, the court shall order the face and voice of the witness to be disguised or otherwise obscured in such manner as to render the witness unrecognizable to the broadcast audience of the trial proceeding; and

(II) the presiding judge in a trial proceeding shall inform each witness who is not a party that the witness has the right to request the image and voice of that witness to be obscured during the witness' testimony.

(iii) EXCEPTION.—The presiding judge shall not permit any action under this subparagraph—

(I) if that judge determines the action would constitute a violation of the due process rights of any party; and

(II) until the Judicial Conference of the United States promulgates mandatory guidelines under paragraph (5).

(B) NO MEDIA COVERAGE OF JURORS.—The presiding judge shall not permit the photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising of any juror in a trial proceeding, or of the jury selection process.

(C) DISCRETION OF THE JUDGE.—The presiding judge shall have the discretion to obscure the face and voice of an individual, if good cause is shown that the photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising of the individual would threaten—

(i) the safety of the individual;

(ii) the security of the court;

(iii) the integrity of future or ongoing law enforcement operations; or

(iv) the interest of justice.

(D) SUNSET OF DISTRICT COURT AUTHORITY.—The authority under this paragraph shall terminate 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) INTERLOCUTORY APPEALS BARRED.—The decision of the presiding judge under this subsection of whether or not to permit, deny, or terminate the photographing, electronic recording, broadcasting, or televising of a court proceeding may not be challenged through an interlocutory appeal.

(4) ADVISORY GUIDELINES.—The Judicial Conference of the United States may promulgate advisory guidelines to which a presiding judge, at the discretion of that judge, may refer in making decisions with respect to the management and administration of photographing, recording, broadcasting, or televising described under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(5) MANDATORY GUIDELINES.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Judicial Conference of the United States shall promulgate mandatory guidelines which a presiding judge is required to follow for obscuring of certain vulnerable witnesses, including crime victims, minor victims, families of victims, cooperating witnesses, undercover law enforcement officers or agents, witnesses subject to section 3521 of title 18, United States Code, relating to witness relocation and protection, or minors under the age of 18 years. The guidelines shall include procedures for determining, at the earliest practicable time in any investigation or case, which witnesses should be considered vulnerable under this section.

(6) PROCEDURES.—In the interests of justice and fairness, the presiding judge of the court in which media use is desired has discretion to promulgate rules and disciplinary measures for the courtroom use of any form of media or media equipment and the acquisition or distribution of any of the images or sounds obtained in the courtroom. The presiding judge shall also have discretion to require written acknowledgment of the rules by anyone individually or on behalf of any entity before being allowed to acquire any images or sounds from the courtroom.

(7) NO BROADCAST OF CONFERENCES BETWEEN ATTORNEYS AND CLIENTS.—There shall be no audio pickup or broadcast of conferences which occur in a court proceeding between attorneys and their clients, between co-counsel of a client, between adverse counsel, or between counsel and the presiding judge, if the conferences are not part of the official record of the proceedings.

(8) EXPENSES.—A court may require that any accommodations to effectuate this Act be made without public expense.

(9) INHERENT AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this Act shall limit the inherent authority of a court to protect witnesses or clear the courtroom to preserve the decorum and integrity of the legal process or protect the safety of an individual.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. REED, Mr. LEAHY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. UDALL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 793. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to provide for the refinancing of certain Federal student loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise today to announce the introduction of the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act of 2015. This bill will allow student loan borrowers to take advantage of today's lower interest rates, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Last Congress, Democrats pressed for a similar bill which has strong support from the Senate and from the public. Every Democrat, every Independent, and three Republicans voted to move this bill forward. More than 700,000 people signed petitions in support of student loan refinancing, but Republicans filibustered the bill, so it didn't pass. It is time to try again, because a problem that was bad last year has gotten worse—much worse.

Since last year, nearly 1 million more borrowers have fallen behind in their payments. Nearly 1 million more are watching their balances get bigger, not smaller. Nearly 1 million more people are sweating out how they are ever going to repay their student loan debt.

Last year, student loan debt was an economic emergency. Now, 1 year later, the emergency is getting worse. Just look at the numbers. Students are now struggling with $100 billion more debt than 1 year ago. Since last year, total student loan debt has jumped to $1.3 trillion, and the debt is crushing young people.

Last year, experts at the U.S. Treasury, the Federal Reserve, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau all sounded the alarm on student debt. This year, the alarm bells are sounding even louder. One year ago, the Federal Government was projected to take in tens of billions in profits on the backs of our kids as a result of artificially high interest rates. One year later, interest rates on new loans are even higher, and even with millions of people struggling to pay, even after accounting for administrative and other costs, the Federal Government is still raking in huge profits on its student loan program.

Despite overwhelming public support for cutting the interest rates on student loans, Republicans last year refused to even debate this bill. Republicans said there were other, better ways to tackle student debt, but Republicans did nothing, nothing except filibuster the only student loan bill on the table. So tens of millions of borrowers got nothing, no help at all. Today, millions of borrowers are left with interest rates of 6 percent, 8 percent, 10 percent, and even higher. Nearly 1 million more borrowers are falling behind, and the Republicans have done nothing. Nearly 1 million more borrowers are falling behind, and they are watching their debt load get bigger. Nearly 1 million more borrowers are falling behind, paying interest rates that produce obscene profits for the U.S. Government, and the Republicans will not even debate refinancing student loans.

Why can't people refinance their student loans? When interest rates are low, homeowners can refinance their mortgages to reduce their payments. Businesses can refinance their debts. Even governments can refinance their debts. But student loan borrowers are stuck with their loans, sometimes at 6 percent, 8 percent, 10 percent, and even higher.

Our proposal is simple: refinance outstanding loans down to 3.9 percent for

undergraduates, and a little higher for graduates and PLUS loans. This single change would give borrowers across this country a chance to save hundreds—and for some, thousands—of dollars a year. That's real money—money they can put toward paying down the balance on their debt, saving for a home, buying a car—money they can put toward building a solid future.

This bill doesn't add one dime to the deficit. It is fully paid for by closing up a tax loophole that allows millionaires and billionaires to pay a lower tax rate than middle class families.

If Republicans don't like that way to pay for the student loan bill, here's another idea. Senators REED and BLUMENTHAL have advanced a bill that would close a different tax loophole. They want to end the tax breaks for executive bonuses that are bigger than a million dollars.

I say to my Republican colleagues, if you don't like that way to pay for the student loan bill, there are other options as well. Let's sit down and talk about it, but don't close your eyes and pretend this isn't happening. Don't turn your backs on the 40 million Americans with student loan debt. Don't do nothing.

Refinancing student loans will not fix everything that is wrong in our higher education system. We need to cut the price of college. We need to reinvest in public universities. We need to shore up financial aid, crack down on for-profit colleges, and provide better protections on student loans, but let's start by allowing people to refinance their student loans. Let's start by cutting back on the interest payments that are sinking young people and holding back this economy.

We could have refinanced student loan debt 1 year ago, but Republicans said no. Now Americans owe $100 billion more than they did. Now nearly 1 million more borrowers are falling behind. Now more people than ever are choking on student loan debt.

By refusing to act, Republicans are sinking the hopes of an entire generation. It is time for Congress to step up and fix this problem, before it drags down another million Americans and another and another. It is time to refinance student loan debt.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 103—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF SOCIAL WORK MONTH AND WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. FRANKEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 103

Whereas the primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, especially the most vulnerable in society;

Whereas social work pioneers have helped lead the struggle for social justice in the United States and have helped pave the way for positive social change;

Whereas social workers are key employees at the Federal, State, and local levels of government and work to expand policies and practices that promote equity and social justice for all people;

Whereas social workers stand up for individuals and support diverse families in every community;

Whereas social workers continue to work to improve the rights of women, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (''LGBT'') community, and communities of color;

Whereas social workers know from experience that discrimination of any kind limits human potential and must be eliminated;

Whereas social workers know from experience that poverty and trauma can create lifelong social and economic disadvantages;

Whereas social workers help people in every stage of life function better in their environments, improve relationships with others, and solve personal and family problems;

Whereas all children have the right to safe environments and quality education;

Whereas dignity and caregiving for older adults help define the character of a nation;

Whereas veterans and the families of veterans need community support to ensure successful transitions after service;

Whereas access to mental health treatment and health care services saves millions of lives;

Whereas research has shown that all people, no matter the circumstance, may at some point in their lives need the expertise of a skilled social worker;

Whereas social workers celebrate the courage, hope, and strength of the human spirit throughout their careers;

Whereas March is recognized as Social Work Month; and

Whereas World Social Work Day is recognized on March 18, 2015: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Social Work Month and World Social Work Day;

(2) acknowledges the diligent efforts of individuals and groups who promote the importance of social work and observe Social Work Month and World Social Work Day;

(3) encourages individuals to engage in appropriate ceremonies and activities to promote further awareness of the life-changing role that social workers play; and

(4) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of caring individuals who have chosen to serve their communities through social work.

SENATE RESOLUTION 104—TO EXPRESS THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE SUCCESS OF OPERATION STREAMLINE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PROSECUTING FIRST TIME ILLEGAL BORDER CROSSERS

Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. RES. 104

Whereas the Border Patrol's Yuma Sector has long grappled with the crossing of undocumented aliens and has seen illegal traffic decline precipitously from the early 2000s to the present;

Whereas a combination of increased manpower, technology implementation, and the delivery of appropriate consequences have resulted in gains in border security in the Yuma Sector;

Whereas a key to the success in the Yuma Sector has been the implementation of Operation Streamline, a program established in 2005 that was described by former Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano as ''a DHS partnership with the Department of Justice, . . . a geographically focused operation that aims to increase the consequences for illegally crossing the border by criminally prosecuting illegal border-crossers.'';

Whereas known for its ''zero-tolerance'' approach, the Yuma County Sheriff's Office cites 100 percent prosecution of illegal border crossers as a shared goal of a partnership including Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies;

Whereas among the various consequences delivered to illegal crossers by the Department of Homeland Security, Operation Streamline is associated with a recidivism rate that is well below average and has seen a steady decrease in recidivism in recent years;

Whereas the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona will reportedly no longer be prosecuting those apprehended crossing the border illegally for the first time; and

Whereas according to the Sheriff of Yuma County, Operation Streamline ''had a deterrent effect in Yuma County, which gained a reputation as an area to avoid crossing into because if caught, you were assured to go to court and possibly face penalties'', but now the program has been ''has been severely diluted.''.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) gains made in border security in the Yuma Sector and positive trends in recidivism rates are of critical importance to those living and working in the border region and to the Nation as a whole;

(2) refusing to prosecute first time illegal border crossers under Operation Streamline will jeopardize border security gains;

(3) the border security steps that have led to some measure of improvement on the border, such as the historical implementation of Operation Streamline, should be preserved; and

(4) the Executive Branch should immediately remove any issued or related prohibition, policy, guidance, or direction to cease prosecuting first time illegal border crossers under Operation Streamline.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 319. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 319. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 178, to provide justice for the victims of trafficking; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. __. REVOCATION OF IMMIGRATION BENEFITS FOR ALIENS CONVICTED OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—If a covered alien is convicted of human trafficking or any conspiracy related to human trafficking, the

Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary of State, as appropriate, shall—

(1) revoke any immigration benefit granted to the covered alien;

(2) revoke any relief from removal provided pursuant to policies implemented under, or substantially similar to policies implemented under, an Executive action or memoranda set out under subsection (c) granted to the covered alien; and

(3) 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).

(c) EXECUTIVE ACTIONS.—The Executive actions and memoranda set out under this subsection are the following:

(1) The memorandum from the Director of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Civil Immigration Enforcement: Priorities for the Apprehension, Detention, and Removal of Aliens'' dated March 2, 2011.

(2) The memorandum from the Director of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion Consistent with the Civil Immigration Enforcement Priorities of the Agency for the Apprehension, Detention, and Removal of Aliens'' dated June 17, 2011.

(3) The memorandum from the Principal Legal Advisor of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Case-by-Case Review of Incoming and Certain Pending Cases'' dated November 17, 2011.

(4) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children'' dated June 15, 2012.

(5) The memorandum from the Director of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement entitled ''Civil Immigration Enforcement: Guidance on the Use of Detainers in the Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Criminal Justice Systems'' dated December 21, 2012.

(6) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Southern Border and Approaches Campaign'' dated November 20, 2014.

(7) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Policies for the Apprehension, Detention and Removal of Undocumented Immigrants'' dated November 20, 2014.

(8) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Secure Communities'' dated November 20, 2014.

(9) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Exercising Prosecutorial Discretion with Respect to Individuals Who Came to the United States as Children and with Respect to Certain Individuals Who Are the Parents of U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents'' dated November 20, 2014.

(10) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Expansion of the Provisional Waiver Program'' dated November 20, 2014.

(11) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Policies Supporting U.S. High-Skilled Businesses and Workers'' dated November 20, 2014.

(12) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Families of U.S. Armed Forces Members and Enlistees'' dated November 20, 2014.

(13) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Directive to Provide Consistency Regarding Advance Parole'' dated November 20, 2014.

(14) The memorandum from the Secretary of Homeland Security entitled ''Policies to Promote and Increase Access to U.S. Citizenship'' dated November 20, 2014.

(15) The memorandum from the President entitled ''Modernizing and Streamlining the U.S. Immigrant Visa System for the 21st Century'' dated November 21, 2014.

(16) The memorandum from the President entitled ''Creating Welcoming Communities and Fully Integrating Immigrants and Refugees'' dated November 21, 2014.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 18, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. ISAKSON. 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 18, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Federal Communications Commission.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 18, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act.''

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 18, 2015, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 18, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Impact of Abusive Parent Litigation Practices on the American Economy.''

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 18, 2015, at 10 a.m. in room SD–G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Seapower of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 18, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern, Sirvat Tokatlian, be allowed privileges of the floor throughout the day.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 1191

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A 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.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2015

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 11 a.m., Thursday, March 19; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 178, with the time until the

cloture vote at 12 noon equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Senators should expect up to two rollcall votes at noon.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 11 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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 5:24 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 19, 2015, at 11 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING GALENA TRAIN DERAILMENT FIRST RESPONDERS

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the first responders who helped to control and contain the fire caused by the recent train derailment in Galena, IL on March 5, 2015. These brave citizens responded to the derailment quickly and performed their duties flawlessly. Thanks to their bravery and hard work, the fire was ultimately contained, and disaster was averted. The state of Wisconsin thanks them for their courage and service.

On March 5, 2015, a Burlington Northern Santa Fe train derailed in Galena, Illinois, and started a fire in a rural area near the city. Firefighters from Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin responded to help control and contain the fire. Wisconsin fire departments from Cuba City, Darlington, Dickeyville, Hazel Green, Jamestown, Lancaster, and Platteville participated in the incident response. After arriving on the scene, first responders assessed the situation and enacted procedures to control the derailment. Their response was successful, the incident was contained, and crisis was averted.

Every day, firefighters and other first responders go to work prepared to confront our most dangerous situations. These brave men and women are on the front lines, protecting our communities from disaster. Today, I recognize these courageous first responders and thank them for their service.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BILLY CASPER

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, San Diego has produced many sports heroes over the years. Rarely, a champion appears on the sports scene whose character and personal impact on others transcends his athletic accomplishments. Billy Casper was such a man.

Billy is known for his 51 victories on the professional golf tour, the seventh most in golf history. But I can tell you as a friend of Billy's, he was more than that; he radiated goodness and friendship. When Billy played, the game itself was secondary. Everyone just wanted to be around Billy and the love of his life, Shirley. And Billy Casper was "G" rated in the same sense as Roy Rogers. To put it simply, you could bring your kids to a Billy Casper event.

Billy's life was that of a San Diego legend. Billy elected to stay in San Diego when his mom announced she was moving to Los Angeles with her new husband. From that point on, Billy bounced around the South Bay, staying with buddies, playing sports and venturing out to the greens of San Diego Country Club to practice his putting—at night. It was in these moments that Billy gained his impeccable touch, making him one of the greatest putters in the history of the game.

At a football game he spotted a pretty girl in the bleachers. Soon, they were inseparable, and after a short stint in the Navy and success on the local amateur circuit, Shirley and Billy Casper got married. They would remain a team for life.

They saw the movie, Follow The Sun, in which Ben Hogan, played by Glenn Ford, came back from a near fatal accident to win the U.S. Open. Billy and Shirley were taken with the adventure of Ben Hogan and his wife Valerie, sallying forth on the PGA tour with no guarantees and only themselves to rely on. Soon after, they too decided to "Follow the Sun."

With a Buick Roadmaster and a Spartan Trailer, they headed out on the PGA Tour. Making less than $50 in their first event, the difficulty of the tour became evident. Then, Billy's talent began to prevail. By the third round of the 1958 U.S. Open at Winged Foot, Billy was leading, with such legends as Ben Hogan and Sam Snead in hot pursuit. And let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, the kid from San Diego knew how to close tournaments. He won that U.S. Open and proceeded in the next decade to win more golf tournaments than Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus or Gary Player.

Along the way, Billy put together the best Ryder Cup record in U.S. history. At Olympic, in the 1966 U.S. Open, Billy shot the greatest come-from-behind closing nine holes in U.S. Open history, making up seven shots on Arnie, with a closing 32. He defeated Arnold Palmer the next day in an eighteen hole playoff with a 69.

In an age of sports psychologists and "living in the moment," where athletes are counseled to jettison all distractions, Billy Casper redefined the term "family man." He and Shirley were blessed with 11 children, who have given them 71 grandchildren over the years. Billy Casper thrived on what others would consider career distractions and his reward for building a family of love and unity is that the Casper support structure for young people will continue.

His annual golf tournament will be played this year as a memorial, run by the Casper children and grandchildren as usual, and with Shirley overseeing everything. Only one guy will be missing, the grandfather with the magic golf touch and the big heart; the guy who did us all proud . . . not just because of what he did, but because of who he was. Inside. Where it counts.

HONORING JACOB LEE VELAZQUEZ

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacob Lee Velazquez. Jacob is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 43, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacob has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jacob has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jacob has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jacob constructed two team benches for the St. Joseph Youth Soccer Association in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jacob Lee Velazquez for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

ALEXSANDER HAY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alexsander Hay for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Alexsander Hay is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alexsander Hay is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Alexsander Hay for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING LAKE ALFRED, FLORIDA

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Lake Alfred, Florida as the city celebrates its 100th anniversary. Lake Alfred is a beautiful community situated among the many lakes of Central Florida.

Lake Alfred's rich history began with its original settlement as a military outpost, called Fort Cummings, in 1839. In 1887, a railroad

line connecting Sanford and Tampa was constructed through Lake Alfred and logging quickly became the community's primary industry. At the turn of the century, Frank C. Gardner of Fargo, North Dakota, sensibly seeking more clement weather in the Sunshine State, formed the Florida Fruitlands Company, purchasing vast tracts of land and planting citrus groves. In the subsequent years, the community underwent several name changes before finally choosing Lake Alfred, one of the most scenic lakes in the community. Lake Alfred has continued to grow as one of the most vibrant cities in Central Florida.

It is an honor to represent the residents of Lake Alfred, and I am excited to join them in celebrating this historical milestone.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE LIFE OF BARBARA AYMAR EARLE

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of an extraordinary American, Barbara (Bobbie) Aymar Earle who passed away in Essex, Connecticut on December 10, 2014, in the company of her five children.

Barbara was born in New York City on January 1, 1925, the daughter of Gordon Aymar, a noted illustrator and portrait painter, and Margaretta Aymar, a civic leader. She attended The Thomas School in Rowayton, Connecticut, Barnard College, and the Julliard School of Music in New York City. She played the harp professionally for a short time before marrying the great love of her life, Harry W. Earle, of Norwalk, Connecticut, upon his return in 1944 from Air Force service in Europe during World War II. She devoted the next thirty years to raising her family, to civic activities, and to writing. She co-founded Person-to-Person, the Connecticut-based volunteer organization that provides clothing, food and other necessities to those in need. She also spent many years as a hospice volunteer, the organization that assisted her during the final days of her life. More than forty years after she first started college, Bobbie returned to earn her Bachelor of Science degree, graduating summa cum laude in 1983 from the University of Washington/Oshkosh, at the age of 58, with a major in human services and a minor in music. ''Give Us This Day'', a book of her poems will be published in 2015.

Bobbie is remembered for her love of life, music, gardening and poetry, her devotion to family and friends, and for her deep and lasting influence on the communities where she lived. Her daughters, Penrhyn Cook and Barbara Ballard; her sons, David, John and Gordon; and her sister Carol Armstrong survive her. She was the proud grandmother of eleven grandchildren: Matthew and Jonathan Earle, Geoffrey Bailey, Joby and Derry Earle, Margaret and Harry Kaplan-Earle, Gordon Earle, Benjamin and Emily Ballard, Naima Guzman, and one great granddaughter, Katherine Guzman. She was predeceased by her brother, Gordon Aymar, Jr. and by Harry Earle, her husband of 56 years.

I met Bobbie in 1966 when the Earle family moved to California from Connecticut. Her husband Harry had been named Vice President of Marketing at the newly formed J.W. Clement Company in Palo Alto and he hired me to be his assistant. From that time and throughout the rest of our lives, Bobbie and Harry remained dear friends. She enhanced and blessed my life with her boundless gifts of wisdom, laughter, poetry, gardening tips, charity, faith, integrity, humility and her sheer joy of life. Across all the decades, I have never known a finer person. A conversation with Bobbie was always a beautiful experience, sprinkled with sparks of divinity. Simply put, there was no one like her. Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life and work of Barbara Aymar Earle and in extending our deepest condolences to her magnificent family.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MISSOURI FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th Anniversary of the Missouri Farm Bureau Federation. The Missouri Farm Bureau has been a champion of advocating for farmers the past century. Over the years, this organization has built a reputation of service based on credibility, integrity, and thorough knowledge of the issues—a reputation that continues to grow.

On March 24, 1915, the county Farm Bureau movement changed forever. A group of farmers and ranchers gathered in Saline County to organize the nation's first state Farm Bureau organization. Since then, Missouri Farm Bureau has continued to grow in strength and is the state's most effective organization that works to improve the quality of life for farmers, rural Missouri, and all Missourians. When members join, their voice is heard at the county, state, and national level.

Over these one hundred years, Missouri Farm Bureau has worked on various issues on the state and national level that would affect the farming industry. This organization is also committed to teaching consumers and school children how crop/food production affects their daily lives. By educating future generations about the importance of agriculture, this industry will continue to be successful.

As a farmer and member of Missouri Farm Bureau, it is a privilege to recognize the impact this organization has had on the agriculture industry and families in Missouri. I am confident that Missouri Farm Bureau will continue to succeed in the years to come.

I ask you in joining me in recognizing the 100th Anniversary of the Missouri Farm Bureau.

HONORING GABRIEL STILLWELL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Gabriel Stillwell. Gabe is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1286, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Gabe has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Gabe has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Gabe has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Gabe installed a flagpole and added landscaping to the front of Community of Christ Church in Odessa, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Gabriel Stillwell for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

EMMA EAKER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Emma Eaker for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Emma Eaker is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Emma Eaker is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Emma Eaker for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. MARK GIESEN, THE SUNBURY, PENNSYLVANIA ROTARY CLUB'S SUNBURY CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the Sunbury, Pennsylvania Rotary Club's Sunbury Citizen of the Year, Mark Giesen, or otherwise known by his radio name, ''Mark Lawrence.'' The Sunbury Rotary Club is an organization within my district that reaches out locally and internationally to better the lives of others through an array of service projects. Mr. Giesen has acted both within the club and the medium of broadcast journalism to proudly serve his community.

Often referred to as ''The Voice of the Valley,'' Mr. Giesen serves as the Program Director at Newsradio 1070 WKOK, and through his position, helps many constituents throughout my district promote events and fundraisers.

His decorated professional experience includes previous roles at WHLM AM/FM in Bloomsburg, and as the News Director at WKOK/WQKX in Sunbury. Mr. Giesen has also worked at Clear Channel in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Giesen's passion for broadcasting began at a young age. As a child, he used to spin the dials on an old radio at night in an effort to reach as many stations as possible. Later on, Mr. Giesen became a fellow at WKOK/AM/FM in Sunbury, and would ride his bike to the studio in the Fort Augusta Museum to continually immerse himself in the world of broadcast journalism.

Mr. Speaker, for his committed service to the Sunbury Rotary Club, to his role as the Program Director at Newsradio 1070 WKOK, and to the constituents of my district, I commend Mr. Giesen and congratulate him on being named the Sunbury Rotary Club's Sunbury Citizen of the year.

THE FLYING TIGERS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on March 28, China will open the doors to a new museum in Chongqing. The museum will be dedicated to a group of American fighter pilots and heroes. The group was originally called the American Volunteer Group, though they are now famously referred to as the Flying Tigers.

Known for the shark face art on the nose of their planes, the Flying Tigers were a group of volunteers that fought alongside the Chinese in their defense against the Japanese at the beginning of World War II. The group was formed by Claire Chennault, a retired U.S. Army Air Corps Lieutenant General from Commerce, Texas, with permission from President Roosevelt himself. The Flying Tigers were comprised of over 100 pilots who hailed from the United States Army Air Corps, the Navy, and the Marine Corps.

Before the creation of the Flying Tigers, Chennault was in China working as an aviation advisor to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and as the director of a Chinese Air Force flight school in Kunming. In 1941, Chiang Kai-Shek sent Chennault to Washington to obtain a war-time loan and some fighter planes, but Chennault came back with much more than that.

With directions from the President and in accordance with the Generalissimo, Chennault headed out to recruit pilots to volunteer with him in China. Since the United States was not yet at war, this all had to be done discreetly.

These brave men were secretly discharged from their respective units and sent to Burma for training. Within four months, the Flying Tigers were dropped into the battlefield and instantly made a name for themselves.

One of the most famous Tigers was David Lee Hill, known by his comrades as ''Tex,'' due to his South Texas heritage. He's remembered as a hero, both in China and back home. He joined the Flying Tigers in 1941, and was credited with destroying over ten Japanese fighter planes in just his first battle in January of 1942. A couple of months after, Tex was officially named squadron leader, where he began planning for his new position and upcoming missions.

On May 7th, 1942, the Japanese began building a bridge across the Salween River that would allow them to easily move troops and supplies into China. However, much to the chagrin of the Japanese, Chennault and Tex learned of their plan. Tex led a flight to the river with the intention of blocking Japanese advancement, and the plan proved successful. According to Chennault, this was one of the most critical missions the Flying Tigers would go on to accomplish.

In July of 1942, after many successful combat missions, the Flying Tigers were disbanded. Though they're remembered for their successes and heroic air battles, their success came with a price. Lacking resources that typical U.S. air corps had, such as doctors, nurses, fresh food, and maintenance personnel, the Flying Tigers were constantly facing setbacks. Wounds were rarely properly treated and the threat of disease was constant. Sixteen Flying Tigers gave their lives in 1941 and 1942, though not before taking out nearly 300 Japanese aircrafts.

After the deactivation, Tex, and five other former Flying Tigers, officially rejoined the United States Army Air Force. On Thanksgiving of 1943, Tex led troops into Formosa where they were heavily outnumbered by the Japanese. Against all odds, his squadron returned home unscathed, despite having downed over 40 Japanese planes.

Tex left active duty in 1946, but joined the Air Force Reserves shortly after, where he would serve until his retirement in 1968 as a brigadier general. His career will go down as one of the most impressive in United States military history. He's been inducted into both the National and Texas Aviation Hall of Fames, and has received numerous awards from both the United States and China.

Tex and his fellow Flying Tigers, such as Claire Chennault, will go down in history as one of the most selfless and heroic service groups in United States military history. They went to war when they didn't have to, to defend a country to which they held no allegiance. The selfless acts of the Flying Tigers will forever be remembered, and their duty, honor, and character should help guide Americans for years to come.

It's no surprise that many of those feisty, tenacious volunteers were from Texas. They would have made the defenders of the Alamo proud.

And that's just the way it is.

IN HONOR OF CHARLES ''CHUCKIE'' WHEELER OF THE BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Charles ''Chuckie'' Wheeler, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Boston Police Department and his hometown of South Boston, MA, and to commend him for over twenty-nine years of dedicated service to his community through his time at the department.

The son of Gerard and Anna Wheeler, Chuckie was born on October 1, 1955 in South Boston and lived on Carmody Court in the Old Colony Housing Projects for most of his growing years. He lived and raised his family all over Southie, from M Street to Preble Street, before moving to Braintree, MA where he currently resides.

Mr. Speaker, Chuckie Wheeler attended South Boston High School where he was a multi-sport all-star athlete and where he met his future wife, Charlene McGinn in the storybook football player meets cheerleader fashion. After graduation, he attended Saint Anselm College and Northeastern University as well as played for the South Boston Chippewas Football Club.

Throughout his career, Chuckie always worked to support his community. Chuck was employed by the Boston Housing Authority and the Boston Public Schools Police Department, prior to joining the Boston Police Department in 1986 where he remained until his retirement this year.

During his time with the Boston Police Department, Chuckie provided distinguished service at both the community level as well as at the Department's Headquarters. Chuckie patrolled the streets of South Boston through District C–6 for the early part of his career, always providing guidance and mentorship to the neighborhood youth. In the latter half of his career, Chuck became one of the cornerstones and first members of a newly-created Crime Scene Response Unit, where he remained until his retirement. During his time with the Crime Scene Unit, Chuckie held fast to his mentorship genes and was an integral part of bringing the Unit to the nationally-recognized success it is today. Chuckie's dedication to the Department and the Crime Scene Response Unit was only outshined by his commitment to his family and community, where Chuckie could regularly be found coaching the South Boston and Braintree youth in football, t-ball, baseball and softball.

Mr. Speaker, Chuckie Wheeler is known for his generous spirit and kind heart. He has had the good fortune to be married to Charlene for thirty-five years. Chuckie and Charlene are proud parents of three children and three grandchildren with a fourth on the way!

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with Charles ''Chuckie'' Wheeler's family, friends, and contemporaries to thank him for his remarkable service to the Boston Police Department and his community.

AUSTIN GUT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Austin Gut for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Austin Gut is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Austin Gut is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Austin Gut for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING CHARLES ALEXANDER VELAZQUEZ

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charles Alexander Velazquez. Alex is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 43, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alex has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alex has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alex has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alex installed a 20 foot flagpole for the St. Joseph Youth Soccer Association in St. Joseph, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Charles Alexander Velazquez for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN WAYNE HOSS, SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Wayne Hoss who is retiring as a Captain in the San Mateo Police Department after 28 years of distinguished service. The San Mateo Police Department relied heavily upon the talents of Captain Hoss over his decades of service, as indicated by the extraordinary range of responsibilities that he held while with the department.

Wayne Hoss worked in every major aspect of department operations, always giving outstanding service. He was initially assigned to patrol and then to Investigations. He kept his investigations skills well-honed throughout his career and later used these skills repeatedly during the times my district office and I relied upon Captain Hoss to respond to security concerns. In addition to working in Investigations, Wayne Hoss also worked in Field Operations, Special Operations, and the Street Crimes Suppression Team. Seeing his talent as an officer, the department assigned Wayne Hoss as a training officer. Noticing that he could manage a computer and other new technology better than many in the department, probably including many Chiefs and more senior personnel, Wayne Hoss was given oversight of technology-related projects

He conducted neighborhood traffic patrols and worked in the K–9 unit. Narcotics, SWAT, major crimes and internal affairs were also entrusted to Captain Hoss as he rose through the ranks. He also worked on the most serious crimes impacting the community including robbery, homicide and sexual assault. As you can see from this unusually broad list, there were very few responsibilities that he did not have during his 28 years of service to the people of San Mateo. I am sure that he has many stories of difficult situations and also wonderful outcomes from the cases that he handled and the people he touched over these years.

My staff and I found Captain Hoss to be highly responsive. He would anticipate our concerns, raise our awareness about security, and inform us about other activities in the community that we needed to know about in order to do our jobs better. His department noted in its letter to us that he worked hard to build trust with the community. We can say from our own experience that Captain Hoss was exceptional in the thoroughness of his communications and the support that he offered.

San Mateo is a diverse city with a high quality of life. Its success is due in part to the dedication of the men and women of the San Mateo Police Department who face big-city policing challenges but also work in a city with a tight-knit sense of community. As spokesperson for the police department, leader and mentor, Wayne Hoss helped to create this quality of life and the tight relationship that the department has with populations originating from around the globe. I am sure that many of the skills that he demonstrated in San Mateo originated with his service in our nation's armed forces as a military police officer. MP's have to cope with many unusual situations and sometimes extremely dangerous operating conditions. I want to offer my appreciation to this veteran who turned his military experience into service to his neighbors and friends in civilian life.

In closing, I want to salute Captain Hoss upon the occasion of his retirement from the police department and the city that he served. He was a talented carpenter on a team that is adept at getting a tough job done right the first time. Retirement for a professional with enormous talent is merely a stepping stone to the next adventure. We thank Captain Hoss for his time in service to us all and wish him all the best in these next adventurous years.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD AND ERROR PREVENTION ACT

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, for nearly 80 years, Social Security has been the bedrock of economic security for American families. Generations of Americans have contributed to Social Security with every paycheck, earning birth-to-death protection for themselves and their families. As a result of their contributions—$16.1 trillion over Social Security's lifetime—Social Security currently has a $2.8 trillion surplus.

Social Security benefits are modest—about $15,000 a year for an average senior and even less for a disabled worker—but for most recipients, their Social Security paycheck is more than half their monthly income.

As a representative of those Americans and the Ranking Democrat on the Social Security Subcommittee, I believe we have no more important responsibility than to make sure that Americans receive their earned Social Security benefits on time and in full. That means protecting Social Security beneficiaries from criminals and fraudsters who try to scam them out of their benefits, and it also means protecting Social Security's trust funds against fraud and errors so the money is available to pay earned benefits. And it means doing so in a way that does not delay needed benefits for honest, hard-working Americans.

On occasion Social Security will provide a recipient more than they are entitled to. That overpayment rate is only a fraction of one percent (0.22%). Most of these overpayments are due to errors, but a small part is due to fraud. Social Security employees believe—and I agree with them—that we could do more to safeguard Social Security.

Recently the Social Security Administration uncovered fraud conspiracies where Social Security contributions made by honest Americans were stolen to pay benefits to people who didn't earn them. In one of the conspiracies, the ringleaders even instructed people to pretend they were disabled as a result of the tragic events of September 11. Social Security's fraud investigators have also uncovered rings of criminals who electronically divert Americans' Social Security checks into their own bank accounts.

The good news is, when you invest in training highly qualified employees to protect Social Security, it pays off. Social Security's front-line employees uncovered those recent cases of fraud. With the help of Social Security's trained investigators, the ringleaders have been charged with felonies, the beneficiaries have been made whole, and Social Security has begun the process of recovering the money stolen from the trust fund.

But the bad news is that these conspiracies show that Social Security is a tempting target for those willing to break the law. Recent Republican budget cuts have made it harder for Social Security to develop and use effective tools to fight them.

That's why, over a year ago, my colleagues and I decided Congress needed to do its part to protect Social Security. We introduced the Social Security Fraud and Error Prevention Act. Our bill would have given Social Security new tools to find fraud and errors, recoup money that should be in the trust funds, and thrown the book at people who steal from Social Security.

Unfortunately, the Republican leadership in Congress failed to act on our proposal and continued to shortchange Social Security's budget. This lack of leadership has had consequences for Americans.

For example, Republican budget cuts mean Social Security has fewer fraud cops on the beat than it had five years ago. Our bill would guarantee Social Security's fraud-fighting budget, expand SSA's special fraud-busting investigative units to cover all 50 states, and increase prosecutions of people who steal from Social Security.

Social Security has lost more than 5,000 front-line workers to budget cuts. And Republicans in Congress blocked hundreds of millions of dollars that the Budget Control Act authorized for SSA's most cost-effective methods of preventing waste, fraud and abuse.

Today, we are reintroducing the Social Security Fraud and Error Prevention Act, which would provide SSA with guaranteed funding for its most effective strategies to prevent fraud and errors. The bill will also provide additional resources to recoup benefits that shouldn't have been paid, along with penalties, if the payments were the result of fraud.

Our measure would demand something in exchange for the guaranteed money: complete transparency and accountability. Social Security could only use the dedicated funds for the most important and effective strategies. SSA would have to report annually to Congress how much was spent and what savings their efforts generated for Social Security's trust funds. And the new funds would only be available for additional fraud and error fighting—not to replace what SSA is already spending out of its regular budget.

Our bill isn't the complete answer to protecting Social Security's trust fund. As we consulted Social Security employees, managers, experts, and beneficiary advocates, they all told us the same thing: the best defense against fraud and errors is a well-staffed, well-trained SSA. And for that to happen, Republicans in Congress have to agree to fund SSA's overall budget.

But providing guaranteed funding to fight fraud will at least spare SSA from having to choose between preventing fraud and processing applications so that Americans receive the benefits they earned on time and in full.

I hope we can work together in a bipartisan way to enact this bill and protect Social Security.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF SCOTT JOHNSON TO THE TENTH DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to a dedicated staffer in the office of the Tenth Congressional District of Florida. Scott Johnson will soon be moving on to new opportunities at the House Committee on the Judiciary.

Scott has done a wonderful job serving the people of Florida's Tenth District since he joined my staff in October 2013. As the face of my DC front office, he has welcomed visitors to my office and to the People's House, and demonstrated the responsiveness to the needs and concerns of the people of Florida's Tenth District that this institution was formulated to reflect. Scott is enthusiastic, hard-working, and dedicated to service. He has been a valuable asset to the people of Florida.

While I am sad to see Scott leave, I am grateful for his service. He will be truly missed in the office. I wish him success and fulfillment in his new position, knowing that his character and talents will assure him both, in this and any new adventure he chooses.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 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.

MIRIAM GALVAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Miriam Galvan for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Miriam Galvan is a 12th grader at Wheat Ridge High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Miriam Galvan is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Miriam Galvan for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING SPENCER COLE GOULDSMITH

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Spencer Cole Gouldsmith. Spencer is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 264, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Spencer has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Spencer has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Spencer has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Spencer Cole Gouldsmith for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING DR. KENNETH DOBBINS

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and thank Dr. Kenneth Dobbins for his significant contributions to Missouri's higher education system over the past two decades. After a distinguished fifteen year tenure, Dr. Dobbins has announced his plans to retire from his position as the president of Southeast Missouri State University at the end of this year's spring semester. His leadership will be difficult to replace and will undoubtedly be missed.

During his tenure as president of Southeast Missouri State University, the university and its programs were nationally recognized by prestigious publications such as U.S. News and the Princeton Review. SMSU increased access to higher education for many Missourians, and enrollment increased steadily each year under Dr. Dobbins' leadership. In 1994, only about 7,900 students attended SMSU. But, as a result of his continued guidance, enrollment for the fall semester of 2014 has increased to 12,087 students.

This gradual increase in enrollment is attributed to Dr. Dobbins' goal of making Southeast Missouri State University's enrollment representative of diversity of the state of Missouri. Moreover, throughout Dr. Dobbins' tenure access to higher education increased dramatically with record enrollments in the SMSU's 25-county service region as a result of regional campuses in Sikeston and Kennett serving place-bound students in and near those rural communities.

Dr. Dobbins also served a two-year term as president of the Missouri Council on Public Higher Education, which is the organization for presidents and chancellors of Missouri's public colleges and universities. In addition, in 2007 he was selected to serve a three-year term on the American Association of State Colleges and Universities Board of Directors, an organization which represents over 420 U.S. public college and university presidents, which equates to 56 percent of the enrollment at all public four-year institutions.

I am extremely proud of all that Dr. Dobbins has done for Missouri's higher education system. It is my honor to recognize him before the U.S. House of Representatives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for roll call votes # 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, and 118 because I was attending the funeral of community leader and former United Auto Workers vice president General Holiefield in Detroit. Had I been present, I would have voted AYE on roll call votes # 113, 114, 115, and 118 and NAY on roll call #116 and #117.

IN HONOR OF CHARLENE WHEELER OF SOUTH BOSTON AND BRAINTREE, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Charlene Wheeler, in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and to commend her for 32 years of dedicated service to the MBTA and the South Boston community where Charlene was raised.

The daughter of Robert and Mary McGinn, natives of South Boston, MA, Charlene was born on May 5th, 1955 in South Boston and lived all over the neighborhood, from D Street to Middle Street to Dorchester St. until she moved to Braintree, MA with her family in 1991. Charlene attended the John Boyle O'Reilly School, Cardinal Cushing and South Boston High School, graduating in 1973.

Prior to joining the MBTA, Charlene worked a number of jobs in her South Boston community including as a counselor with Jobs for Youth. Additionally, Charlene volunteered her time by teaching Catholic education at St. Brigid's School where her children attended.

In her time with the MBTA, Charlene held a number of positions, starting as Track Walker and progressing to her final position as Train Starter for the Red Line. At times, Charlene was one of the first females to hold positions of authority at the ''T'' and always did so with the mindset of professionalism and equality. She took pride in each position she held at the MBTA and made endless contributions to the Authority.

Mr. Speaker, Charlene is known for her caring heart, outgoing personality, and her dedication to family, friends and her work. Charlene has had the good fortune to be married to her high school sweetheart, Chuckie Wheeler for 35 years. They are the proud parents of three children and three grandchildren, with a fourth on the way.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with Charlene Wheeler's family, friends, and contemporaries to thank her for 32 years of remarkable service to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and the communities of South Boston and Braintree in which she lived and worked.

AYLA SCHUETZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Ayla Schuetz for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Ayla Schuetz is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Ayla Schuetz is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Ayla Schuetz for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

INTRODUCTION OF FLEXIBILITY FOR WORKING FAMILIES ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, across all sectors and industries, flexible work arrangements are a key to meeting the 21st century's diverse workforce needs. Such voluntary arrangements have been shown to boost employee satisfaction and their physical and mental health as well as improve businesses bottom line by helping to retain key talent, reduce absenteeism, and enhance employee productivity.

Flexible workplace policies are a win-win for businesses and workers. To help promote these policies, I am introducing the Flexibility for Working Families Act. This legislation guarantees employees the right to request flexible work arrangements and provides employers with flexibility by encouraging them to review these requests, propose changes, and even deny them if they are not in the best interest of the business. Such voluntary arrangements between employees and employers include changing the time, amount, and/or place that work is conducted.

It is time for our country's workplace policies to reflect the reality of a 21st century economy—where both parents are working and overtime is expected. I urge my colleagues to support the Flexibility for Working Families Act, and I thank Sen. BOB CASEY for his work on this important legislation.

HONORING DANIEL GARNETT SHAY

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Daniel Garnett Shay. Daniel is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 264, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Daniel has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Daniel has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Daniel has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Daniel Garnett Shay for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE LIFE AND BRAVERY OF JAMES A. CARTER

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of a very special constituent of mine, James A. Carter.

James Carter was born on January 28, 1921, in Hannibal, Missouri, and passed away on February 22, 2015.

On that infamous day in 1941, James was stationed at the Pearl Harbor military base in Hawaii as a machinist. As you already know, on December 7, 1941, the Japanese Imperial Navy launched a surprise attack on the U.S. Naval Fleet stationed in Pearl Harbor. This heinous act by the Japanese Empire struck a massive blow to our armed forces in the Pacific theater of operations, costing the lives of over 2,400 people.

None could have anticipated the events that occurred that day, but even as fiery death rained down upon servicemen and civilians alike, the brave men and women of Pearl Harbor rose to meet the occasion. On that day, James himself, caring nothing for his own life or safety, swam time and time again through the raging inferno of burning oil which blanketed the surface of the harbor, dragging many back to safety on the shore. James sought no recognition for his actions that day, and never spoke of his valiant actions upon returning to civilian life.

I raise my voice today to honor, in memorial, the life of a brave and humble man. I am deeply honored to recognize James Carter and his service to our nation. May his life be an example to us all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed roll call votes 113, 114, and 115. If present, I would have voted ''yea'' on roll call vote 113, ''yea'' on roll call vote 114, and ''yea'' on roll call vote 115.

ROBERT CHRYSAFIS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Robert Chrysafis for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Robert Chrysafis is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Robert Chrysafis is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and

perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Robert Chrysafis for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

CELEBRATING CARLOS VILLARREAL

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a noteworthy American: Carlos Villarreal. From April of 2007 until 2014, Mr. Villarreal served as City Manager of Laredo, Texas. In his own words, he worked diligently to ''shape the growth and prosperity of [his] community.''

Carlos Villarreal graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration. He began his career in public service with the City of Laredo, serving as the Director of Community Development. During his time in this role, he became the department's chief planner and director for the renewal of urban housing programs, working tirelessly to ensure affordable housing for low-income Laredoans. Mr. Villarreal then served as the Assistant City Manager for ten years and went on to become the Executive Administrator for Webb County, where he oversaw the administration and management of all county departments and worked with county officials to improve county services. For the past eight years, Mr. Villarreal has served as the City Manager of Laredo.

With his experience in government spanning over thirty-five years, Mr. Villarreal successfully procured two presidential permits for the Colombia Solidarity Bridge and World Trade Bridge, both of which allowed Laredo's port to become the country's number one land port for commercial trade. He has also maintained a valuable working relationship with the Mexican government at the local, state, and federal levels.

Mr. Villarreal has also served as Past President of LULAC Council #12. He is the recipient of various awards such as the Republic of Mexico-Jose Lopez Portillo Presidential Medal for Outstanding Service, the Sportsman of the Year by the Latin American International Sports Hall of Fame, and the Tejano Achievers Award for Community Service.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize Carlos Villarreal for his outstanding service to the City of Laredo and its people.

IN RECOGNITION OF LYDIA I. BEEBE

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Lydia I. Beebe, a leader in the Bay Area and role model for women in corporate America, who is retiring after a remarkable career at Chevron Corporation that spanned four decades. For the last 20 years, Lydia served as the Corporate Secretary and Chief Governance Officer. In addition, she served as the secretary of the board, the Executive Committee and the Board Nominating and Governance Committee.

Lydia's history with Chevron dates back to 1977 when she originally joined as a contract attorney. She then worked as a legislative representative in Washington, D.C. from 1981–1985, and a senior management and tax counsel in the tax department from 1985–1995.

Lydia's competent, calm and clear advice has earned her the trust and admiration of the Board of Directors senior management at Chevron. Her leadership style has also earned her my trust and admiration. I had the great privilege of working with Lydia Beebe on the Board of Directors of PBWC, the Professional Business Women of California, an organization I founded 26 years ago to give women a platform to connect and help each other grow and thrive. Lydia helped guide PBWC from 1998–2003, the last two years as chair of the board.

For Lydia, no problem is ever life-threatening and there is always a Plan B. Her contributions to PBWC were and remain invaluable to the organization and in 1996 she deservedly was awarded the ''Breakthrough Award.''

As you can surmise from Lydia's achievements in the corporate world, she is a trailblazer who simply ignored the glass ceiling and burst through it. Her impact reaches far beyond one company. She is a frequent speaker and panelist addressing corporate governance topics. She has also been very active with the Society of Corporate Secretaries and Governance Professionals.

Lydia Beebe is a native of Kansas and earned her bachelor's degree in journalism in 1974 and her Juris Doctor degree in 1977 from the University of Kansas. She moved to California and received her master's degree in taxation from Golden Gate University in 1980.

We in California are extraordinarily fortunate that she relocated from the Midwest. Her intelligence, resolve and philanthropy have benefited many organizations and countless individuals. Lydia serves on the National Association of Corporate Directors of Northern California, the San Francisco Symphony, and the advisory board of the Arthur and Toni Rembe Rock Center for Corporate Governance at Stanford. Lydia was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Presidio Trust in 2003 by President George W. Bush and served until 2008. In 1991, she was appointed by Governor Pete Wilson to the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission where she served for eight years, from 1995–1999 as chair.

As a Golden Gate University graduate, she served as board secretary and member of the executive committee and received the 2004 Alumna of the Year award. She was also a member of the San Francisco Municipal Fiscal Advisory Committee to the mayor for more than 10 years.

But Lydia, with her inexhaustible energy, didn't abandon her roots; she also serves on the governing boards of the Kansas University Endowment Association and the Kansas University Law Alumni. At the University of Delaware, the John L. Weinberg Center and Corporate Governance is lucky to have her on the advisory board.

In her retirement, she will undoubtedly enjoy more time with her husband Charles Doyle and their three children Bion, Jason and Louise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor an amazing woman whom Chevron named its first woman officer, whom the San Francisco Business Times named one of the most influential businesswomen in the Bay Area for eight consecutive years, and whom I feel humbled to count as a dear friend and irreplaceable adviser. Lydia Beebe is a role model for women and men everywhere. I am honored to congratulate her on her retirement from Chevron on the eve of the 26th PBWC conference.

RECOGNIZING LANCASTER HIGH SCHOOL, TEXAS'S 2015 CLASS 5A STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor the Lancaster High School Tigers for winning the State of Texas title in the class 5A State Basketball Championship on Saturday, March 14, 2015. On behalf of all the proud residents of the 30th Congressional District of Texas, I stand with great pride to salute the Tigers for their unmatched athleticism, dedication, perseverance and teamwork. This victory is historic. The 2015 State Championship Team is the 100th basketball team in Lancaster I.S.D.'s history, and they are the first team to ever bring home this title to the great City of Lancaster.

The Lancaster Tigers worked hard throughout the season in preparation for the challenge that awaited them in San Antonio, Texas. The Tigers entered the 2015 State Tournament on a remarkable 27 game winning streak. After a hard fought battle with the Clifton J. Ozen Panthers of Beaumont, Texas, the Tigers emerged victorious. The team was led by Senior Forward, Elijah Thomas, a Top 20 pick, who contributed seventeen points to the team's winning score of 59–47.

The talented young men who make up Lancaster's remarkable team have assembled a fine record ending the season with 33 wins and only 4 losses. Members of the team include: Junior Power Forward, Nate Morris; Senior Point Guard, Antwoin Portley; Junior Shooting Guard and Forward, JaColby Pemberton; and Junior Guard, Deon Barrett.

This accomplishment is a testament to the inspirational leadership of Head Coach, Ferrin Douglas and his Varsity Assistant coach, Mr. Joseph Mayberry. Coach Douglas has built an impressive basketball program at Lancaster High School during his 9 year tenure. ''Coach Doug,'' as he is affectionately called, provides guidance that his players describe as crucial in helping them realize their potential both on and off the court.

On behalf of the 30th District of Texas, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the accomplishments of the Lancaster High School

basketball team for their victory in the 2015 Texas Class 5A State Basketball Championship. We are proud of your accomplishment, and we share in the pride and excitement felt by the city of Lancaster, Texas, the Superintendant of Lancaster I.S.D., Mr. Michael McFarland, the Principal of Lancaster High School, Mr. Michael Showell and the entire school.

HONORING DEVIN McCOMBS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Devin McCombs. Devin is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Devin has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Devin has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Devin has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Devin McCombs for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

BIANCA MARTINEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Bianca Martinez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Bianca Martinez is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Bianca Martinez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Bianca Martinez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING LT. COLONEL GREG GADSON

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of America's finest, Lt. Colonel Greg Gadson who is in command of Ft. Belvoir in Virginia, a graduate of West Point in 1989. Greg was also a star linebacker on the United States Army football team. Greg, a twenty-year veteran, has received three bronze stars and a purple heart. While serving in Operation Iraq Freedom, he was almost killed as the commander of a surge unit by an IED explosion, losing both of his legs. He has since done nothing but climbed mountain after mountain. He is also well-known as an inspirational public speaker, and many give him credit for helping inspire the New York Giants to their Super Bowl XLVI season. He has also appeared in the movie "Battleship" and truly is an American hero and a man for all seasons. I submit this poem, penned in his honor by Albert Carey Caswell.

HOLD THAT LINE

Hold
That
Line
All in our lifetimes
Past what new goal lines will we so drive?
When, it all so seems our backs are up against the wall to find
All in these the moments of our lives
Coming off that line
All in hearts now carried deep
What promises to ourselves will we so keep?
To find the faith and courage to compete
To strive
Will we get up and fight?
When it all so lies on the line
And hold
That
Line
Or will we give in,
In these our darkest of all nights as they begin?
Or will we go deep?
All in our hearts of honor so to seek
Whether, on football fields of green
Or out upon most heroic battlefields of honor seen
You Lt. Colonel Gadson,
Have always gleamed
Will our hearts choose to stand and fight,
To compete?
All in the seeds we've sown so deep
All in our hearts to reap
Emanating from somewhere inside,
So down so very deep
Is the place Lt. Colonel,
Where all of your promises you would so keep
All in your strength in honor which speaks
To be the best as you would seek
All in your actions,
And deeds
Firing out across that line to death to beat
Tackling all of those obstacles in your way to compete
As so gallantly you sow heroism seeds
As why in the game of life you shine so brilliantly
As it's your faith Greg you were so to keep
Running from end to end,
As up ahead you would lead
To take control and command
To hold
That
Line
As there you'd stand
When this battle before you so lie
As across that goal line of life for victory you'd strive
All because of men like you Colonel who so courageously compete
We all may live in peace
Because, in the game of life
It's all about digging in,
And digging in deep
Through thick and thin,
How far we are all willing to go for victory to reach
To
Hold
That
Line
To walk through that valley of death,
With clenched fists to one day Heaven reach
For these are the things in life which speak
And who have we saved?
And who have we blessed?
And what have we taught to pass that test?
By all our actions, whom have we reached
By our examples to beseech
Will we stand up and go deep?
As have you Colonel,
As to such new heights you'd so reach
In this new battle you began,
And you so chose to fight and stand
While, all in the midst of hell
As your most courageous heart began to swell
And you had to start all over again
Without your once strong legs upon which you so ran
As you looked down as the red blood ran
As in that moment your new battle so began
Being from The Point,
Your heart gave you a command
To hold
That
Line
As once again it was first and goal
With your back to the wall
As you had to plug up all those holes,
And somehow find the strength to stand
To tackle all that misery at hand
And somehow hold
That
Line
As you had done before,
Time and time again
As somehow you got up and stood,
And started your whole life over as you would
Listening to your heart,
As you brought tears to all our eyes
Thanking your Father and your brothers for being alive
As a winner in that game of life you crossed that recovery goal line
As Greg you crushed it
As death you sacked it
Firing out to victory to find
And Colonel,
If I ever have a son
I pray to God,
He could lead a life like yours as won
Who when it was all on the line,
Did not thing think twice
To win that day, that fight
As a winner before us now stands here this night
Because it's on our legs we stand
But it's with our hearts we run to daylight
And we
Hold
That
Line
For Greg you are Army strong
And why such men as you and MacArthur to The Point so belong
Whose hearts of honor in history will live on
Hoo ah

Mr. Speaker, before I close, I ask everyone to continue to pray for our country and for our military men and women that protect it.

God bless the United States of America.

HONORING THE CAREER AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DUNKIRK FIRE CHIEF KEITH AHLSTROM

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career and accomplishments of heroic member of the Western New York community, Dunkirk Fire Chief Keith Ahlstrom, on the occasion of his retirement after a remarkable career.

Since joining the Fire Department in 1979, Ahlstrom has provided wonderful leadership, serving as chief for the last 8 years. His team of 25 paid firefighters and numerous volunteers work together to provide safety for the residents of Dunkirk. Ahlstrom follows his brother, who also recently retired from the fire service, but his 35 years of committed work will not be forgotten.

Along with his tenure as Fire Chief, Keith Ahlstrom also served as valuable member of the community, spending time as a high school baseball umpire and serving as the most senior Chautauqua County legislator. Ahlstrom looks forward to spending time with his children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to deeply thank Keith Ahlstrom for his dedicated years of service and sacrifice for his community. We wish him all of the greatest happiness in his future.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MAIME ERNA STRIEBER SHEPPERD

HON. K. MICHAEL CONAWAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Maime Erna Strieber Shepperd. Maime passed away in January, just weeks after celebrating her ninety-seventh birthday. Bright from a young age, Maime graduated high school as class valedictorian at the age of fifteen and enrolled in the University of Texas at Austin Journalism School. It was at the University of Texas where she met her husband of 51 years, the late John Ben Shepperd. They were married shortly after her graduation.

Maime and John raised four children together, living in both Austin and Odessa throughout their marriage. She was first-lady to John's political career, first as Texas Secretary of State and then as Attorney General. When the family moved to Odessa, Maime got involved with many cultural, philanthropic, and political organizations. She served on the board for the West Texas Rehabilitation Center and founded the Crystal Ball, an annual benefit event. She was also involved as a board member for the Midland-Odessa Symphony, and was tapped by the New York Metropolitan Opera to serve as their West Texas representative.

During Lyndon Johnson's campaign for president in 1964, Maime served as the Chairman of the Ladies for Lyndon West Texas committee. She also joined Lady Bird Johnson on the whistle-stop Lady Bird Special train as it toured eight southern states. Maime's legacy also extends to the University of Texas Permian Basin's library. As the Odessa chairman of the book drive which founded the library in the early 1970s, she helped obtain over 300,000 books to start the collection that students at the University of Texas Permian Basin still use to this day.

Maime's dedication to her many cultural and philanthropic pursuits was admirable, as was the stable and loving home she provided for her family. She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Alfred and Honey Shepperd, her daughter and son-in-law, Suzanne and Gary McIntosh, nine grandchildren, and twenty great-grandchildren. Please join me in remembering the extraordinary life of Maime Shepperd.

YURITZI MORA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Yuritzi Mora for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Yuritzi Mora is a 12th grader at Wheat Ridge High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Yuritzi Mora is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Yuritzi Mora for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

REMEMBERING A HEINOUS ATTACK AGAINST THE KURDISH PEOPLE

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pause and remember a heinous attack against the Kurdish people that occurred 27 years ago this week.

On March 16, 1988, Saddam Hussein's regime dropped chemical weapons on the city of Halabja, killing 5,000 innocent men, women, and children.

Thousands more suffered permanent injuries.

This crime against humanity was the worst part of a larger campaign of more than 40 gas attacks aimed at exterminating the Kurds.

The Kurdish people, however, have proudly persevered, rebuilt, and now provide stability and an ally in an often unstable region.

Today, while we look back on this solemn anniversary, it is important to offer our gratitude to the Kurdish people for their courage and sacrifice in the current fight to defeat our mutual enemy ISIL.

THANKS MR. BASEM MUALLEM FOR YOUR SERVICE TO CALTRANS DISTRICT 8

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bid farewell to Basem Muallem who will be retiring after 29 years with Caltrans at the end of March. A true man of the people, Muallem will always be remembered as an extraordinary leader who listened and understood the growing infrastructure needs of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. As District 8 Director, Muallem is currently responsible for the largest of the 12 statewide Caltrans districts geographically, with four interstates and 32 routes totaling over 7,000 lane miles within its boundaries. Muallem manages a staff of 1,280 and an operating budget of $181 million. He oversees all facets of design, construction, operation and maintenance of the state highway system in the greater Inland Empire region. Muallem works in partnership with both regional transportation and local resource agencies to provide a safe and reliable highway network for the traveling public. For as long as I have been in public office, our region continues to face massive growth. As more people, businesses and vehicles come into the area, the challenges of providing a highway system to meet the region's growing needs increase. Muallem has been a good friend to these needs in the various positions he has held within Caltrans. What's next for him you might ask? Muallem, who holds a Bachelors of Science degree in biology, and a Bachelors and Masters of Science degrees in Civil Engineering is headed to Parsons corporation, an engineering and construction company. I wish him the best of luck in his new endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. CARL DJERASSI

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the iconic Dr. Carl Djerassi who died at the age of 91 on January 30, 2015. In the weeks since his death, a great deal has been said about Dr. Djerassi.

Most of these comments focus on his key role in developing the contraceptive pill. Because Dr. Djerassi and two other scientists were able to synthesize norethindrone, a key ingredient of the pill was finally available for widespread use and commercialization. The human race owes Dr. Djerassi a great deal.

Because women were finally able to control their own fertility, they were able to spend time in school, obtain work and to fully join the economy. Millennia spent bearing children and being denied education and advancement due to the demands of raising children were now upended in those nations that embraced artificial contraception. The pill is often characterized as a great advancement for women but in truth all human beings were advanced as women were freed to increasingly contribute their talents and intellect fully to the great research and economic challenges of their eras.

For this reason alone, Carl Djerassi should be heralded as an advocate for human rights and economic development.

Dr. Djerassi came to the United States with his mother as a refugee from a Europe increasingly dominated by Nazi Germany. After writing to Eleanor Roosevelt about his impoverished state, but inquiring mind, she offered him a scholarship. It was a fateful offer for Carl Djerassi and for human beings globally. Dr. Djerassi graduated summa cum laude from Kenyon College before his 19th birthday and then earned his doctorate in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin. He subsequently worked for or founded several private companies, including early work for Syntex, the company that commercialized norethindrone into the pill. His research was also key to the synthesizing of antihistamines and cortisone.

After positions at a number of other universities, Dr. Djerassi moved to Stanford where he conducted research and taught for decades. He was the ultimate professor who, because of his extraordinarily high standards, did not suffer fools gladly. Stanford University indicated that Dr. Djerassi published more than 1,200 scientific papers, and made early and important contributions in many areas of chemistry, including the use of analytical tools of chemistry such as mass spectrometry, magnetic circular dichroism and optical rotary dispersion. Those he mentored remarked on his willingness to look after their careers despite an extraordinary schedule that at times committed him to travelling 100,000 miles per year. In 1973, Dr. Djerassi was awarded the National Medal of Science by President Nixon. Stanford noted that he was the only awardee to simultaneously be given that award by the President while also being on Nixon's enemies list.

In our region, Carl Djerassi was also known for his extraordinary love of art, poetry, and his books of ''science-in-fiction.'' According to those who knew him well, his short stories, novels and plays provided unusual detail about the lives and difficult choices of scientists who bear the burdens of historic discoveries.

Mr. Speaker, some individuals leave as their legacy an endowment or a building or fond memories of a life well lived. At least from my perspective, Carl Djerassi left us all something that is much more valuable than any of these gifts: He gave us options in life. Thanks to Carl Djerassi, we can choose to live as human beings have lived for tens of thousands of years or we can acknowledge that human beings may seek a different path—one of self-determination and thus personal responsibility to leave the world a better place than when we entered it. Carl Djerassi left the world a much better place than when he entered it, having explored the greatest secrets of chemistry and some of the most difficult moral dilemmas confronted by inquiring minds. He was truly a man for all ages, and we can only hope that his insights passed down through these past decades will endure and be improved upon for decades yet to come.

RECOGNIZING ROBERT LEE FINK FOR HIS SERVICE

HON. LEE M. ZELDIN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Robert Lee Fink for his 50 years of dedicated service to the field of Emergency Medical Services. Bob's EMS career began when he was just 12 years old, when he witnessed an 8 year old unconscious boy being pulled from a public swimming pool. The boy was placed upon the ground, but no one rendered aid to him. This was before CPR, but as a Sea Scout, Bob was taught the Holger-Nielson back pressure arm lift, which saved the boy's life.

This is what drove Bob to become a lifeguard, a career he officially began at 16 when he took his first CPR and first aid classes through the City of New York. A few years later, Bob was granted a waiver by the Mayor of New York City to become the first lay person to be a CPR instructor. After graduating college, Bob had a successful 20 year career promoting health and fitness as a Physical Education teacher in Bedford Stuyvesant. In 1977, Bob became an EMT and then in 1979, he became a Critical Care EMT. A few years later, in 1988, Bob was honored with the New York State Advanced Medical Technician of the year. This honor was bestowed upon him for saving the life of a 12 year old boy who was submerged in the waters of Lake Ronkonkoma.

Bob went on to become an EMT instructor in 1996, and since then, he has prepared thousands of students to become EMT's and Critical Care EMT's. At the age of 60, Bob returned to school yet again to become a Paramedic as one of the oldest students in his class at St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Center.

To this day, Bob remains dedicated to serving the public, continuing to volunteer and serve his community as a mentor and a Paramedic. Today, I thank and congratulate Bob for his 50 years of dedication and service.

CARLY BAUER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Carly Bauer for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Carly Bauer is a 12th grader at Ralston Valley High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Carly Bauer is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Carly Bauer for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MICHAEL GRAVES, FAIA

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michael Graves, FAIA, a prominent and respected architect, who passed away last Thursday March 12, 2015 at the age of 80 at his home in Princeton, NJ.

Mr. Graves was born in Indianapolis on July 9, 1934. Upon graduating from Broad Ripple High School in 1952, he went on to pursue a bachelor's degree in architecture at the University of Cincinnati. Enamored with design, Mr. Graves went on to obtain a masters degree in architecture from Harvard University, before teaching at Princeton University as the Robert Schirmer Professor of Architecture, Emeritus, a pursuit that would turn into a 40-year career.

While at Princeton, Mr. Graves was an inspiring professor who taught architectural design and theory to thousands of undergraduate and graduate architecture students, as well as extending his reach beyond Princeton through serving as guest lecturer at over 1,000 public conferences.

In 1964, Mr. Graves founded his own firm, now called Michael Graves Architecture & Design or MGA&D. in Princeton, NJ. Since its establishment, Mr. Graves has been tasked with designing everything from office buildings, resorts and retail stores, to hospitals, monuments and university buildings. Renowned across the country as one of the New York Five, a group that redefined modernism in architecture, Mr. Graves became among the most celebrated of the postmodernist architects in the 1980's.

Mr. Graves designed more than 350 buildings around the world. Among his most notable projects are the Netherlands Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in The Hague, the Walt Disney Co. corporate headquarters in Burbank, CA, the NCAA Hall of Champions, the Newark Museum, and an innovative design scaffolding for the Washington Monument Restoration here in our nation's capital. He and his firm have designed over 2,500 products for manufacturers and retailers. Mr. Graves received more than 300 awards and citations, including the National Medal of Arts presented by President Bill Clinton in 1999 for his exceptional achievements in architecture, design and education. In 2001, he was awarded the Gold Medal from the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the highest honor the AIA bestows on an individual whose body of work has had a lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture.

Mr. Graves received 14 honorary degrees from various universities, including Rutgers, NJIT, Emory University, the University of Virginia, and the University of Miami. In his most recent project, Mr. Graves established the Michael Graves School of Architecture at Kean University in New Jersey and Wenzou-Kean University in China, where his architectural legacy will continue for generations to come.

As a United States Congressman, it is my great honor to recognize and commemorate

the life of Michael Graves. I am proud to say that he was from my home state—truly his impact was felt in New Jersey and throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Mr. Graves' coworkers, family and friends, all those whose lives he has touched, and me, in recognizing Mr. Michael Graves.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF THE ''THE BORINQUENEERS''

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the brave individuals listed below for their service in the U.S. Army's 65th Infantry Regiment, an all-volunteer Puerto Rican unit known as ''the Borinqueneers.'' This exceptional group of veterans has made Central Florida their home. As their representative, it is my honor to recognize each one of them for their service to our nation.

Aida I. Rodriguez, Andre Vergara, Andres Medina, Angel L. Mendoza, Anibal Albertorio, Carlos Diaz-Husband, Carlos Guffain, Carlos Soya, Celio Freytes Melendez, David Flores Mendez, Despian Quilles, Diego Melendez, Edwin Aviles, Efrain Diaz, Enrique De Jesus.

Enrique Quiñones, Epifonio Agosto, Eriberto DeJesus, Esteban Alejandro, Felipe Ramos Gonzalez, Feliz Lopez, Ferdinand Lopez, Francisco Mendez Lugo, Fransisco Torregoza, German R. Colon, Gilberto Ramirez, Gisele Ayala-Granddaughter, Hector M. Perez, Jesus Asencio, Jose A. Feria.

Jose Alujo, Jose Angel Colon, José Ángel Ramírez, Jose Mercado Pacheco, Jose Semidey, Jose Troche, Juan B. Melendez Rodriguez, Juan Bautista, Juan Ramos Flores, Leonardo Justiniano, Leonardo Zeno, Luis F. Suarez, Luis Martinez, Luis Muñoz, Luis Ramirez.

Luis Sabater, Marcia Mojica, Moises Rivera, Narcisco Villot, Nelson Gonzalez, Nestali Franco Baez, Nicolas Ayala, Osvaldo Alvarado, Osvaldo Rivera, Pedro Martinez, Rafael Donis, Rafael Gonzalez, Rafael Lopez Machado, Rafael Martinez Negron.

Ramon Mendez, Raul Aldarondo Galdan, Raul E. Reyes Castaneira, Raymond Medina, Richard Acosta Guerreo, Ruben Aquino, Samuel Collazo, Santiago Villafañe, Victor M. Rosario, Victor Mesias, Victor Ortiz, Victor Roldan, Wilfredo Lopez.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to honor these members of the 65th Infantry Regiment for their exceptional service to our nation.

HONORING AUSTIN CONWAY

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Austin Conway. Austin is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Austin has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Austin has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Austin has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Austin Conway for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCTION OF SUPERMARKET TAX CREDIT FOR UNDERSERVED AREAS ACT

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Supermarket Tax Credit for Underserved Areas Act, which I introduced earlier today. If enacted, this bill would provide tax incentives for the establishment of supermarkets in urban and rural areas without access to fresh food.

It is hard to believe, but more than 23 million Americans, including many residents in my hometown of Memphis, Tennessee, live in communities that lack access to fresh food. I believe that is simply unacceptable in a nation as great as ours.

No American should have to live in a so-called, ''food desert.'' According to the Department of Agriculture, a ''food desert'' is a low income neighborhood that lacks grocery stores within a 1 mile proximity for urban residents and 10 miles for rural residents. Many families in these neighborhoods face transportation challenges and rely on corner convenience stores that often stock processed snack products (potato chips, soft drinks, and candy) rather than fresh meat and produce. Studies have shown that access to healthy food choices can help prevent many diet-related illnesses, including diabetes, obesity, hypertension, heart disease and digestive diseases.

That is why I introduced Supermarket Tax Credit for Underserved Areas Act. This legislation seeks to reduce food deserts, create jobs and boost local economies by increasing the rehabilitation tax credit for supermarkets that open stores in food desert communities. The bill would also increase the work employment tax credit for supermarkets that hire disadvantaged youth, community residents, veterans and ex-felons. Finally, Supermarket Tax Credit for Underserved Areas Act would provide a tax credit for supermarkets that purchase their fresh fruits and vegetables from local growers.

I urge my colleagues to support this much needed legislation.

CRUZ GARCIA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Cruz Garcia for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Cruz Garcia is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Cruz Garcia is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Cruz Garcia for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 24

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Middle East policy.

SH–216

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine waters of the United States, focusing on stakeholder perspectives on the impacts of the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rule.

SD–106

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the regulatory regime for regional banks.

SD–538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security

To hold hearings to examine surface transportation reauthorization, focusing on performance, not prescription.

SR–253

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine management reforms to improve forest health

and socioeconomic opportunities on the nation's forest system.
SD–366

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine continuing America's leadership, focusing on advancing research and development for patients.
SD–430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine securing the border, focusing on assessing the impact of transnational crime.
SD–342

Committee on the Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Sally Quillian Yates, of Georgia, to be Deputy Attorney General, Department of Justice.
SD–226

10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Judiciary.
SD–138

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Securities, Insurance, and Investment
To hold hearings to examine capital formation and reducing small business burdens.
SD–538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security
To hold hearings to examine unmanned aircraft systems, focusing on key considerations regarding safety, innovation, economic impact, and privacy.
SR–253

Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the Veterans Choice Act, focusing on exploring the distance criteria.
SR–418

MARCH 25

9 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Defense Health Program.
SD–192

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on SeaPower
To hold hearings to examine Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

2 p.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine securing the border, focusing on understanding and addressing the root causes of Central American migration to the United States.
SD–342

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Paul A. Folmsbee, of Oklahoma, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mali, Mary Catherine Phee, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan, and Cassandra Q. Butts, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, all of the Department of State.
SD–419

Special Committee on Aging
To hold hearings to examine the fight against Alzheimer's disease, focusing on a treatment by 2025.
SD–106

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine the current state of readiness of U.S. forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–232A

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

MARCH 26

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. Central Command, U.S. Africa Command and U.S. Special Operations Command programs and budget in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC–217 following the open session.
SD–G50

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the Administration's Quadrennial Energy Review.
SD–366

10 a.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine securing the border, focusing on defining the current population living in the shadows and addressing future flows.
SD–342

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Airland
To hold hearings to examine Army modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR–222

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1591–S1635.

Measures Introduced: Twenty-eight bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 768–795, S.J. Res. 10–11, and S. Res. 103–104. **Pages S1628–29**

Measures Reported:

S. 792, to expand sanctions imposed with respect to Iran and to impose additional sanctions with respect to Iran. **Page S1628**

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 S1596–S1625**

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 S1596–S1625**

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 S1596–S1625**

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 S1596–S1625**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

The motion to proceed to the motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on March 17, 2015, was agreed to. **Page S1614**

The motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on March 17, 2015, was agreed to. **Page S1614**

By 57 yeas to 41 nays (Vote No. 74), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, Senate upon reconsideration rejected the motion to close further debate on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill. **Page S1614**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 11 a.m., on Thursday, March 19, 2015, with the time until the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill at 12 noon equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees. **Pages S1634–35**

Messages from the House: **Page S1626**

Measures Referred: **Page S1626**

Measures Read the First Time: **Pages S1626, S1634**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1626–28**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1629–30**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1630–33**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S1633–34**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1634**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S1634**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—74) **Page S1614**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 5:24 p.m., until 11 a.m. on Thursday, March 19, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on pages S1634–35.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

APPROPRIATIONS: FOREST SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Forest Service, after receiving testimony from Tom Tidwell, Chief, and Tony Dixon, Director, Strategic Planning, Budget and Accountability, both of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.

APPROPRIATIONS: MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense concluded a hearing to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the Missile Defense Agency, after receiving testimony from Vice Admiral J.D. Syring, USN, Director, Missile Defense Agency, Department of Defense.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on SeaPower concluded a hearing to examine Navy shipbuilding programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, after receiving testimony from Sean J. Stackley, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, Vice Admiral William H. Hilarides, USN, Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command, and Vice Admiral Joseph P. Mulloy, USN, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Integration of Capabilities and Resources (N8), all of the Department of Defense.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing 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, after receiving testimony from John M. McHugh, Secretary of the Army, Deborah Lee James, Secretary of the Air Force, General Raymond T. Odierno, USA, Chief of Staff of the Army, and General Mark A. Welsh III, USAF, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, all of the Department of Defense.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Budget: Committee began consideration of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, but did not complete action thereon, and recessed subject to the call and will meet again on Thursday, March 19, 2015.

FCC OVERSIGHT

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, after receiving testimony from Tom Wheeler, Chairman, and Mignon L. Clyburn, Michael O'Rielly, Ajit Pai, and Jessica Rosenworcel, each a Commissioner, all of the Federal Communications Commission.

TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 697, to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to reauthorize and modernize that Act, after receiving testimony from Senator Udall; James Jones, Assistant Administrator, Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, Environmental Protection Agency; Brian Frosh, Maryland Attorney General, Baltimore; Richard A. Denison, Environmental Defense Fund, Lynn R. Goldman, George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health, and Kenneth Cook, Environmental Working Group, all of Washington, D.C.; Edward R.B. McCabe, March of Dimes Foundation, White Plains, New York; and Bonnie Lautenberg, New York, New York.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

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, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

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.

NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine S. 710, to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, after receiving testimony from Karen R. Diver, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Cloquet, Minnesota; Gary Cooper, Cherokee Nation Housing Authority, Washington, D.C., on behalf of the National American Indian Housing Council; and Russell Sossamon, The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma Housing Authority, Hugo.

PATENT LITIGATION PRACTICES

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the impact of patent litigation practices on the American economy, including H.R. 9, to amend title 35, United States Code, and the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to make improvements and technical corrections, after receiving testimony from Brad Powers, Kinze Manufacturing, Inc.,

Williamsburg, Iowa; Hans Sauer, Biotechnology Industry Association, Washington, D.C.; Steven E. Anderson, Culver Franchising System, Inc., Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin; Michael R. Crum, Iowa State University, Ames; and Krish Gupta, EMC Corporation, Hopkington, Massachusetts.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 42 public bills, H.R. 1415–1456; and 6 resolutions, H. Res. 154–159, were introduced. **Pages H1767–70**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H1771**

Reports Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H.R. 1021, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the integrity of the Medicare program, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–46, Part 1). **Page H1767**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Hardy to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1725**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:41 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Pages H1729–30**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Reverend Dr. Mark Gooden, Munsey Memorial United Methodist Church, Johnson City, Tennessee. **Page H1730**

Committee Elections: The House agreed to H. Res. 155, electing Members to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives. **Page H1730**

Secret Science Reform Act of 2015: The House passed 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, by a recorded vote of 241 ayes to 175 noes, Roll No. 125. **Pages H1733–48**

Rejected the Takai 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 181 ayes to 239 noes, Roll No. 124. **Pages H1746–48**

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 114–11 shall be considered as read. **Page H1742**

Rejected:

Edwards amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–37) that authorizes $250 million for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2019, by a recorded vote of 164 ayes to 254 noes, Roll No. 122; and **Pages H1742–43, H1744–45**

Kennedy amendment (No. 2 printed in part B of H. Rept. 114–37) that allows the EPA to use all peer-reviewed scientific publications, by a recorded vote of 184 ayes to 231 noes, Roll No. 123. **Pages H1743–44, H1745–46**

H. Res. 138, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1029) and (H.R. 1030) was agreed to yesterday, March 17th.

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, March 19. **Page H1748**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1745, H1745–46, H1747–48, and H1748. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

Committee Meetings

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADE TO U.S. AGRICULTURE

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing on the importance of trade to U.S. agriculture. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES PUBLIC AND OUTSIDE WITNESS DAY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies held a hearing for public and outside witnesses. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held an oversight hearing on closing the achievement gap in higher education. Testimony was heard from Aaron Thompson, Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education; and public witnesses.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies held a hearing on Department of Agriculture Rural Development budget. Testimony was heard from Lisa Mensah, Under Secretary, Rural Development; Lillian Salerno, Administrator, Rural Business—Cooperative Service; Tony Hernandez, Administrator, Rural Housing Service; Jasper Schneider, Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service; and Michael Young, Budget Officer, Department of Agriculture.

APPROPRIATIONS—UNITED STATES PACIFIC COMMAND AND UNITED STATES FORCES KOREA

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Defense held a hearing on United States Pacific Command and United States Forces Korea budget. Testimony was heard from Admiral Samuel J. Locklear III, United States Navy, Commander, United States Pacific Command; and General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, Commander, United Nations Command, Commander, Republic of Korea, United States Combined Forces Command, Commander, United States Forces Korea. This hearing was closed.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development held a hearing on Department of Energy, Environmental Management budget. Testimony was heard from David Klaus, Deputy Under Secretary, Management and Performance, Department of Energy; and Mark Whitney, Acting Assistant Secretary, Environmental Management, Department of Energy.

APPROPRIATIONS—NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies held a hearing on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration budget. Testimony was heard from Kathryn Sullivan, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

APPROPRIATIONS—INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government held a hearing on Internal Revenue Service budget. Testimony was heard from John A. Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service.

APPROPRIATIONS—MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS RELATED AGENCIES

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies held a hearing on related agencies budget. Testimony was heard from Max Cleland, Secretary, American Battle Monuments Commission; Patrick K. Hallinan, Executive Director, Army National Military Cemeteries; Bruce E. Kasold, Chief Judge, United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; and Steven G. McManus, Chief Operating Officer, Armed Forces Retirement Home.

APPROPRIATIONS—DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs held a hearing on Department of Treasury International Programs budget. Testimony was heard from Jack Lew, Secretary, Department of the Treasury.

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

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a 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''. Testimony was heard from Ashton B. Carter, Secretary of Defense; and General Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

NAVAL COOPERATIVE STRATEGY

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces; and Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, held a joint hearing entitled ''Naval Cooperative Strategy''. Testimony was heard from Vice Admiral Charles D. Michel, USCG, Deputy Commandant for Operations; Major General Andrew W. O'Donnell Jr., USMC, Assistant Deputy Commandant, Combat Development and Integration, and Deputy Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command; and Rear Admiral Upper Half Kevin M. ''Kid'' Donegan, USN, Acting Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans, and Strategy (N3/N5).

SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES IN AN UNCERTAIN THREAT ENVIRONMENT: A REVIEW OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET REQUEST FOR U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities held a 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''. Testimony was heard from Michael D. Lumpkin, Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC); and General Joseph L. Votel, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on the Budget: Full Committee began a markup on the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

REVIEWING THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Reviewing the President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Proposal for the Department of Labor''. Testimony was heard from Thomas E. Perez, Secretary, Department of Labor.

DATA SECURITY AND BREACH NOTIFICATION ACT OF 2015

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade held a hearing on a discussion draft of the ''Data Security and Breach Notification Act of 2015''. Testimony was heard from Jessica Rich, Director, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission; Clete Johnson, Chief Counsel for Cybersecurity, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission; Sara Cable, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General; and public witnesses.

IMPROVING COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS REGULATION ACT OF 2015

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy began a hearing on the ''Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2015''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

PRESERVING CONSUMER CHOICE AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Preserving Consumer Choice and Financial Independence''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

IRAN AND HEZBOLLAH IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere; and Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, held a joint hearing entitled ''Iran and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. ELECTION SUPPORT IN AFRICA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Election Support in Africa''. Testimony was heard from Eric G. Postel, Assistant to the Administrator, Bureau for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development; and public witnesses.

DOES THE PRESIDENT'S FY 2016 BUDGET REQUEST ADDRESS THE CRISES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA?

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa held a hearing entitled ''Does the President's FY 2016 Budget Request Address the Crises in the Middle East and North Africa?''. Testimony was heard from Anne W. Patterson, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State; and Paige Alexander, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for the Middle East, U.S. Agency for International Development.

UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEM THREATS: EXPLORING SECURITY IMPLICATIONS AND MITIGATION TECHNOLOGIES

Committee on Homeland Security: Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency held a hearing entitled ''Unmanned Aerial System Threats: Exploring Security Implications and Mitigation Technologies''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a 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''. The following bill was ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 1148. The following bill was ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 1153.

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

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a 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''. Testimony was heard from Joseph Pizarchik, Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior.

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

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs held a 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''. Testimony was heard from the following Department of the Interior officials: Kevin K. Washburn, Assistant Secretary, Indian Affairs; Esther Kia'aina, Assistant Secretary, Insular Areas; and Vincent G. Logan, Special Trustee, Office of Special Trustee for American Indians; and Yvette Roubideaux, M.D., Senior Adviser to the Secretary on Native Americans and Alaska Natives, Department of Health and Human Services.

CYBERSECURITY: THE EVOLVING NATURE OF CYBER THREATS FACING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Information Technology held a hearing entitled ''Cybersecurity: The Evolving Nature of Cyber Threats Facing the Private Sector''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FEDERAL WORKFORCE TAX ACCOUNTABILITY

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing entitled ''Federal Workforce Tax Accountability''. Testimony was heard from Brad Huther, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development; E.J. Holland, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Health and Human Services; Seto Bagdoyan, Director, Audit Services, Forensic Audits and Investigative Service, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

TANGLED IN RED TAPE: NEW CHALLENGES FOR SMALL MANUFACTURERS

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Tangled in Red Tape: New Challenges for Small Manufacturers''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET: ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES FOR THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled ''The President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget: Administration Priorities for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency''. Testimony was heard from Ken Kopocis, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Water, Environmental Protection Agency; and Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Environmental Protection Agency.

BURDENS FAMILY BUSINESSES AND FARMS FACE PLANNING FOR AND PAYING THE ESTATE TAX

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures, held an organizational meeting for the 114th Congress and a hearing on the burdens family businesses and farms face planning for and paying the estate tax. The subcommittee successfully organized. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Joint Economic Committee: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Economic Report of the President 2015, after receiving testimony from Jason Furman, Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers.

VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Senate Committee concluded a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation from multiple veterans service organizations, after receiving testimony from Lonnie L.

Wangen, North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner, Fargo, on behalf of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs; Colonel Maxwell S. Colon, USA (Ret.), Jewish War Veterans, Encinitas, California; CMSGT (Ret.) Robert L. Frank, Air Force Sergeants Association, Springfield, Virginia; USAF Senior Master Sergeant (Ret.) Larry Hyland, The Retired Enlisted Association, Palm Bay, Florida; Thomas J. Snee, Fleet Reserve Association, Burke, Virginia; Colonel Peter J. Duffy, USA (Ret.), National Guard Association of the United States, Washington, D.C.; Charles Susino, Jr., American Ex-Prisoners of War, Metuchen, New Jersey; Jeanette Early, Gold Star Wives of America, Inc., Aurora, Colorado; and Ryan Kules, Wounded Warrior Project, Severna Park, Maryland.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission concluded a hearing to examine Northern Ireland, focusing on Stormont, collusion, and the Finucane inquiry, including other issues of accountability for past government collusion in paramilitary crimes, after receiving testimony from Anne Cadwallader, *Lethal Allies: British Collusion in Ireland*, Armagh, Northern Ireland; and Kieran McEvoy, Queen's University School of Law, and Geraldine Finucane, both of Belfast, Northern Ireland.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for the Veterans Benefits Administration, 10:30 a.m., SD–124.

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security, to hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2016 for the United States Secret Service, 2 p.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Transportation Command, and U.S. Cyber Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Subcommittee on Airland, to hold hearings to examine Air Force force structure and modernization in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2016 and the Future Years Defense Program, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the regulatory regime for regional banks, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on the Budget: business meeting to continue to mark up the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, 10:30 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security, to hold hearings to examine the evolving cyber insurance marketplace, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine U.S. crude oil export policy, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Finance: to hold hearings to examine the Affordable Care Act at five years, 9:30 a.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy, to hold hearings to examine the United States-Africa leaders summit seven months later, focusing on progress and setbacks, 9:30 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine Federal rulemaking challenges and areas of improvement within the existing regulatory process, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Judiciary: Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts, to hold hearings to examine reining in amnesty, focusing on *Texas v. United States* and its implications, 3:30 p.m., SD–226.

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: to hold hearings to examine patent reform, focusing on protecting innovation and entrepreneurship, 10 a.m., SR–428A.

Select Committee on Intelligence: closed business meeting to consider pending calendar business; to be immediately followed by a closed hearing to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 897, the ''Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2015'', 9:30 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, hearing on Bureau of Land Management budget, 9:30 a.m., B–308 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Inspector General oversight, 9:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing on Department of Agriculture Farm and Foreign Agricultural Service budget, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Defense, hearing on United States European Command budget, 10 a.m., H–140 Capitol. This hearing will be closed.

Subcommittee on Homeland Security, hearing on Transportation Security Administration budget, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing on Consumer Product Safety Commission budget, 11 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, hearing on Surface Transportation Programs budget, 10 a.m., 2358–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Missile Defense Hearing'', 9 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled ''Fiscal Year 2016 Ground Force Modernization and Rotorcraft Modernization Programs'', 10:30 a.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing on H.R. 906, to modify the efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters, 10 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, hearing entitled ''FCC Reauthorization: Oversight of the Commission'', 11 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the SEC's Division of Enforcement'', 9 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Negotiations with Iran: Blocking or Paving Tehran's Path to Nuclear Weapons?'', 8:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, hearing entitled ''Agents of Opportunity: Responding to the Threat of Chemical Terrorism'', 9:30 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Child Exploitation Restitution Following the *Paroline* v. *United States* Decision'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Federal Lands; and Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, joint hearing entitled ''Examining the Spending Priorities and Missions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in the President's FY 2016 Budget Proposal'', 9:30 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''A Review of the Department of Homeland Security's Policies and Procedures for the Apprehension, Detention, and Release of Non-Citizens Unlawfully Present in the United States—Part II'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce, hearing entitled ''Contracting and the Industrial Base III: Reverse Auctions, Verification and the SBA's Role in Rule Making'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing on H.R. 571, the ''Veterans Affairs Retaliation Prevention Act of 2015''; H.R. 593, the ''Aurora VA Hospital Financing and Construction Reform Act of 2015''; H.R. 1015, the ''Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2015''; H.R. 1016, the ''Biological Implant Tracking and Veteran Safety Act of 2015''; H.R. 1017, the ''Veterans Information Security Improvement Act''; H.R. 1128, the ''Department of Veterans Affairs Cyber Security Protection Act''; and H.R. 1129, the ''Veterans' Whistleblower and Patient Protection Act of 2015'', 8 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Growing Cyber Threat and Its Impact on American Business'', 9 a.m., HVC–210.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

11 a.m., Thursday, March 19

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of S. 178, Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. At 12 noon, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the committee-reported substitute amendment to the bill. If cloture is not invoked, Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the bill.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, March 19

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of S.J. Res. 8—Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the National Labor Relations Board relating to representation case procedures (Subject to a Rule) and H. Res. 132—Providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress (Subject to a Rule).

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