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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, our Protector, mountains shake in Your presence and islands skip for joy. We praise You because Your ways are just and true. Lord, You know our hearts and minds like an open book. Thank You for the security we have in You, for You alone remain our rock and refuge.

Lead our lawmakers on the road that You have chosen, providing them with strength for their journey. Keep them safe as You provide them with the patience to wait for Your harvest. Lord, help them in the making of our laws to execute justice for the oppressed and to set the captives free. Give us all the grace to love and pray, even for those who hurt and wrong us.

We pray in Your merciful 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.

SCHEDULE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Later this morning the Senate will move to go to conference with the House on the budget resolution. The vote on that motion

will occur before lunch. After about 10 hours of debate, which is stipulated in the statute, we expect a series of votes on motions to instruct conferees on the budget. Senators should expect those votes later this afternoon or this evening.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, just hours ago, 100 percent of Senate Democrats followed the lead of Republicans and Democrats in the House, including NANCY PELOSI and the pro-choice caucus, in voting to endorse the bipartisan principle that Federal funds leaving the government should be subject to bipartisan Hyde language. Given that Americans overwhelmingly support what Hyde does, it is no wonder this principle has been applied by both parties—both parties—to appropriations and authorizing legislation for as long as anyone could remember.

We hope the Democrats' statement of support for Hyde in last night's Medicare vote will finally clear the way for passage of antislavery legislation they have been filibustering over the very same Hyde principle. It was never a morally tenable position. Never. Considering what we saw just 12 hours ago, it is no longer politically tenable either. Democrats couldn't possibly justify voting for Hyde language in order to keep doctors—as they did just hours ago—but then look an abused victim in the eye and tell her she is not worth it. OK to vote for Hyde to help doctors, but then not OK when it comes to victims of sexual trafficking.

Human trafficking is a serious problem in our country. It is hard for a lot of people to believe, but it occurs in every single State. I recently saw a news report about a local nonprofit that is worried about trafficking at big events such as the Kentucky Derby. "They'll take a girl to one city for one to two weeks," an official with that

group said, "then they'll go to another city, and they just follow these circuits . . . it's really hard to get them out of it . . ."

Look, it is unconscionable for anyone to continue filibustering this human rights bill over a principle that has been a fixture—a fixture—in Federal law for decades, that was in the bill when Democrats endorsed it, cosponsored it, and voted unanimously to support it in committee, and that was endorsed again by Democrats just last night.

But just to ensure there are no possible excuses left to continue this filibuster, Senator CORNYN offered another compromise last night to eliminate any remaining pretext. His compromise ensures that, by supporting this bill, Senate Democrats would only be endorsing the same Hyde language that 100 percent of them just voted to support last night, less than 24 hours ago. Remember, this is essentially language endorsed by NANCY PELOSI and the pro-choice caucus.

It is actually the third compromise we have offered on the Senate floor to our friends across the aisle. First, we offered our colleagues a simple up-or-down vote last month to strike the language that they once were for before they decided to be against it. Then, before the recess, Senator CORNYN offered to make the monies in the fund subject to the appropriations process, something our Democratic colleagues had said was important to them.

So this is now the third compromise we have offered on the floor. It is time for our Democratic friends to show a little courage to finally bring their party's filibuster of antislavery legislation to an end. A large bipartisan majority of the Senate has already demonstrated its commitment to doing so, and all that is needed now are a couple more Democrats to join us. That is all that is needed now, a couple more Democrats willing to show the same level of compassion to enslaved victims

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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they offered to doctors—to doctors—just a few hours ago.

As an official with the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women put it: “Our Democratic colleagues should stop choosing a phantom problem . . .”—a phantom problem—“. . . over real victims.”

Because as the Los Angeles Times said:

The Hyde Amendment has been the law for many years. A fight over whether a fraction of the projected millions of dollars in aid to victims of trafficking and hunters of traffickers can be used on abortion services seems fruitless, and the bill should not be derailed by such a fight.

This has gone on long enough. It is time for Senators of conscience to stand up and end this filibuster now.

A BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, on another matter, before Easter, the Senate passed a balanced budget. The House of Representatives did as well. The next step in the process is for each Chamber to appoint Members to a conference committee that can work out any differences between those bills, and then send unified legislation back to Congress for a final vote. We are taking that next step today.

Some of our friends across the aisle seem eager to use this opportunity to rehash some of the same votes we took in passing the budget. The outcome of those votes won't be different, so I am not sure what the point would be, other than to slow down the process for its own sake. So I would urge them to reconsider and decide if that is really what they want to do.

But either way—either way—the new Congress is determined to keep working to finalize the budget. After years of a Senate that often refused to even consider a budget, this is a big change. And it is another example of the new Congress that is back to regular order and back to work.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION AND THE BUDGET

Mr. REID. The Republican leader talked about two issues: one, sexual trafficking, and, two, the budget. His statements regarding the two are illogical as anything can be. Illogical.

First of all, let's talk about sexual trafficking. Senators on this side of the aisle, with rare exception, are not wild about the Hyde amendment, but it has been the law of the land for some 30 years. And why is it the law of the land? Because it has been put in appropriations bills over these many years. But what my friend the Republican leader failed to mention is that if the Cornyn amendment or the Cornyn lan-

guage were adopted, it would change women's reproduction rights permanently. You see, the Hyde amendment has always applied to taxpayer-funded money. But what Senator CORNYN, the author of this bill and this amendment, wants to do is direct this to private money. They are two totally different things. Hyde has never, ever in the past applied to private money—nontaxpayer dollars. So that is why my friend's argument is totally illogical. Illogical. It has no basis in fact. We are not going to stand by to enlarge this so-called Hyde amendment to private money.

Now we have tried. We have tried. Ten different offers have been made to Senator CORNYN and Senator McCONNELL to work our way through this. There are many ways we can handle this. But they feel—my friend the Republican leader and the assistant Republican leader feel this is their opportunity to broaden Hyde. We are not going to allow that to happen. It would be wrong. We have made 10 separate offers of ways to get to yes, but Republicans appear unwilling to compromise about the Hyde language, and that is unfortunate.

To carry on the illogic of the Republican leader, every organization has a mission statement, a summary of their goals and values. Congress is no different. There are mission statements that are done every year and they are called a budget. We have our mission statement; the Republicans have theirs. The budget sets forth our core values as a party, a statement of our values that tells the American people what we really care about and whose side we are on. We are committed to a budget that puts the middle class first, a budget that supports hard-working families, creates jobs, and invests in our future. The Republicans, by contrast, are hell-bent on passing a budget that creates a war on the middle class and serves the interests of special interests and the superwealthy.

Let's take a look at what the Senate Republican budget does. Remember, this is their statement of core values, and their war on the average American from Reno to Las Vegas to Chicago to Louisville—it doesn't matter where you go—is an attack on the middle class. Why do I say that? It deprives more than 16 million Americans of health coverage. That is the first thing their budget does. It devastates Medicare. It makes Medicare something we would not recognize, and they do it, of course, at the expense of America's seniors. It cuts Medicaid and hurts millions of families who are not able to pay for their care.

Everyone thinks Medicaid is just for poor people. Some people don't think they have much value in our society and Medicaid is something that shouldn't get much of our attention. But a significant amount of Medicaid money goes to people who are in rest homes and convalescent centers. So the money they are whacking from Medicaid hurts not only the young but the

old. It guts nutrition assistance. It guts food that can go to people who are hungry. It undermines job training and employment services for millions of American families. It cuts billions in financial aid for college students.

The Republicans not only want to cut aid to families as it relates to education, but then the debts they have accumulated, which are larger than credit card debt—they don't want to cut them any relief whatsoever. We have tried that lots of times. Our budget reflects that; theirs doesn't.

While the middle class is decimated by Senate Republicans—and who benefits? Special interests and the superrich. They are protected more than ever. The Republicans refuse to close a single loophole to reduce this deficit.

A single tax loophole they will not touch. They will not end tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas. They will not close loopholes for the wealthy, including hedge fund managers. They will not take away wasteful and unneeded tax breaks for the very powerful oil and gas industry. They are attacking the middle class while protecting the super wealthy. That is wrong.

Now, the Republican budget is also dishonest. I heard the Republican leader come here and boast. He boasted about the balanced budget they have. That is absolutely not true. Their budget does not balance the budget. It is simply dishonest to say so. The Republican budget claims to add more money for defense, but it does not.

It is no wonder that the New York Times called the Republican budget “a trillion dollar con job.” “A trillion dollar con job” is the Republican budget. I agree with the New York Times. In the coming days, as we move forward toward a conference—now remember moving forward toward conference has become kind of a joke around here because we do not have conferences like we used to. That is too bad.

There will be no meeting of the conferees. There will be no debate in open session as to how the budget should be changed. The Republicans will get to conference. There will be meetings held by the Republicans. Democrats will not be invited. If they are invited, it is pro forma: Here is what we have decided to do. The conferences, as we used to do them around here, do not exist. It is a rare occasion when they do.

We will not be looking into our efforts to try to improve the budget. We are not looking to obstruct the process to force another all-night vote-arama. We could. Under the rules we could offer endless, endless motions to instruct: 5, 6, 50, 100, 200. We could do that. We are not going to do that. But we will be offering a few motions to make clear where we stand on important issues.

For example, there will be an amendment that men and women who do the same work should be paid the same money. If my daughter works here and

a man works here and they do the same job, they should be paid the same amount of money. We have tried to do that. The Republicans have filibustered this five times over the last few years.

We are going to offer an amendment to provide sick leave to help families get through tough times. We are going to offer an amendment to ensure that same sex spouses have equal access to Social Security and veterans' benefits. We are going to offer an amendment to relieve the crushing burden of costly student loans. No one has worked harder on this issue than the assistant Democratic leader. I heard him yesterday talk about this at a meeting we had—the crushing, crushing costly student loans. We are going to offer an amendment to address the economic and national security threats posed by climate change.

In the West, we are in the midst of a 15-year drought. This is the 15th year. Lake Powell, the largest manmade lake in America, could go dry very quickly. Hundreds of thousands of acre feet of water will not go into that lake this year because of what is happening up in Colorado.

So when we are done offering what we feel should be ways to improve this dishonest budget that the Republicans put forward, the American people will have no doubt which party stands with the middle class and which stands with the special interests and billionaires. Yes, we have set forth what we believe are our core values, and we believe our core values are what the American people need.

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, with the time equally divided, and with the Democrats controlling the first half.

The assistant Democratic leader.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DEATH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was 150 years ago today—150 years ago today—when who is called the last casualty of the Civil War died. He was a man who was born in the Presiding Officer's home State of Kentucky. He grew up for a part of his life in Indiana but spent his formative years in my State of Illinois.

He was a country lawyer, an unlikely Congressman who, because of a political deal, was given a chance to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. He served only 2 years. He brought his family here to Washington for that experience.

They lived just across the street, in a boarding house where the Library of Congress now sits. His family did not like Washington in those days in the 1840s and returned back to his wife's home in Kentucky.

He stayed out here and served in Congress and liked it. He wanted to serve for a longer period of time but was reminded that this was not part of the agreement—only 2 years. So he left Washington, went back to Springfield, IL, practiced law, but continued to aspire to higher office.

In 1858, he ran for the Senate against a man named Steven Douglas. They had historic debates across the State of Illinois. When the votes were finally counted, Douglas was the victor, and this man returned to the practice of law. Just 2 years later, though, he was elected President of the United States.

He came to Washington at one of the most dangerous times in our history. The Civil War had started, and there was a question as to whether the Union could survive, whether the United States of America would survive. This simple country lawyer from what was considered the frontier of America in those days led our Nation during the most dangerous moments in our history.

He watched as more Americans died in that Civil War than in any war that we have ever witnessed. He saw a nation bitterly divided. The war raged on for years. There were moments—bleak and dark moments—when it looked as if the North would fail and the division of the country would begin.

But eventually the North prevailed in a victory that really the American people had given so much to achieve. In April of 1865, this was a tumultuous period. I commend to all of my colleagues a book written by Jay Winik, a Senate staffer entitled “April 1865,” if you want to get a feel for what it was like in America that month.

Many things occurred. The second inaugural address of this President is one of the most beautiful, touching, and moving speeches ever given by a President, where he turned toward the enemy who had fought the North for so many years and basically extended an olive branch when many others would have done just the opposite. “With malice toward none” and with “charity for all,” he gave that speech right outside here—right outside the Senate Chamber on the porch.

Then, in celebration of the victory of the Union, he and his wife attended a play not far from here, at Ford's Theatre. It was there that an assassin took his life. So 150 years ago today, Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, was assassinated. We have learned a lot from his life, from his leadership, and we enjoy the blessings of liberty and the Union today because that President and the men and women who stood by him saved the Union.

I reflect on this because I come from what is known as Mr. Lincoln's home-

town of Springfield, IL. I am not an expert on Lincoln. I am just a fan, as so many people are, not only across the United States but around the world. I hope we can remember him just for a moment today and reflect on the need for all of us to extend an olive branch to our personal enemies and to our political enemies and try to find how to eliminate an enemy by making a friend, as Lincoln said.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I cannot believe that Loretta Lynch still sits on this Executive Calendar of the Senate. It is put on our desk every day we are in session. She has been on that calendar for a longer period of time than any nominee for Attorney General in the last 30 years.

Senators can vote for or against Loretta Lynch to be Attorney General. That is their right. But an Attorney General nominee whose qualifications and character are unquestionable deserves better than the treatment she is receiving from this Senate. Ms. Lynch deserves a timely vote, just as other Attorney General nominees of other Presidents have received.

She was reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 26 in a bipartisan vote. Nine Democrats and three Republicans voted for this Presidential nominee. She has now been pending on the Senate calendar right here for 48 days—48 days on this calendar. Not one word has been spoken on this floor in derogation of this fine woman, this fine nominee.

The last seven Attorney General nominees combined—all seven of them—had to wait on the Senate floor for a total of 24 days—seven nominees, 24 days. For Loretta Lynch it is 48 days.

The Senate has confirmed other nominees while the human trafficking bill has been pending on the floor. There is no procedural obstacle. While that bill has been pending, the Senate has voted on nominees for Assistant Secretary of Transportation, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, and the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. And on Monday we voted on a Federal judge. It is routine for the Senate to consider nominees on the Executive Calendar while still considering legislation.

It has been 158 days—more than 5 months—since Ms. Lynch's nomination to be Attorney General was announced. A vote still has not been scheduled. This is far longer than any recent Attorney General nominee has had to wait. Janet Reno waited 29 days. John Ashcroft, a Republican nominee, waited 42 days. Alberto Gonzales, 86 days. Michael Mukasey, 53 days. Eric Holder, 64 days. But when it comes to Loretta Lynch, it is 158 days.

The last Attorney General nominee whose nomination took this long to process was Edwin Meese in 1984, who

facéd questions and investigations relating to questions of ethics. There have been no such allegations—none—that have been raised against Loretta Lynch.

Senate Republicans have the capability to bring up nominations promptly. The majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL of Kentucky, can walk to this floor and within a minute call her nomination, and it will be voted on immediately. It is in his power to do it. Why will he not do it? Why will he not give this woman, who has such an extraordinary life story, a chance to serve as the first African-American woman in the history of the United States to serve as Attorney General?

There is no substantive reason—not one. I welcome any Republican Senator to come to the floor and make the case against Loretta Lynch. No one did it in committee. No one has done it on the floor. It is time for us to move forward and approve this nomination.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF POLIO VACCINE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Presiding Officer probably does not remember these days because of his age, but I do. When I was a child, polio was a scare that every family felt. I had friends in school who were stricken with polio. Some of them, in the most extreme cases, ended up in something called an iron lung. The Presiding Officer has probably seen pictures of it. It is an incredible situation where someone would be encased in this tube, this metal tube that would help them breathe.

Many were stricken with polio and ended up crippled, and their lives were compromised to some degree in those days because disabilities were not treated as well then as they are now. Parents did not know what to make of this. No one knew what caused polio. My mother, God bless her, had a theory that one of the things that might cause polio was playing in the street after a rainstorm in the flooded waters.

She would just ban me from doing that. "That can cause polio," she said. That was my mother's theory. It was as valid as any other theory in those days. No one knew what was going on, what was causing it. Many Americans lived in fear of that infectious, viral disease that attacks the nerve cells and the central nervous system causing muscle wasting, paralysis, and sometimes death.

In 1952, nearly 60,000 children in the United States were reported to have polio, with more than 20,000 cases of paralysis. There was a panic about this epidemic. Families were afraid for their kids and the scientists struggled to understand the disease. Dr. Jonas Salk, a pioneer in the field of vaccine research, was recruited in 1947 by the University of Pittsburgh to be the director of virus research and to work on finding a polio vaccine.

His work caught the attention of Basil O'Connor, the president of the

National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, now known as the March of Dimes Foundation. The organization decided to fund Dr. Jonas Salk's work to develop a vaccine against polio. For 5 years, Dr. Salk worked tirelessly on this effort while the country donated their dimes to the foundation to support his work.

Then, on April 12, 1955, Dr. Thomas Francis, Jr.—an epidemiologist at the University of Michigan and a mentor to Salk—announced that Salk had discovered a polio vaccine that was safe and effective.

When the announcement was made, it was as if time stood still. I still remember it as a kid. Americans turned on their radios and TVs to hear the details. Department stores set up loudspeakers and judges suspended trials so everyone in the courtroom could hear this good news.

April 12 was deliberately chosen for the announcement because it marked the 10th anniversary of the death of the most famous polio survivor of all, former President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Roosevelt also founded what would become the March of Dimes Foundation in 1938, without which Salk might not have been able to complete his work.

A massive field trial, the first of its kind, was conducted on over 1.8 million children to prove the vaccine was 80 to 90 percent effective. Church bells rang across the country, factories observed moments of silence, and parents and teachers wept to finally be relieved of this fear.

But it had only just begun. The U.S. Government invested heavily in mass production of the polio vaccine and led campaigns across the Nation to see that every kid was vaccinated. I hated the thought of getting a shot, but the notion that I would be protected from polio for life was certainly worth it.

As a result, polio was eradicated from the United States in 1979.

Sunday, we marked the 60th anniversary of the announcement of the discovery of the first safe and effective polio vaccine. In commemoration of that announcement, I submitted a resolution last month celebrating the discovery of the polio vaccine and supporting the efforts to eradicate that disease around the world.

The resolution also encourages Federal funding for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative for biomedical and basic scientific research so more lifesaving discoveries can be made. Thanks to the work of scientists funded by the CDC and nonprofit organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, polio has been eradicated in all but a handful of the world's poorest nations.

The success of the polio vaccine shows us what medical research can accomplish. If we can do this with polio, then we can do it again.

I thank Senators KIRK, LEAHY, SHAHEEN, MURRAY, BOXER, COONS, MARKEY, ISAKSON, AYOTTE, and REED of Rhode Island for cosponsoring my resolution.

I also thank the March of Dimes, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.N. Foundation's Shot@Life campaign, the Rotary Club, and RESULTS for supporting this resolution.

But today, America's place as world leader in cutting-edge biomedical research is at risk. We no longer invest as we should in basic scientific research.

From 2003 to 2012, the U.S. investment in the NIH research didn't even keep up with inflation, and the number of research grants awarded by the National Institutes of Health has declined every year for the past 10 years.

This is shameful. It is shameful in a great Nation such as the United States, where we have seen achievements such as a polio vaccine, for to us walk away from medical research.

One decade ago, 30 percent of qualified NIH proposals were funded. Today, it is half that—15 percent, the lowest rate in America's modern history.

Dr. Francis Collins, who directs the National Institutes of Health, told me that inadequate funding of basic medical research will cause some of America's best young researchers to take their talents to other places and even other countries. It has already started.

We are on the verge of losing a generation of medical researchers in America. In 1982—listen—18 percent of NIH primary investigators, medical researchers, were under the age of 36—1982, 18 percent under the age of 36. Today, 3 percent are under the age of 36. Young researchers have given up.

If Congress and the President don't want to put money into the NIH, they are going to go someplace else. How many Jonas Salks are we losing because of our cuts to basic medical research? How many lifesaving discoveries are being delayed and ignored? With the right commitment, we can change this.

I tried to gather on the floor—during the debate on the budget resolution—a dozen different Senators who cosponsored amendments calling for more money for medical research. They were from both sides of the aisle: Senator COLLINS on the Republican side of the aisle, interested in Alzheimer's; Senator WICKER of Mississippi, also interested in medical research.

I brought them all together and said: Why don't we cosponsor the same amendment. We are all trying to reach the same goal. They agreed, and it passed unanimously on a voice vote as I hoped it would.

This is what we need to do. Dr. Collins spelled this out in clear terms. We need to increase the funding in biomedical research by 5 percent over inflation every year. Five percent over inflation for 10 years, Dr. Collins tells me, will dramatically change medical research in America.

Can we afford it? Can we afford a 5-percent real growth in biomedical research? Think about it for a second. Do you know what that will cost us over 10 years—5 percent real growth in biomedical research. It is going to cost us

\$150 billion. That is a lot of money, isn't it?

Do you realize that once every 68 seconds in America someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer's? I didn't believe that when my staff told me. I checked it, and it is true. Once every 68 seconds an American is diagnosed with Alzheimer's, and we know what that means: for most of those patients, a steady decline to death, and for their families, the heartbreak of losing communication with someone they love and then caring for them in this state of Alzheimer's disease—once every 68 seconds.

Do you know what it costs us as a government to care for Alzheimer's victims last year, Medicare, Medicaid? We estimate \$200 billion.

Now, step back, a 5-percent growth in biomedical research over 10 years will cost \$150 billion. What if that research could find a way to delay the onset of Alzheimer's for months—maybe for years—and, God willing, find a cure.

What I am saying is whether it is Alzheimer's, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, each and every one of these is praying for and depending on medical research to give Americans who are stricken a fighting chance. It is up to us. We have to make that decision.

I would take this question to the Iowa caucus, to the New Hampshire primary, any State, any city in the Nation, and ask the crowd that you would assemble, that anyone assembles, what do you think is a high priority? Do you think biomedical research by our government is a high priority?

I know the answer, because every one of us lives in fear that someone we love will be diagnosed with a serious illness. You know the first questions you would ask that doctor: Doctor, is there a medicine, is there a surgery, is there something I can do, something that can be done?

And you pray, pray to God, that the doctor says: Yes, we have a new medication in clinical trials at the NIH. It is very promising, and this may be the answer for your son, your daughter, your wife, your mother, and your father. That is what this comes down to—real life, real family challenges.

The American Cures Act I introduced a couple of years ago sets this 5 percent funding goal. I have talked to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and asked them to join me. This shouldn't be a Democratic idea, not a Republican idea. This is as basic as it gets.

The next great scientific and medical breakthroughs will be discovered by researchers if we fund the research, but it isn't just a matter of biomedical research at the NIH. I had a visit with Department of Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, and over breakfast we talked about the American Cures Act.

He said: Senator, let me put in a word here. Do you know who develops the technology for diagnostic evaluations—whether it is MRIs, PET scans, and things of that nature? Do you know who develops the technology for

the application of radiation therapy for cancer victims? A lot of it is done right here at the Department of Energy.

He awakened me to the fact that we think about NIH automatically in biomedical research—and we should. There is more to the story.

So I have really reached out and said: American Cures Act, 5 percent real growth for biomedical isn't enough. We need 5 percent growth when it comes to innovation, the next breakthrough when it comes to diagnosing breast cancer at an early stage, treating cancers with radiation, other things. The American Innovation Act would provide an annual budget increase of 5 percent for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, the Department of Defense science and technology programs, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research, and the NASA Science Directorate.

You say to yourself, can we afford it? I will say what I know. I know that when we embark on scientific research of real value, it not only can cure disease, in the process it will create a company. It will create many companies. It could create many jobs in the right fields and develop our economy in the right way.

We are debating this now on the floor of the Senate. They are not debating it in Beijing. They have decided they are going to pass us. The Chinese have embarked on a medical program in medical research and other research, determined—within the next 20 years—to pass the United States.

Will we let that happen? The men and women of the Senate will make that decision, and the men and women of the House and the President.

All told, the American Innovations Act would invest \$100 billion over 10 years; the American Cures Act, \$150 billion—\$250 billion.

How much money will we spend on our budget in that 10-year period of time? Somewhere in the range of \$18 trillion to \$20 trillion. This is a tiny, little decimal point, but what a difference it could make.

Some of my colleagues talk about burdening our children and grandchildren with debt. I agree. We shouldn't. But the way to reduce our deficit and grow our economy is not by killing research and innovation. It pays for itself many times over. We have cut the budget deficit by two-thirds since the start of the recession which we just went through 7 or 8 years ago.

Now it is time to close the innovation deficit. In the last years of Jonas Salk's life, he was searching for an AIDS vaccine. He didn't need to do that. His place in history was assured, but Jonas Salk wasn't content to rest on past achievement. After all, he was an American, and when his early efforts failed, he was undeterred. Jonas Salk said: "You can only fail if you stop too soon."

This is a decisive moment of a historic opportunity for America and for Congress. We must continue to invest in basic science and research in order to reap the rewards of decades of work by the best scientific and medical minds of the world. The only way we can fail is by stopping too soon.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TAX DAY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it has been said that April is the cruelest month. I think that pretty much captures how Americans feel as tax day approaches each year. This year, Americans will spend 114 days working to pay their Federal, State, and local taxes. In other words, Americans may have submitted their Federal tax returns or be getting ready to submit them tonight, but they are still not done working off their taxes. In fact, Americans won't start earning a dollar for themselves until April 25, almost one-third of the way through the year.

Americans spend 6.1 billion hours every year trying to comply with the Tax Code. That is an average of 19 hours for every man, woman, and child in the United States or an average of 76 hours for a family of four. Almost half of small businesses spend more than \$5,000 each year on tax compliance; that is \$5,000 on top of their tax bill.

Paying taxes is never going to be on the top of Americans' list of favorite activities, but it doesn't have to be the torturous process it has become. The Tax Code takes too much time to comply with, and it takes too much money from hard-working Americans.

Comprehensive tax reform is long overdue. Unfortunately, instead of tax reform, under the Obama administration Americans have just gotten more taxes. The President's health care law created or raised taxes to the tune of more than \$1 trillion over the first decade. Several of those taxes have hit families making less than \$250,000 a year, despite the President's campaign pledge not to raise taxes on families making less than \$250,000.

Let's take the ObamaCare medical device tax. Thanks to this tax, families are now facing higher prices on life-saving medical equipment such as pacemakers and insulin pumps. ObamaCare taxes are also driving up prices for families on essential drugs such as EpiPens and asthma medications. Other ObamaCare taxes are costing American families in other ways.

The ObamaCare employer mandate tax is discouraging employers from expanding and hiring, which means fewer

jobs and opportunities for American workers. Then there is the individual mandate tax that last year began hitting American families without government-approved insurance. For 2015, the individual mandate tax penalty is \$325 per person or 2 percent of household income, whichever is greater. In 2016, that tax penalty will rise to \$695 per person or 2½ percent of household income, whichever is greater.

But that is not all ObamaCare is bringing to tax season. This year, a full half of Americans receiving ObamaCare health insurance subsidies discovered they have to pay back some or all of their subsidies because they didn't estimate their income correctly. Ultimately, just 4 percent of households receiving subsidies had the correct subsidy advanced to their insurance companies. Unfortunately, the confusion and mistakes are par for the course for ObamaCare. The administration apparently finds the law so confusing that it sent out incorrect ObamaCare forms to more than 800,000 people. Yet the administration wants us to believe ObamaCare is somehow working.

We need to repeal this broken law and its trillion dollars' worth of taxes, and we need to reform our bloated Tax Code. We need to cut rates for families so that Americans can spend more of the year working for themselves and less of the year working for the Federal Government. We need to cut rates for businesses, both large and small. The U.S. currently has the highest corporate tax rate in the developed world. That puts American businesses at a huge disadvantage compared to their foreign competitors, and American workers suffer the consequences—lower wages and fewer opportunities. Reforming both corporate and individual tax rates would go a long way toward making American businesses more competitive and opening new opportunities and higher paying jobs for American workers.

Of course, any tax reform measure should include reforms to the IRS. From mishandled customer service to the Agency's most serious offenses—the First Amendment violations involving the deliberate targeting of groups for extra scrutiny based on their political beliefs—this Agency, the IRS, is long overdue for reform.

The IRS Commissioner himself, John Koskinen, was quoted in Monday's Washington Post as saying: "We certainly can't afford to have taxpayer service be any worse than it is, although it is hard to imagine it being much worse than it is." That is a quote from the IRS Commissioner himself. When even the IRS Commissioner admits the Agency's taxpayer services can't get much worse, that is a signal the Agency is ripe for reform.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, before I close, I would like to take a moment to talk about what I think is a bright spot

for our economy, and that is bipartisan trade promotion authority. Previous free- and fair-trade agreements have been a boon to the economy, expanding opportunities for American workers and giving American farmers, such as many of those I represent in South Dakota, and manufacturers access to new markets for their goods. Nearly every one of those trade agreements was negotiated and enacted using trade promotion authority.

The idea behind trade promotion authority is very simple: Congress sets negotiating priorities for the administration and requires the administration to consult with Congress during that negotiating process. In return, Congress promises a simple up-or-down vote on the legislation instead of a lengthy amendment process that could leave the final agreement looking nothing like what was negotiated. That up-or-down vote is the key. That is what gives our trading partners the confidence to put their best offers on the table, which allows for a successful conclusion of negotiations.

Trade promotion authority expired in 2007. Republicans have been trying to get it reauthorized ever since. Currently, the administration is negotiating two key trade agreements—the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the United States-European Union trade agreement—that are unlikely to be concluded in the near future unless trade promotion authority is finally renewed. These agreements will expand opportunities for American workers and open new markets for American goods. A bipartisan reauthorization of trade promotion authority will help bring those agreements to a speedy conclusion, and that will be good news for American workers and American businesses.

The challenges facing our Nation are best solved when Members of both parties come together to find solutions for the American people. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on trade promotion authority and other issues that will grow our economy, create better paying jobs for American workers, and increase the take-home pay of middle-income families in this country.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015. To the surprise of many people, including me, it was unanimously reported, which makes me begin to wonder just how much Iran nuclear agreement review there will be in this act.

I was an original cosponsor of the Corker-Menendez bill that would give Congress and the American people a voice in what is likely to be the most significant nuclear arms agreement in

this decade. I think the likelihood, as we move toward the agreement, as it appears to be structured, is that it won't be able to contain the desire of other people in the neighborhood—and maybe in other places in the world but certainly in the neighborhood—to be just as capable of producing a nuclear weapon as we allow Iran to be.

Supporting this bill does mean that Congress really gives the opportunity for these negotiations to advance, not Congress putting the brakes on these negotiations. Specifically, the bill would give Congress the opportunity to review and weigh in on a deal that has already been made. It does appear to prohibit the administration from removing sanctions while Congress reviews and while Congress votes on a final deal, if that is what Congress decides to do. It doesn't require Congress to vote, as I read it, but I look forward to having the people who unanimously voted for this in the Foreign Relations Committee explain how it really does involve the Congress as the Constitution would suggest the Senate would be involved. This does permit removal of sanctions only if the Congress passes a joint resolution approving the agreement, I have been told.

The new bill reported out of committee makes the following changes in the original bill. Under the new bill, the congressional review period isn't going to be 60 days, it would be 30 days. The new bill removes the provision requiring the administration to certify to Congress that Iran is not providing material support to terrorists plotting against the homeland or against U.S. entities.

We are continuing to be told: Well, that is a different topic. I don't know why that is a different topic at all. A nuclear-capable Iran that is supporting terrorism is obviously more dangerous than a nuclear-capable Iran that is not supporting terrorism. The weapon that you can see being built, the weapon that would compare to weapons we may have built, and other powers, in the past was perhaps not nearly as dangerous as the weapon being built that could be used by some terrorist.

This bill does appear to give Congress the ability to intervene but only to intervene after the parties have made the deal. I am not particularly offended by that. If this were a real treaty, the administration would obviously be negotiating that treaty and then would bring the treaty to the Senate for approval, as the Constitution requires and as has happened over and over again on treaties involving nuclear capacity, nuclear ability, nuclear build-up, or nuclear build-down. That is not a new thing for the Senate to deal with, but apparently nobody in the administration wants this to be this kind of treaty. Now, there is, apparently, a way to weigh in before it is implemented but in a way that I think we are going to have to look at very carefully if and when that legislation comes to the floor.

A nuclear-armed Iran, an Iran that is nuclear weapons capable—whether that is in 6 months or 12 months or monitored or unmonitored—is a major threat, in my view, to the United States. It is a major threat to our allies in the region. Lifting these sanctions only empowers Iran to have more influence in the region. The sanctions did bring Iran to the negotiating table, but they have been given a lot of breathing room since these negotiations started a couple of years ago. We wouldn't be negotiating, I don't think, if the sanctions hadn't been working.

With what has happened to oil prices, those sanctions would have had a more dramatic effect on the economy of a country in which we have every reason to believe the population is inclined to be very friendly toward the United States. They are educated, they are capable, and they have long-term ties with many of their family members in this country. But, of course, the population is not in control of the country; the country is controlled by a small group who has only one view of how the world can work, and, frankly, that small group appears to have only one view of what they think about the United States of America. If you listen to the comments the Supreme Leader, the religious leader, makes over and over again, that view is dependably negative about our country and our people and our system of government and our ability to live side by side with each other. So we should be concerned about that.

The agreement would allow them to continue to enrich uranium. It would allow them to retain centrifuges, which we said, by the way, we wouldn't do. That was a point we wouldn't negotiate away. It would allow them to continue to have thousands of centrifuges—something we also said we wouldn't allow them to do. It would allow them to continue developing new and better and more sophisticated ways to enrich uranium, to weaponize, to have the ability to create a weapon.

Frankly, it is not even clear what agreement has been agreed to. To listen to our description of the agreement is a very different description of the framework. There is no agreement, everybody agrees to that, but there is supposedly a framework.

This framework would build two very different houses. If we listen to their description of the agreement and we listen to our description of the agreement, we are looking at very different things.

This week, for example, the Supreme Leader saw this very differently than the President—the so-called deal—with respect to when the sanctions would be removed and what would be happening.

President Obama and Secretary Kerry have put a tremendous amount of effort into reaching an agreement—in fact, such amount of effort that it has been clear from the very start of the negotiations who wanted an agreement the most. What hasn't been clear

and what isn't clear to me is why we are so eager to just check the box and move on here, and assume that sometime in the next few years Iran will become a friendlier state and will not want to head in a bad direction. Not only does it head Iran in a nuclear-weapons direction, but it heads many other people in the neighborhood in the direction of wondering if they have this capacity, why wouldn't we want to have this capacity?

Most Americans don't believe Iran will stick to a deal. Frankly, I have great questions about that myself.

Whether the President likes it or not, this is an international agreement with wide-ranging consequences. The Congress and the American people have a role to play here. The Foreign Relations Committee has made a proposal about what that role should be. But it seems to me that proposal is still a long way away from the constitutional protection that should be involved when we reach an agreement of this kind, or when we negotiate a treaty.

A number of us sent a letter a few weeks ago which got a lot of attention. I thought the reaction to that letter was pretty interesting.

The immediate reaction from the Secretary of State was: Well, this isn't a treaty, it is just an agreement. The Senate doesn't have to approve an agreement. The President would be bound by it, and it would be such a good agreement—according to the Secretary of State—that the next President would want to be bound by it as well.

This is a pretty significant moment to decide that we may or may not be bound by what is decided.

The Iranian Foreign Minister then was able to give us some sense of his understanding. I think the phrase he said the next day was: We know international law is what really matters here, not the law of any given country.

I have been all over my State, as many of us have, in the last couple of weeks. I don't think there is any courthouse, any coffee shop, or any gathering of people in Missouri where they would say: Well, really, international law is what we care about. We don't care about what the Constitution says when we are dealing with other countries.

Then 72 hours after that letter was sent, the President's Chief of Staff said: Really, the President would probably want to take this to the U.N., but he probably wouldn't want to take it to the U.S. Senate.

We will see how this debate goes on the proposal that the Foreign Affairs Committee is making, but it clearly does not bode in the direction of a treaty approved by two-thirds of the Members of the U.S. Senate. In my view, we are still a long way from a final agreement.

There seems to be a lot of disagreement as to what the framework means. But as we move toward that final agreement, our number one priority

should be to do everything possible to prohibit Iran—whose influence in the world and the region is already disproportionate—from having the capacity to ever have a nuclear weapon. I hope our negotiators continue to keep that in mind, and I hope there is not nearly as much disagreement about the final agreement as there is about what the framework itself says.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

THE BUDGET

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, later today, maybe as early as 11 o'clock or so, we are going to begin a discussion of the budget. As we know, the budget is a set of national priorities. A budget has to do with our vision of where America is and where America should be. We are now in the process of moving the budget to a conference committee between the House and the Senate.

When I think about a budget, I think about a document designed to address the problems facing our country. In that regard, I find the Republican budget that will likely pass to be totally inadequate, and a budget whose priorities are way, way out of place with where the American people are.

When we talk about the needs of America, the most significant need and the most significant economic problem we face is that for 40 years the American middle class has been in decline. Today we have over 40 million Americans living in poverty, almost more than at any time in the modern history of America. Our real unemployment is not 5½ percent; real unemployment is 11 percent. And despite the modest gains of the Affordable Care Act, we still have 35 million Americans who have no health insurance.

While millions of Americans work today longer hours for lower wages than used to be the case, despite a significant increase in productivity, what we are seeing as a nation is an obscene level of income and wealth inequality. That reality speaks to the fact that since the Wall Street crash of 2008, about 99 percent of all new income today is going to the top 1 percent. I know people find that amazing, but it is true. Which means that no matter what the GDP may be—2 percent, 5 percent—it doesn't really matter, because virtually all the new income goes to the top 1 percent.

In terms of distribution of wealth, what we are seeing in America today is worse and more unequal than any major country on Earth, and worse in America than at any time since the late 1920s. Today we have the top one-tenth of 1 percent owning more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. Unbelievable—the top one-tenth of 1 percent owning more wealth than the bottom 90 percent. Today we have one family owning more wealth than the bottom 42 percent of the American people—that is, the Walton family of Walmart.

A recent report came out by Forbes magazine which pointed out—and this is almost beyond belief—that the wealthiest 14 people in this country, Bill Gates, Warren Buffett, Koch brothers, others, saw their wealth increase between 2013 and 2015, a 2-year period, by \$157 billion. That is just an increase in their wealth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I will be back on the floor dealing with the budget as the ranking member, but I am happy to yield the floor at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, for the last several weeks we have been trying to get unstuck on an important piece of legislation that would combat modern-day slavery.

At a time, I think most people were unaware of this phenomenon of sex trafficking primarily of teenaged girls between the ages of 12 and 14. I think the country has become much more aware about this scourge, this dark side to our culture and our society, and much more interested in trying to figure out what we can do to address it.

At a time when we are really beginning to see some true bipartisan cooperation and progress here in the Senate—and I say that because of things like the budget we passed last night, which was a very important piece of legislation we passed to reform Medicare, particularly to improve access for our seniors to Medicare services performed by doctors and hospitals by making sure they had a predictable and sustainable reimbursement rate, and what happened yesterday in the Foreign Relations Committee, where we had a unanimous vote on Congress's prerogative to represent our constituents on having a voice on the very important negotiations taking place between Tehran and the United States and our allies on Iran's aspirations for nuclear weapon.

Then I think about other things that are happening that are encouraging here, after a long period of stagnation and dysfunction over the last 2 years. I think we are on the cusp of a breakthrough on trade. Why in the world wouldn't we want to be open to markets when basically 80 percent of the purchasing power of the world and 95 percent of the world's population lies outside of our shores? Why wouldn't we want to open those markets to our farmers and ranchers and our manufacturers—people who grow things and who make things—and wouldn't that be great for our economy and job creation?

So imagine my surprise when after these past few weeks we have been stuck on something that has enjoyed such broad bipartisan support as com-

bating human trafficking. Senator after Senator has come to the floor and talked about this and why we ought to act to do something about it.

Just to refresh everyone's memory, what we are trying to do is pass the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. What it would do is create a victims compensation fund, in essence, from the fines and the penalties assessed against people who are engaging in child pornography and other sex-related crimes. In other words, it would address the demand side, and take the money from fines and penalties assessed against the demand side and use that to help the victims—to help them be rescued, and to help them heal and get on with their lives.

This legislation has enjoyed broad support outside of these Chambers. More than 200 different organizations—law enforcement organizations, victims rights organizations, faith-based groups, people who want to lend a helping hand to provide beds and a secure place to stay while people heal. Unfortunately, there is just not enough money. There is a huge need across America for the resources this legislation would provide. We estimate, based on historic data, that there could be as much as \$30 million generated from the fines and penalties associated with the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act that would then be available to be granted by the Department of Justice to help these victims.

So imagine my surprise when after Senator after Senator on both sides of the aisle endorsed this legislation—I think at last count we had 30 cosponsors, an almost equal number on the Democratic side as the Republican side. Then this legislation sailed through the Senate Judiciary Committee and got the unanimous vote of all Democrats and all Republicans. Then it came to the floor, and at least initially we bypassed the traditional procedures to bring legislation to the floor because all 100 Senators agreed that this was important enough and significant enough and urgent enough that we needed to act on it quickly.

So imagine my surprise when, all of a sudden, it was brought to my attention that some people objected to a provision in the legislation known as the Hyde amendment, which has been the law of the land for 39 years.

To refresh everybody's memory, in the very polarizing debate over abortion, this is the one consensus item that has been the law of the land for 39 years that Republicans and Democrats have voted for repeatedly. What it says is that no taxpayer dollars can be used to fund abortion except in the case of rape or in the case of the mother's health. Those are basically the exceptions. Do you know what? I cannot imagine that those exceptions would not apply in the vast majority of cases involving human trafficking because tragically they do involve rape, certainly sexual assault of a minor who is incapable by virtue of their tender age,

unable to legally consent, and certainly people who are coerced into this sort of activity who do not want to be.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Hyde amendment itself would provide broad exceptions to provide health care services to the very victims we are talking about, some of our colleagues across the aisle said that what this bill does is it expands the Hyde amendment. The way it does it, they claim, is that it now would apply to the fines and penalties that would be assessed on criminals, primarily child pornographers, consumers, purveyors, and other people guilty of various sexual crimes. They claim that is somehow an expansion of the Hyde provision.

This is getting more and more baffling because actually last night, in an overwhelming vote—I think it was 92 votes in favor of the so-called doc fix and also funding community health centers and an extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program—the very same Hyde-type provision that was contained in the bill we voted on last night is contained in the amendment we are going to vote on tomorrow on the Senate floor. If this provision is good enough for doctors and hospitals, why in the world isn't it good enough for victims of human sex trafficking? I think the answer is obvious: It is and it should be.

In an effort to try to get us unstuck in order to try to catch a wave based on what we are doing generally here in the Senate—finally being productive and making things work—I have tried to take something that virtually all Democrats have voted for previously and to put that in the bill in order to eliminate their cause for concern. I am not going to question at this point whether it is a legitimate complaint. I, frankly, disagree. But let's get on with getting the bill passed and getting something important done.

This morning, I heard a familiar argument that was made by the Democratic leader, Senator REID. The good news is that I have made a change in the legislation that would directly address what the Democratic leader said is their main objection. Here is their objection. I don't agree with it, but here is what it is and here is what I have done to try to address it. Their claim is that the fines and penalties are private dollars, not public dollars, and that attaching the Hyde language to those fines and penalties is somehow an expansion of the Hyde provision.

As I said, I disagree with that, but what I would ask my colleagues to do is look at page 3 of the legislation, lines 3 through 7. What we have done to address their concern is to say that no longer will the fines and penalties associated with this fund be directly appropriated and paid out in grants to the victims of human trafficking. Instead, what page 3 of our amendment says—which we will vote on tomorrow, S. 178—this paragraph is entitled “Transfers.” It says:

In a manner consistent with section 3302(b) of title 31, there shall be transferred to the

Fund from the General Fund of the Treasury an amount equal to the amount of the assessments collected under this section, which shall remain available until expended.

What we tried to do in order to maintain the status quo on the Hyde amendment is say that the money which will actually be used to help the victims will now come from the general fund. It will be an amount equal to the fines and penalties that were going to be available under the original bill. But because of the objection, because of the stated concern, we are trying to find a way to get unstuck and keep our focus on these victims and not on some phantom objection based on—again, I am not going to reargue here today; I am just going to say we need to get this done, and this provision does that.

Mr. President, may I ask what the order of business is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time reserved for the majority under morning business has expired.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional 5 minutes to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I will wrap up.

As I have told a number of our colleagues across the aisle who believe passionately in the importance of this topic, I think this amendment we will vote on tomorrow addresses their stated concerns. It certainly addresses the concerns stated by the Democratic leader this morning.

I would just say that of all the Senators on the other side of the aisle who agreed to cosponsor this legislation, who previously objected to voting on the bill and passing it—I would ask them to please take a close look at that provision. Again, page 3, lines 3 through 7 of my amendment now would provide that instead of the fines and penalties being directly appropriated into these programs for grant purposes, that money would come from a general fund of the Treasury in an equivalent amount of the fines and penalties. So, money being fungible, there is no loss of funds, but what we have done is we have tried to address their concerns, I think in a way that eliminates them.

All the Senators who cosponsored this legislation, for which I am very grateful—Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator WYDEN, Senator COONS, Senator UDALL, Senator CASEY, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator HEITKAMP, Senator SCHUMER, Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator PETERS, and Senator DURBIN—I hope all of our Democratic friends who previously objected based on the original provision will take a look at this change because it does directly address their stated concerns.

Let's get this done. We will vote on this tomorrow. But I would rather not wait for that time. I would rather try to get this done today if we can. We might be able to do that by agreement if everyone agrees that this provision,

this change, addresses those stated concerns.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. 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

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I move to close morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Morning business is closed.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate the message from the House requesting a conference on S. Con. Res. 11, the budget resolution.

The Presiding Officer laid before the Senate the following message from the House of Representatives:

Resolved, That the House insist upon its amendment to the resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) entitled "Concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025," and ask a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon.

Ordered, That Mr. Tom Price of Georgia, Mr. Rokita, Mr. Diaz-Balart, Mrs. Black, Mr. Moolenaar, Mr. Van Hollen, Mr. Yarmuth, and Ms. Moore be the managers of the conference on the part of the House.

Mr. ENZI. I move to disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is pending.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to make some comments about the budget and the process.

Last month, the Senate Budget Committee took an important first step in helping to change the way we do business in Washington by reporting out a balanced budget. This is crucial as we begin to restore the trust of the American people.

This week, we will take the next step and start to work on a joint balanced budget resolution with our colleagues in the House that will expand America's economy and increase opportunities for hard-working families. A balanced budget approved by Congress will help make the government live within its means and set spending limits for our Nation. A balanced budget will also boost the Nation's economic output by more than \$500 billion over the next 10 years. That is according to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office.

Why the urgency? Hard-working families are fed up with the President's spend-now-pay-later policy and are closely following our efforts to produce a balanced budget. Senate Democrats could only muster two budgets in 8 years, and we will soon have one after only 4 months. It is time to show taxpayers that Congress is committed to a balanced budget to make our government more effective and accountable, but we are running out of time.

Recent media reports note that the lawmakers in 27 States have passed applications for a constitutional convention to approve a balanced budget amendment. I have to add that there are new applications to do that same amendment in nine other States, and they are close behind.

Now, if just seven of those nine States approve moving forward on the balanced budget issue, it would bring the number of applications to 34 States. This would mean the two-thirds requirement under Article V of the Constitution would force Congress to take action. It is no wonder hard-working taxpayers across the country are feeling anxious.

Federal revenues have hit record highs. Yet we are on track to overspend by nearly \$1 trillion a year. I think we are at the \$560 billion level of overspending this year.

How much does Congress get to make decisions on? Congress spends about \$4 trillion a year, but only gets to make decisions on \$1½ trillion. Now, if we overspend by over \$500 billion, we are spending half more than what we take in. No family can exist very long by spending half more than they take in year after year after year.

We looked at the President's budget and the President increases taxes by \$2½ trillion and still gets a wider and wider gap of overspending as time goes by to that trillion-dollar mark out there in 10 years.

Just this week, headlines around the country reported: "Budget Deficit in U.S. Widens as Spending Exceeds Record Revenue."

On Monday, the Treasury Department reported that spending by the Federal Government exceeded its revenue by more than \$439 billion from October through March, which is \$26 billion more compared to the same period last year. In fact, CBO is forecasting that for March our Nation spent more than \$44 billion, up 19 percent from last year. We are getting more money, and we are spending more money.

American taxpayers understand we overspend. The more we overspend, the more debt we owe, and the more debt our children and grandchildren will owe. In fact, we have done this so consistently that it is not just our grandchildren and our children who are faced with the crisis, it is us as well—everybody in America.

I mentioned that we get to make decisions on \$1½ trillion dollars a year, which is \$1,100 billion. If anybody knows how big \$1 billion is, they know

how big \$1,100 billion is. But that is all we get to make decisions on.

The amount of interest we paid last year was \$235 billion. Interest doesn't buy you a thing, but we spent \$235 billion on interest. Now, that is pretty close to 1 percent for the fee for that borrowing. So if \$235 billion is 1 percent interest, what would the normal 5 percent cost? Every single dime we get to make a decision on. That means no defense, no education, no HELP. Everything will be by the wayside just so we can pay the interest on our debt. That is why we have to be concerned about the overspending that is happening.

American taxpayers understand that the more we overspend, the more debt we owe and the more debt our children and grandchildren owe. If that tax rate goes up, we will soon be responsible for paying off that debt at the expense of everything else America expects. This is why Republicans in Congress are focused on passing a balanced budget that will ensure that Washington will once again live within its means, just like hard-working families do every day.

Now, we don't get that balance for 10 years, but it moves toward that goal every year. Ten years is too long. For next year's budget, we are going to have to figure out better things to do to get it back into a framework where our interest will not exceed our expenditures. That is the interest exceeding the expenditures, not the revenue, and again we had a record revenue. That is why we are focused on passing a balanced budget, just like hard-working families do every day.

What does the Senate-passed budget do? Well, here is what it does: It balances the budget in 10 years with no tax hikes. It protects our most vulnerable citizens. It strengthens the national defense. It improves job growth and opportunity for hard-working families. It slows the rate of spending growth.

Now, it doesn't recede the spending growth, it slows the spending growth. That is the best we have ever been able to do in Washington. When we talk about a cut in Washington, what we are talking about is giving them less than what they asked for, not less than what they have.

It preserves Social Security by reducing spending in other areas to fully offset Social Security's rising deficit and encourages our Nation's leaders to begin a bipartisan, bicameral discussion on how to protect Social Security and avoid the across-the-board Social Security benefit cuts that will occur later under the law unless we take action, but that is something that has to be done jointly. There would be too much blame otherwise, and as far as the budget, the reason we have to preserve Social Security by reducing spending in other areas to offset Social Security is because we are not allowed to do anything with Social Security in the budget.

This budget will also protect our seniors by safeguarding Medicare from in-

solveny and extending the life of the Medicare trust fund by 5 years. It ensures Medicare savings in the President's health care law and makes sure those savings are dedicated to Medicare. If it comes from Medicare, it ought to go back to Medicare instead of seeing it go to more overspending on new programs that are outside of Medicare.

Our balanced budget continues funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program and creates a new program based on CHIP to serve low-income, working-age, able-bodied adults and children who are eligible for Medicaid.

It increases State flexibility in designing benefits and administering Medicaid Programs to encourage efficiency and reduce wasteful spending, and it provides stable and predictable funding so long-term services and support are sustainable both for the Federal Government and the States.

As the Senate and House begin budget negotiations next week, it is worth noting that the strong economic growth a balanced budget can provide will serve as the foundation for helping all Americans grow and prosper.

One of the goals of a Republican balanced budget is to make our government more efficient, more effective, and more accountable. If Congress does its job, we can have some flexibility and eliminate what is not working, starting with the worst first, and then we can eliminate and streamline what is left.

The reason I emphasized "the worst first" is because one of the things we talk about constantly is the need to prevent the sequester. In some cases, it is absolutely essential to prevent a sequester, but the sequester should have been done in the efficient way of eliminating the worst first. Instead, there was a memo that went out that said: Make it hurt. That should never happen in America. That is why we saw some of the decisions that came down that seemed pretty ridiculous.

One of the decisions that affected Wyoming was—I hope everybody will come and see the Grand Tetons—marvelous mountains that look like part of the Alps were transplanted over there and made a little bit taller. A lot of people like to stop and take pictures there regardless of the season—whether it is snow covered or the aspens are golden in the foreground and whether everything is lush and green, and, of course, you see wildlife all through that valley. Naturally, people like to stop and take pictures.

Well, a bunch of signs were printed up that said you cannot use the turnouts. A bunch of barricades were bought so you could not pull onto the turnout, and the sign said it would be illegal to park along the highway.

Where did the money come from for the barricades? Where did the money come for the signs that said we could not use the parking lots to take pictures? Well, I called to find out whose brilliant idea that was and why park-

ing lots would be closed, and I was told that there would not be any garbage pickup. I suggested they just remove the garbage cans.

When people in Wyoming and across the Nation visit a national park, they can haul their garbage another 20 miles before they throw it out. That way the beautiful vista could still be photographed instead of people still parking along the highways to take those pictures and then getting ticketed. That is just one small example of cutting the most important first instead of the worst first. I am sure there are examples in every State.

It didn't just happen with facilities like that. The people at Head Start came to see me and said they got a 7.5 percent cut in the sequester. It was supposed to be 2.3 percent.

How did it get to 7.5 percent? After checking into it, it appears the Washington bureaucracy decided to keep more than their share of the money instead giving it to the kids across America who were supposed to have it. It did get restored, but the discouraging part was that when I asked the people who talked to me before how things were going, they said: Well, we got the extra money, but in order to meet the employer requirements in Wyoming for ObamaCare, we had to spend all of that money, so none of the kids happened to go back to Head Start. That was very disappointing. That is not the way to run a government and it is not the way to run a business. It should never have happened.

We need a budget that can eliminate waste and streamline what is left and start with the worst first.

Of course, another of my suggestions is that we have a biannual budget. Mr. President, \$1,100 billion is too much money to look at in 1 year. Twelve bills to allocate that money to the different agencies are too many bills for us to handle in 1 year, particularly if they are going to get scrutiny.

I suggested we write the number of bills that we do and separate them into two packages of six and that we do the six tough ones right after the election, because we have a little more appetite for doing them then, and the six easy ones just before an election. Then we would be able to get all 12 of them and be able to scrutinize all 12 of them.

Why is that important? Well, in going through this budget process—and like I said, I only had about 8 weeks to start to put the budget together—one of the things I discovered was that we have a whole bunch of programs that are out of authorization. The ability to spend for them has expired, but that doesn't stop us from spending on them. It should at least constrain us a little bit.

Some of those programs go back to 1983. They expired in 1983, 1987, and on up to the present day. How many of them? Two hundred and sixty programs. There were 260 programs that we haven't looked at to see if we ought to continue to spend money on them or

if we ought to revise how we have been spending the money. If they have expired—most of them had been in existence for 6 years before they expired, and in those 6 years, we should have been able to find if there were any flaws or changes. Hopefully, there was somebody who was looking out for it and found some efficiencies that helped with the spending.

So there were 260 programs. Do we know how much that amounts to that we are still spending and there is no authority to spend? It is \$293 billion a year. That is a year. Usually, when we talk about the budget we are talking about over 10 years. So that would only be \$29 billion a year if it were over 10 years, but it is not. It is \$293 billion a year of expired authorizations, expired permissions to spend money. We have to get that corrected as well.

One of the ways we can do that is through a biennial budget, so that we are looking at half of them in a year instead of everything the government does every year. The dollars have gotten so big that we can't get through them efficiently, effectively, and scrutinizing them as good accounting in a year.

There is one exception on that, which is that we look at defense every year. Defense is the most important constitutional requirement given to this body. So we would continue to do that each year. Incidentally, defense is the one authorization that is not out of authorization, and that is because we do it every year. I don't know how many decades we have done the authorization—the permission for spending—for defense.

Another troubling situation I discovered through this process was that there are some items that are not authorized that were in defense that we are spending money on anyway. I get comments from the people on the committee that looks over defense saying: How can they spend that money when we just did an authorization that said no, that is not one of the authorized items? So there are some problems we need to definitely work on with budgets. That is what we have done while putting this budget together, in trying to eliminate some of the inconsistencies we have, but we have not touched that \$293 billion in unauthorized spending.

So when people say we need more money for the nondefense items, I want them to take a look at that \$293 billion and see if they can't find \$29 billion, \$90 billion, whatever, out of \$293 billion that they think might be more effectively spent in a different way.

I know when I came to Congress there were 119 preschool children's programs. Everybody has ideas for preschool programs, and they are good ideas. We know that if we teach kids better before they go to school, they do better in school, there are fewer drop-outs, there is less crime, and the whole world is better.

There were 119 programs. Senator Kennedy and I worked on that, and we

got it down to 69 programs. The ones we got rid of are the ones that were under our jurisdiction. So that left a whole bunch more. In the meantime, I have been able to work that down to 35 programs. And in the child care grant program last year, I got an amendment passed—it was one of 14 amendments that we considered—which required that those 35 go down to just 5 and that all 5 be put under 1 department. I am hoping that is what the administration is doing. That would save enough money to fund the truly preschool education programs really well, and that is what we need to do. There is a lot of money right there.

So if Congress does its job, we can have some flexibility and eliminate what isn't working, starting with the worst first, and then we can eliminate waste and streamline what is left. But to do this, first, Congress must do what it has not done in the past 8 years. It has to scrutinize every dollar for which they have a responsibility. If government programs are not delivering results, they should be improved, and if they are not needed, they should be eliminated. It is time to prioritize and demand results from our government programs. When these programs are reauthorized, I am hoping there is a matrix in there that says this is what we plan to do and this is how we will know if we got it done. Then we will have an easy evaluation of whether they are getting their job done. That is mostly what happens in the private sector, and it is an efficient way of doing it in the public sector as well.

I have made enough speeches about efficiency in government that I had someone come up to me and say: I hate to say this, but the job I am doing isn't worth having anybody do. He said: I am reluctant to mention it because if they eliminate that job, I am probably fired. Well, I took his suggestion, and I spoke to the right people and that job got eliminated, and he got promoted. That is what has to happen. We have to take the people who are innovative in government, who are figuring out ways to do things better and more efficiently and more effectively and move them into the positions where they can really do the job.

So that is what I am counting on. In the coming weeks, hard-working taxpayers will get to see something they have not had the chance to experience in the last 8 years, and that is an open and transparent legislative process. We are starting that process today with the appointment of the conferees for the conference committees, and we will have amendments this afternoon. Members of Congress from both the House and the Senate will come together as part of the Senate-House budget committee to create a balanced budget that will boost our Nation's economic output and help restore the promise of a government that is more effective and that will put more people to work.

A balanced budget will allow Americans to spend more time working hard

to grow their businesses or to advance their jobs, instead of worrying about taxes and inefficient and ineffective regulations. Most importantly, it means every American who wants to find a good-paying job and a fulfilling career has the opportunity to do just that.

I look forward to joining my colleagues in both the Senate and the House—Republicans and Democrats—as we take this next step to deliver a government that is more accountable to each and every American.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me applaud Senator ENZI and his staff for their very hard work.

I certainly agree with Senator ENZI that we need a government that is accountable, that we need to get rid of waste in government, and that we need to get rid of duplicative programs. I don't think there is any debate on that. I look forward to working with Senator ENZI and others to make that happen. However, the Republican budget is far, far more than that.

Today, I rise in strong opposition to the motion to go to conference on the budget resolution.

The budget resolution the Senate passed on March 27 moves this country in exactly the wrong direction, and the House budget resolution, in many respects, is even worse. The Federal budget is more than just a long list of numbers, although God knows there is a long list of numbers in the budget. The Federal budget is about our national priorities and about our values. It is about how we assess the problems facing our country, of which there are many—and I am not sure Senator ENZI would disagree with me if I laid it out—and how we go forward in addressing the problems on which there is a fundamental divide. That is what the Senate is now dealing with. What are the problems facing our country and how do we move forward?

Let me begin by saying that despite the modest gains of the Affordable Care Act, there remain in this country 35 million Americans who have no health insurance. That means that when they get sick, they may not be able to go to the doctor or they may end up going to the emergency room at very high cost.

I have spoken with doctors all over this country who tell me that when people don't have health insurance, because they delay going to the doctor, sometimes by the time they go into the doctor's office, it is too late. The doctor says: Why didn't you come in here 6 months ago when you noticed your symptoms? And they say: I don't have any health insurance; I couldn't afford it. So we are losing tens of thousands of people every single year who die—or become much sicker than they should be because they don't have health insurance.

The United States remains the only major country on Earth that doesn't

guarantee health care to all people. Thirty-five million Americans have no health insurance. What is the Republican solution to this problem? Well, it is a brilliant idea. They are going to end the Affordable Care Act and make \$440 billion worth of cuts to Medicaid, which will result in 27 million Americans losing their health insurance on top of the 35 million we already have uninsured.

I know the newspapers are not particularly interested in it. We won't see it on network TV. That is the reality. They don't deny it. There are 16 million people covered by the Affordable Care Act who would lose their health insurance because this bill ends it. Then, a \$440 billion cut to Medicaid, and another 11 million gone. Sixteen plus 11 is 27 million Americans. What is the idea? What happens to those people? How many of them die? How many of them suffer? It is not an issue for them. They are working on something. They have been working on something for about 15 years for health care. If it hasn't happened in 16 years, it isn't going to happen.

That is what is in this budget.

This budget denies over 2.3 million young adults the right to stay on their parents' health insurance plan until the age of 26. We used to have this absurd situation. My wife and I have health insurance to cover our kids, but when they turn 18, they are not on our plan. It is gone. Right now, young people are on the plan until they are 26. It is gone under this Republican budget.

We finally overcame a situation that is so vulgar it is hard to imagine that it existed in America, and that is that people who have serious illnesses such as cancer, heart disease or diabetes would walk into an insurance office and say: I need insurance. The insurance company would say: Oh, we can't cover you for your diabetes, your heart disease, your cancer because it is a pre-existing condition and we don't want to pay out all of that money if it recurs.

Think about that, how crazy that is. What do people want insurance for? They want insurance to cover their needs. If I had breast cancer or colon cancer 5 years ago, sure, I want to make sure my insurance company covers that. It is a preexisting condition. Under the Affordable Care Act, we did away with that discrimination. That would come back. So all Americans who have serious health illnesses: Know that if what they put into this budget goes into effect, insurance companies can reject you.

Not only has this Republican budget ended the Affordable Care Act and made \$440 billion in cuts to Medicaid, it would also increase prescription drug prices for 4 million seniors and persons with disabilities who are on Medicare Part D by reopening the doughnut hole. That means that at a time when senior poverty is increasing and so many seniors in Vermont—I speak to them all the time and I suspect it is

the same in Wyoming or maybe not—are saying: I am living on \$13,000, \$14,000 a year; I have to heat my home in the winter—if you live in Vermont, you do—I have to buy food; I have to pay for medicine; I can't do it all. So we closed the so-called doughnut hole, which means that seniors would not have to pay out-of-pocket for their prescription drugs. The Republican budget reopens the hole. All over this country, seniors will be paying more for their prescription drugs.

The Republican budget not only undertakes a vast attack on health care in this country, which will decimate life for millions of people, but then on another issue of great consequence, education, it is equally bad.

A couple of months ago in my State of Vermont I held three townhall meetings at colleges and universities in the State to talk to young people about the cost of college and about student debt. In Vermont—and I suspect in the other 49 States as well—we have families who are struggling to afford to send their kids to college, and then we have others who are leaving college terribly deep in debt. Just yesterday, I was flying here from Burlington, VT, and I sat next to a woman who said her six kids went to college and graduate school, and all of them are deeply in debt.

So clearly, what a sensible budget does is two things. It says, first, how do we make college affordable so that young people will be able to get a higher education; and second of all, when they graduate, how do we lower student debt, which is today so oppressive?

The Republican budget does exactly the opposite. What the Republican budget does is cut \$90 billion over 10 years in Pell grants. Pell grants are the major Federal program making it possible for low-income and working-class families to get grants to go to college. This would increase the cost of college education to more than 8 million Americans. Think about it. Our job is to lower the cost of college; this budget increases it.

At a time when working-class families in Vermont and all over this country are having a hard time finding good quality, affordable preschool childcare, the Republican budget makes significant cuts in Head Start which means that 110,000 fewer children would be able to enroll in that program. Under the Republican budget, 1.9 million fewer students would receive the academic health they need to succeed in school by cutting about \$12 billion in cuts to the title I education program. Dropout rates in low-income communities all over this country for high school kids are atrocious. The Republican budget cuts significantly the funding that we put into public schools in low-income communities.

At a time when the middle class is disappearing and we have more people living in poverty today than at almost any time in modern American history,

today there are millions of families who are struggling to put food on the table. I know maybe on Capitol Hill people don't know that, but that is a reality. People are making 9 or 10 bucks an hour. They have a few kids. They are having a very difficult time affording food—basic nutrition. We have an estimated 40 million people that are what they call “food insecure.” That means people who on any given week, any given month, depending on what is happening, have a hard time feeding their families. The Republican budget would make massive cuts in nutrition programs in this country by, among other things, cutting \$10 billion to the Women, Infants and Children Program over the next decade.

I honestly have a hard time hearing people talk about family values and how much they love families and children, and you have a program which has done a really good job in terms of prenatal care for pregnant woman, making sure they get the health care and the nutrition they need, making sure their babies get the care they need. Who really thinks we should cut these programs? What kind of Nation are we or what kind of Senate are we that people would vote to cut these programs—not to mention massive cuts in the food stamp program.

But in the midst of all of these devastating cuts in health care, education, and nutrition that impacts working families, the Republican budget does something else which is quite incredible. And I suspect that people who are listening are saying: BERNIE SANDERS is being partisan; he is not telling the truth; it really can't be this bad. One of the problems we have is convincing people this is reality. This is reality. This is the Republican budget. I know the media doesn't write about it much, but that is what it is. In addition to making cuts to health care, nutrition, education, other programs, what else do they do?

At a time when the wealthiest 400 Americans—400 Americans—paid a tax rate of 16.7 percent in 2012, at a time when hedge fund managers pay a lower effective tax rate than working families, truckdrivers, and nurses, what the Republican budget does based on an amendment they did abolishes the estate tax. The estate tax provides a \$269 billion tax break. For whom? For the middle class? Good. Low-income people? That is great. Not so. This repeal of the estate tax applies to the wealthiest—not 1 percent, but the top two-tenths of 1 percent. Republicans passed a tax proposal which impacts the top two-tenths of 1 percent and leaves nothing for 99.8 percent of Americans. Cut education, cut health care, cut nutrition, and give the tax breaks to billionaires. By repealing the estate tax, the average tax breaks for multimillionaires and billionaires would be about \$3 million.

When you go around Vermont and you go around America, do people say: Hey, what we really need, what our

major priority is, is not to feed the hungry, not to make college affordable, not to create jobs, but to give a tax break to billionaires? That is in their budget.

Not only do they give a huge tax break to the wealthy—what else do they do? They raise taxes on low-income and working families—folks who do not make a whole lot of campaign contributions. What the Republican budget does is increase taxes by not extending the benefits we put into the earned income tax credit and the child tax credit. It allows those additional benefits to expire, which means that low-income and moderate-income families will pay more in taxes.

In fact, we estimate that tax hike for low-income and middle-income families will be about \$900 apiece for more than 13 million families. Raise taxes to low- and moderate-income families and lower taxes for billionaires. Anybody believe those are the priorities that should be in a budget for the American people?

I will have more to say about this budget later. But the Republican budget does not address the significant problems facing America: how we create the millions of jobs we need, how we raise the minimum wage to a living wage, how we address pay equity so women workers don't make 78 cents on the dollar compared to men, how we rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. It doesn't address any of those issues. But what it does is make a bad situation worse. I would hope that my colleagues would have the courage to stand up to Wall Street, to stand up to the big money interests, and start defending the working families of this country and vote no on this resolution.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, as part of this discussion, I want to mention something that was very significant that happened last night. It happened after the press went to bed, I think, but a very important thing, and that is a thing called the doc fix passed. The SGR passed this body last night in a very bipartisan way, after a series of amendments that were open floor amendments. That is what is supposed to happen around here.

One of the reasons I mention that is, I have always said if you can't see a doctor, you don't have insurance at all. With the way we have been setting up Medicare payments for doctors, we have been driving them out of the profession. We have been eliminating doctors. We have been having doctors tell their kids don't become a doctor, because of what Congress is doing, holding them hostage every 6 months. That got taken care of last night.

I don't know, we have been doing that for, I think, about 18 years, just 1 fix at a time. So it is nice that we are finally able to make that permanent.

I mentioned that was Medicare. This is the first budget the Republicans have gotten to participate in in many years, but the Democrats got to work on the health care bill, and that was part of their budget. In fact, it was part of the reconciliation in the budget, which is a special way of passing something without 60 votes. In that budget they took \$714 billion from Medicare, and they didn't put it into Medicare. There were just some comments about how the budget I worked on has a little over \$400 million of Medicare savings. That Medicare savings is what the President suggested should be done in Medicare savings, and we put that Medicare savings back into Medicare. That is the only way you can save the fund.

So we have taken into consideration a lot of these issues. The cost of college—I have been through numerous hearings in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. I used to be chairman of the committee and I have been ranking member of the committee, and I expired my time as ranking member on that committee, but we did a lot of hearings on the cost of college. Probably the biggest suggestion I can have for people living in the East is send your kids West.

I was checking to see why more people couldn't get into community college on the east coast. I am not talking about the big colleges, which also have a very big problem on the number of students they can take and are very selective in what they take, but I found out that most of the community colleges were filled out here. Consequently, some for-profit colleges were able to charge considerably more than community college and we looked into ways to eliminate that practice. Of course, the way it got eliminated, if you did that to the public colleges as well, we would put them out of business. But I would mention that it is less expensive for an out-of-State student to go to the University of Wyoming or one of our community colleges than it is to get in-State tuition in most of the places in the United States.

There was a mention of estate tax. That is a recommendation that was put in as a deficit-neutral measure. I am not sure where the raising the taxes on the poor comes from, except for the comment that the extensions that we do annually on that weren't in there. There is a good reason why those aren't in there. We have provided a reconciliation instruction that would allow for tax reform, although the chairman of the committee said we are going to do that in a bipartisan way.

We are going to have tax reform that will take care of fairness and simplicity and accountability in our tax system. This is a particularly important time to talk about that. Today is tax day, and I hope everybody in America has or will file their taxes today. I know there has been some difficulty getting through on the lines to be able

to talk to the IRS about tax problems, and I want to chastise the IRS a little bit for that. They are trying to show they need more money, instead of allocating personnel to where they are really needed. If they answer more questions right now, they don't have as many things they have to do later, and they will collect more money than if they don't answer those questions. The proper committee needs to take a look at whether they have adequate revenue to do their job, but again, there are inefficiencies there. They are talking about needing more money because when they audit, they are able to get \$4 to \$6 for every dollar they spend. They should be embarrassed. Public auditors in a company expect to get \$15 to \$20 per dollar that they audit. They have got to come up with a better selection procedure for who needs to be audited, and go after the big bucks. There are a number of things the IRS ought to do.

When I first came to Washington, I tried to talk to different agencies about inefficiencies they had. I was a freshman, so I had a lot of time to do some of those things. One of the agencies I wanted to look at as an accountant was the IRS. As a result of some of my meetings at the IRS, we had some hearings here about being taxpayer friendly. People might recall that the people who served as witnesses in the past had to be voice-modulated behind screens. That should not happen in America. We should have a tax system that people can comply with without the gestapo kinds of tactics that are sometimes used.

So we need to do something to make our tax system more efficient, more accountable, and fairer. I am convinced that Senator HATCH and Senator WYDEN, the chairman and the ranking member of the committee, are going to do some things on taxes, and I think the American people will like it. They are past due. They can end those complications and get more accountability, which will make the IRS's job a lot easier and also make it better for hard-working taxpayers in America.

So there are a lot of things a budget can do. I am hoping we will do them.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me just pick up on a couple of the points my friend from Wyoming, Senator ENZI, made. The Republicans often say, and Senator ENZI said it now, that Democrats cut \$714 billion from Medicare. To the best of my knowledge, not one penny involved in those cuts cut any benefits to the American people.

What the Affordable Care Act attempted to do—and maybe we made some progress, as Senator ENZI pointed out, last night with the so-called doc fix—is to make Medicare more efficient. What is wrong with that? What is wrong with saving money? What the American people want us to do is make

programs more efficient. In fact, Senator ENZI was talking about that a moment ago. He is right. But the idea, the implication, that those cuts resulted in benefit cuts is not accurate.

Furthermore, what some of that money—those savings—went to is filling, plugging the doughnut hole so that seniors would not have to pay money out of their own pockets for prescription drugs.

So if you could save money in a bureaucracy—and God knows the U.S. health care system is the most wasteful and bureaucratic of any in the world—if we can make the system more efficient, save money, put that money into helping seniors afford prescription drugs, what is the problem with that? I do not think so.

Senator ENZI talked about the IRS and people having difficulty making connections, which is clearly not right. He is right. He also mentioned, quite correctly, that for every dollar we invest in various parts of the IRS which do audits, we can make—what was that, \$4 to \$6? I think that is a pretty good investment. Most business people would say: All right, I can get \$4 to \$6 for every dollar that I invest. Let's do it.

I look forward to working with Senator ENZI and other Republicans to, in fact, do just that. We can argue about the Tax Code, and we will. But I think we don't argue that when people owe it, they should pay it. Right. We should change it if we do not like it.

So if we can invest a dollar into the IRS and get \$6 to \$4 back, I think that is a pretty good investment. Senator ENZI was right in saying that last night we passed a pretty good piece of legislation. Not perfect by any means. I had some serious concerns about it. I voted for it. One of the reasons I voted for it is it extended for another 2 years a program that I worked very hard on—that is, the Federally Qualified Community Health Center Program which is playing a huge role in providing health care and dental care and low-cost prescriptions drugs and mental health counseling to many millions of Americans in all of our 50 States. We got a significant increase. I fought very hard for a significant increase in that program as part of the Affordable Care Act that was going to expire.

As a result of yesterday's legislation, in addition to the doc fix, we have extended—and I see Senator BLUNT here, who has been active in that as well—we were able to extend for another 2 years funding for the Community Health Center Program, something that I think was important.

Senator ENZI was right. I think that is a step forward. But that should not be confused with the budget. The Republican budget is an unmitigated disaster—tax breaks for billionaires, cuts in programs that Americans desperately need, raising taxes for low-income working families.

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. ENZI. 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 Senator has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to disagree in the House amendment, agree to the request by the House for a conference, and authorize the Presiding Officer to appoint conferees.

Mr. TESTER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 145 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Alexander	Ernst	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Murkowski
Blunt	Gardner	Perdue
Boozman	Graham	Portman
Burr	Grassley	Risch
Capito	Hatch	Roberts
Cassidy	Heller	Rounds
Coats	Hoeven	Rubio
Cochran	Inhofe	Sasse
Collins	Isakson	Scott
Coons	Johnson	Sessions
Corker	Kaine	Sullivan
Cornyn	King	Thune
Cotton	Kirk	Tillis
Crapo	Lankford	Toomey
Daines	Lee	Warner
Enzi	McCain	Wicker

NAYS—43

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Klobuchar	Sanders
Boxer	Leahy	Schatz
Brown	Manchin	Schumer
Cantwell	Markey	Shaheen
Cardin	McCaskill	Stabenow
Carper	Menendez	Tester
Casey	Merkley	Udall
Donnelly	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Franken	Nelson	
Gillibrand	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Shelby	Vitter
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The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S DEATH

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, today we honor the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's death. We all know the tragic story: On the evening of April 14, 1865, the 4-year anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War and just days after its end at Appomattox, President Lincoln was shot while attending the theater. The next morning, his last, labored breathing ceased.

His fanatically unreconciled assassin was enraged by Lincoln's achievements: his saving of the Union; his emancipation of the slaves; his forecast that the freed slaves would soon be voting; his rededication of the Nation to the Declaration and to the Constitution in which it is embodied. Lincoln lived for these things, and he also died for them.

Days earlier Lincoln's assassin, in attendance at the second inaugural, had ignored the reelected President's eloquent plea "to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds," doing so "with malice toward none, with charity for all."

A year-and-a-half earlier, dedicating the cemetery at Gettysburg, Lincoln had said that "history would little note nor long remember" what he said. Here he was wrong—or at least falsely modest—for the Gettysburg Address is among the most beautiful and memorable speeches in history. He called upon us to "be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us," and "that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

His words call upon us still to take "increased devotion" from those at Gettysburg and every war since who gave "the last full measure of devotion." Soon he would be among those honored dead, the final and most poignant casualty in the same war, and his death is another reason for us to renew our devotion to our great country.

We should think, then, about Lincoln's message, which is like the message of our Nation. On the question of equality, Lincoln was as precise as a mathematician and as lyrical as a poet.

Of equality and slavery, he said:

As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy.

Of equality and the Declaration, Lincoln said:

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say that we are all equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal in "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This they said, and this they meant.

Now put these propositions together. We are unequal in most respects, but

we are equal in our rights. We own ourselves, and no one else may own us. We own the government, and the government does not own us. We are entitled to our lives with the talents that God gave us. Any form of government that interferes with these rights is wrong.

But in the world today are rogue nations that are growing in strength and violate these principles. They constitute a menace to our freedom and to civilization itself.

At home, our government grows ever greater in its size, in its reach, and in its expense. The law is flouted increasingly by high authority. And our people say with increasing intensity that they mistrust and even fear their government. It may be for the people, but it is less and less "of and by" the people.

On this 150th anniversary of Lincoln's death, let us be here reminded and dedicated to that cause for which Lincoln himself gave the last full measure of devotion. Let us dedicate ourselves, in Lincoln's words, "to finish the work we are in," so that we "may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:44 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. FLAKE).

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

If no one yields time, the time will be charged equally.

The Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk my motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation related to retirement benefits, which may not include legislation cutting benefits under the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program established under title II of the Social Security Act, increasing the retirement age, or privatizing the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as I mentioned earlier, I happen to believe the Republican budget we will be discussing today moves us in exactly the wrong direction. At a time when the

middle class is in decline and the gap between the very rich and everybody else is growing wider, what the Republican budget does is make ferocious attacks on programs desperately depended upon by working families while at the same time providing outrageous tax breaks to the very wealthiest of the wealthy. That makes no sense to me at all.

One area where the Republican budget is negligent—one of many areas where the Republican budget is negligent—is in the issue of Social Security. Social Security is perhaps the most important and successful Federal program that was ever initiated. It is life and death to millions of seniors and people with disabilities in this country, and it has a history of enormous success. Before Social Security was established, about half of the seniors in this country lived in poverty. Today, while too high, that number is somewhere around 10 percent.

Unfortunately, in recent years what we have seen is an increase in senior poverty. We have seen many seniors struggling to pay their bills, to heat their homes, and to buy the medicine they need. It seems to me that in this moment, not only should we not be talking about cutting Social Security, as many of our Republican colleagues are, we should be talking about expanding Social Security benefits. I have introduced legislation to do just that. But today I rise to bring forth legislation—bring forth a motion to instruct the budget conferees to include a deficit-neutral reserve fund to protect retirement benefits by not cutting Social Security benefits, by not raising the retirement age, and by not privatizing Social Security. So in essence, what this motion to instruct says is that we go on record as Members of the U.S. Senate that we will not cut Social Security benefits, that we will not raise the retirement age, and that we will not privatize Social Security.

At a time of massive wealth and income inequality, when 99 percent of all of the new income generated in this country is going to the top 1 percent and when over half of the American people have less than \$10,000 in savings, the last thing any Member of the Senate should be thinking about is cutting Social Security. Today, the average Social Security benefit is just \$1,328 a month—not a lot of money.

Now, 20 percent of senior citizens are living on an average income of just \$7,600 a year. Frankly, I don't know how anybody lives on an income of \$7,600 a year. I don't know how you buy food. I don't know how you buy the medicine you need, how you take care of your basic needs. But that is the reality. More than one-third of our senior citizens rely on Social Security for virtually all of their income. In other words, Social Security for them—more than a third—is not just a small part of their total income, it is virtually all of their income. Two-thirds of American

seniors depend on Social Security for more than half of their income.

The reality is, despite some of the rhetoric we hear around here or see on TV, we do not have a Social Security crisis. America has a retirement crisis. Given this reality, our job is to expand Social Security benefits, not cut them.

I have been distressed that in three out of the four major Budget Committee hearings held this year, Republicans invited witnesses who testified in support of cutting Social Security. John Engler, the head of the Business Roundtable, representing the CEOs of some of the largest corporations and Wall Street banks in this country, was one of the Republican witnesses. Mr. Engler and the Business Roundtable are the leaders of corporate America. These are the guys who make millions of dollars a year in salary. These are the guys who have huge retirement benefits. They are asking Congress to cut Social Security COLAs for senior citizens and disabled veterans and to raise the retirement age to 70 years of age.

Imagine that. People who are multimillionaires and have huge retirement benefits are coming to Capitol Hill and telling Members of Congress to cut Social Security. It turns out, in fact, that the CEOs of the Business Roundtable have retirement benefits of their own of some \$88,000 a month. So we have the heads of large corporations who have retirement benefits of \$88,000 a month—\$1 million a year—and they are telling the Congress to cut benefits for people who are trying to survive on \$14,000 a year. That is an outrage.

I am getting a little bit tired of being lectured by CEOs of large corporations who want to cut the Social Security benefits of elderly people. That is wrong.

I am also tired of hearing folks on TV say that Social Security is going broke. Well, the truth is Social Security is not going broke. Social Security has a \$2.8 trillion surplus and could pay out every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 18 years. Now, is 18 years a terribly long time? No, it is not. Should we develop legislation to extend Social Security for decades after those 18 years? Yes, we should, and I have done that. But, please, I hope that my colleagues will not stand up here and tell us that Social Security is going broke because it is not.

I believe the American people feel very strongly that in these difficult times Social Security is a major safety net for so many of the elderly and disabled. When we vote tonight, our job is to send a very, very clear message that the Senate is not going to cut Social Security, it is not going to privatize Social Security, and it is not going to raise the age at which people get those Social Security benefits.

With that, I yield the floor for the Senator from Hawaii.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member of the Budget Committee, the Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion to instruct, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Hawaii [Mr. SCHATZ] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ensuring all legally married same-sex spouses have equal access to the Social Security and veterans' benefits they have earned and receive equal treatment under the law pursuant to the Constitution of the United States in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, 3 weeks ago, the Senate held an important vote on an amendment to the budget resolution, and 56 of our colleagues, including 11 Republicans, joined me in affirming the need for legislation to ensure that all legally married spouses, including gay couples, have access to Social Security and VA benefits that their families have earned.

This amendment passed with bipartisan support because it is fundamentally about fairness.

Imagine a veteran who served his country for decades fighting for equality and freedom around the world and he gets married in a State that allows gay marriage. If he is permanently disabled from his service, his spouse is eligible for veterans' spousal benefits. They have earned these benefits. But if they move or if they drive over the border from Florida into Georgia, for example, they lose those benefits. The same scenario applies to our seniors and their right to Social Security spousal benefits.

Why does this happen? Simply because the Federal right to these benefits happens to be defined in law with respect to the State of residence rather than the State of celebration of the marriage. In other words, eligibility for these Federal benefits is based on where you live, not where you were married. So we have one Federal right and two unequal outcomes based on the person's residence. This is the definition of unequal treatment under the law.

No one is denying that Americans earned their Social Security and veterans' benefits regardless of whether they are gay or straight. And since the Supreme Court's decision in the Windsor case struck down parts of the Defense of Marriage Act, no one can deny that the Federal Government is required to recognize all legal marriages.

For almost all Federal agencies, this went into effect right away. Gay married couples can now file joint taxes. In

legal proceedings before the Federal Government same-sex spouses are given the same legal rights as all other spouses. Under the Family and Medical Leave Act, an employee can now take leave to care for a same-sex spouse. These are just a few of the ways that the Federal Government brought its policies into line with the law.

The Social Security Administration and the VA, however, are tripped up by an old wording in their authorizing statutes. Working together, we can fix this. We can pass legislation to ensure that all legally married couples receive equal treatment under the law regardless of where they live. The amendment that the Senate voted to include in the budget affirms the need for this legislation.

Allowing unequal treatment under the law goes against American values, and it goes against our Constitution. Equality under Federal laws should not end when you cross State lines. We are not debating whether gay marriage should be legal in all 50 States. That question is currently in front of the Supreme Court. We are debating whether a Federal right should be afforded to all Americans regardless of where they live.

For those who are concerned with preserving States' rights, I understand that perspective, but we should all support fixing the statutes governing Social Security and veterans' benefits. Fixing these statutes does not impact State law whatsoever. In contrast, by not fixing these statutes, the Federal Government is ignoring the laws of States that allow gay marriage. It actually does harm to States' rights to allow this situation to continue.

This is not an ideological proposal, and I should point out that the Senator from Washington, PATTY MURRAY, and the Senator from New Hampshire, JEANNE SHAHEEN—this was originally their idea. First, Senator MURRAY provided this as a piece of legislation on the Social Security side, and JEANNE SHAHEEN, likewise, presented this on the VA side. We worked together during the so-called vote-arama to merge these proposals into one because the same principle applies for both Federal benefits, which is that equal protection under the law should not depend on which of the 50 States an American citizen resides in. This is about treating veterans, disabled Americans, and our seniors equally, no matter where they live or what their sexual orientation may be.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I yield time to the Senator from Ohio, Mr. BROWN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Vermont and also the senior Senator from Wyoming for their work.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside and that my motion be sent to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Hearing none, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to ending "Too Big To Fail" bailouts for Wall Street mega-banks with over \$500,000,000,000 in total assets, as set forth in amendment 994 to S. Con. Res. 11 (as agreed to by the Senate).

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, this amendment, about which I asked to instruct the conferees, passed by a voice vote, and I appreciate the acceptance of it by Senator ENZI and Senator SANDERS during the vote 2 weeks ago. We know too big to fail is still with us. We know that it is really all about those megabanks that are over \$500 billion in total assets. That is what my amendment speaks to.

In the 6½ years since Wall Street pushed our economy to the brink of collapse, the biggest banks have gotten, as we know, bigger.

Think about this statistic. Just 18 years ago, the 6 largest banks in the United States had assets equal to 18 percent of our Nation's gross domestic product. Today, the 6 largest banks have assets equal to 63 percent of our GDP, with an average of more than 5,000 legal entities operating in 57 countries.

These institutions are not just massive, too big to fail in terms of size. They are risky and complex. In many ways they are too big to fail, they are too big to manage, as we have seen from the mistakes they have made, and they are too big in many ways to regulate.

If a financial institution is too big to understand, then it is probably too complex to manage and too opaque to regulate. Dodd-Frank requires large banks to produce an annual living will explaining the bank's plan for its own rapid and orderly resolution through the bankruptcy process in the event of material financial distress or failure.

Last year, the largest 11 banks—all 11 of them—were informed that their living wills were insufficient. In other words, it was not clear to the regulators that these 11 banks would know how to go through resolution. That means they failed to show that their collapse would not cause devastating harm to our economy as a whole. It raises this question: What happens if one of these banks fails?

Today, I urge the Senate to instruct budget negotiators to create a deficit-neutral reserve fund to ensure that the largest Wall Street megabanks can be put through bankruptcy or resolution

without a taxpayer bailout. This is the amendment that Senator VITTER, my Republican colleague from Louisiana, and I spoke out about, and it was passed unanimously in the Senate a couple of weeks ago.

Congress should act on the remedies provided in the law for any bank that cannot produce a credible living will this year. We need to end the cycle that enables large, unsafe banks to enjoy government bailouts. The public is cynical about these too-big-to-fail banks. The public does not believe they are not too big to fail, if you will.

The cycle that allows Wall Street to pile up private profits while forcing American taxpayers to be ready and willing to pick up the tab for their losses and failures is outrageously bad public policy. The American people don't want Congress to wait until we are faced with another crisis. Congress needs to take action now to prevent future economic collapse and future taxpayer-funded bailouts.

As Senator SHELBY, the senior Republican who sits on the banking committee with me, told the Senate banking committee last month, if a bank is too big to fail, it is it probably too big to exist.

This motion to instruct will put the Senate on record that the American taxpayer should never ever again be on the hook for risks taken by megabanks.

I ask my colleagues to vote yes.

PAID SICK LEAVE

Mr. President, for too many Americans, a sick day means a day without pay. Each day workers across the country face impossible dilemmas. Do they go into work knowing the risks to their own health and to others around them or do they stay home and lose a paycheck? Do they send a sick child to school, knowing they are risking the health of their daughter and her entire classroom or do they jeopardize their job by taking a day off? This is a choice too many families face, and it needs to end.

Guaranteeing paid sick and family leave to all Americans would protect public health and increase economic security for millions of families.

In the 20th century, unions fought for workers' rights to collectively bargain—and often one of the protections they were bargaining for was paid sick leave. But after decades of attacks on our labor movement and on our middle class, most Americans are not protected by unions. Too often they have no protection if they have to miss work because of their own illness or that of their child.

43 million workers—including 2 million Ohioans—currently have no paid sick leave. Workers earning the lowest wages are the least likely to have paid sick days and are often unable to afford to take a day off when they or their children get sick.

Not only does this affect their own health, but these workers are often working in service jobs where they risk

infecting others. They are often caring for seniors or children or working in stores, hotels, or restaurants where they risk food contamination.

Adults without paid sick days are 1½ times more likely than adults with paid sick days to report going to work with a contagious illness, according to the National Partnership for Women and Families. That's why the National Partnership for Women and Families and more than 100 employers support this legislation. And so do many business owners, who realize that healthy workers are often more productive workers.

But too many do not, and that is why I urge my colleagues to pass the Healthy Families Act. This legislation would end the agonizing choice faced by families by allowing workers to earn up to 7 days per year in paid sick time.

This plan is good for both workers and businesses. Employers already providing sick time would not have to change their policies as long as they meet the minimum requirements and businesses with fewer than 15 employees would be exempt.

We know that when workers are healthy, they are more productive, and providing sick days decreases turnover and gives employers safer, healthier, and more stable workplaces. Paid sick leave will also save precious health care resources.

When workers go in sick, they can spread illnesses like the flu, and they increase the risk of workplace injury. The American Journal of Public Health found that the lack of paid sick days contributed to an additional 5 million cases of H1N1 during the 2009 pandemic.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research found that paid sick days could decrease emergency room visits by 1.3 million each year, saving the country \$1 billion in health costs. And most importantly, guaranteeing paid sick leave will give families the peace of mind that they can protect their jobs, their families, and their health. That is why it is far past time for us to finally guarantee paid sick leave for all of our workers.

My colleagues have all seen and heard me talk about my canary pin.

Our duty to protect our workers continues and our work is not yet finished. To truly embody the spirit of this pin, we must extend paid sick leave to all Americans—not just those lucky enough to be represented by a union or wealthy enough to have a high-wage job with protections.

No parent in America today should have to choose between a paycheck and a sick child. No worker should have to choose between his job and his health.

I urge my colleagues to join me in passing the Healthy Families Act without delay.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I yield to the Senator from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Vermont.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside and that my motion be sent to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Massachusetts [Ms. WARREN] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision to make college more affordable for middle-class families by allowing borrowers with outstanding Federal and private student loans to refinance at the equivalent interest rates that were offered to Federal student loan borrowers during the 2013-2014 school year and to fully offset the cost of such a program by requiring millionaires to pay at least a 30 percent effective Federal tax rate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. I ask unanimous consent that any time under quorum calls this afternoon be charged equally, regardless of who spoke last.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN HONOR OF THE VICTIMS OF THE BOSTON MARATHON BOMBINGS

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, 2 years ago today, the people of Boston came face-to-face with terror at the finish line for the Boston Marathon. The cowardly attack and its aftermath took four lives, injured many more, and forever changed the lives of the survivors and their families.

In the face of this horrific terrorist attack, Boston responded with courage and community. Our heroic first responders acted swiftly and their bravery saved many lives.

In the days, weeks, and months after the marathon, families and friends came together to lift each other up, to raise the spirit of our city, and to help us heal.

Now, 2 years later, Boston continues to move forward together. A jury just reached a verdict that is another step toward justice for victims and for their families. The strength and perseverance of survivors continues to inspire us, and our community works to keep alive the memories of Krystle Campbell, Lu Lingzi, Martin Richard, and Sean Collier.

Recently, Mayor Marty Walsh announced the city of Boston will now recognize April 15 as One Boston Day. One Boston Day is a chance to honor the victims and survivors of the marathon bombing and an opportunity for people to give back to the community through acts of service. This day helps us remember that in the face of tragedy and violence, our community responds with an open heart.

Next Monday, tens of thousands of people from across the Nation and around the world, once again, will come to Massachusetts for the 2015 Boston Marathon. Our Commonwealth, once again, will commemorate Patriots' Day with reenactments, baseball, parades, and celebrations.

Today, as we mark One Boston Day and the second anniversary of the attack at the Boston Marathon, we recall the spirit of strength and resilience that brought our city and our Commonwealth together, the same spirit of strength and resilience that helps us heal.

As a tribute to honor the victims and survivors of the attack at the 2013 Boston Marathon, I ask my colleagues to join Bostonians in a moment of silence at 2:49 p.m. today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I would like to join Senator WARREN and the rest of the Senate in observing a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings.

The people of the United States will always remember the victims of the previous acts of terrorism that have occurred in the United States and will always stand together as one people. Two years ago today, three innocent people were killed and hundreds injured in two bombings that occurred during the running of the 117th Boston Marathon. On the happiest day in Boston, Patriots' Day, two bombs detonated by the two evil men took lives, limbs, and livelihoods away. That day, we lost Martin Richard, an 8-year-old boy from Dorchester; Krystle Campbell, from Arlington; and Lu Lingzi, who came to the United States from China; and 232 innocent people were also wounded in the bombings.

In the aftermath of the attacks, Officer Sean Collier, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology police force, was assassinated by the two twisted individuals who bombed our city. Officer Collier wasn't just protecting the best and the brightest minds, he was the best and brightest, an impressive and loved officer who has been greatly missed on campus and in our community.

I want to express my deepest thanks to all of the men and women in law enforcement in Massachusetts and around the Nation for their unwavering determination, courage, and resolve to bring to justice those responsible for the Boston Marathon bombings. We

were "Boston Strong" because we were Boston ready, with the best training and personnel available to save lives and to seek justice.

Many others responded decisively: the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, fire and rescue workers, caregivers, Armed Forces, and thousands more who, through their many expressions of care and compassion, brought forth comfort, hope, and the promise of recovery.

Today, under the leadership of Mayor Marty Walsh, the city of Boston is turning April 15 into a new tradition, honoring the resilience, generosity, and strength called One Boston Day. As Mayor Walsh said, "It's a day everyone should come together, spread goodwill throughout the city and recommit ourselves to our deepest values."

Mayor Walsh is right. This is a day for the citizens, businesses, and organizations in the city of Boston to display their humanity and draw neighbors together.

Thank you, Mayor Walsh, for helping all of us understand that the compassion and support we all felt that day should never be forgotten but instead should be a part of our lives every single day.

May the light of One Boston Day shine as an example of how our Nation responds to times of crisis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now observe a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the Boston Marathon bombings.

(Moment of silence.)

Mr. ENZI. 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. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET, FISCAL YEAR 2016—Continued

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. I send to the desk my motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to setting aside the pending motion?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the provision in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate that provides for the establishment of a deficit-neutral reserve fund related to strengthening the United States Postal Service by establishing a moratorium to protect mail

processing plants, reinstating overnight delivery standards, protecting rural service, allowing the Postal Service to innovate and adapt to compete in a digital age, or improving the financial condition of the Postal Service.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I move to instruct conferees on S. Con. Res. 11, a concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, to include in the conference report the provision in the concurrent resolution as passed by the Senate establishing a deficit-neutral reserve fund related to strengthening the U.S. Postal Service by establishing a moratorium to protect mail processing plants, reinstating overnight delivery standards, and protecting rural services.

During the so-called vote-arama, that amendment passed by voice vote. This time I hope we can get a strong rollcall vote on it because it is terribly important that we tell the Postmaster General of the United States that the U.S. Senate wants a strong and vibrant U.S. Postal Service.

What we are saying to the Postmaster General of the United States is pretty simple; that is, do not destroy up to 15,000 middle-class jobs, do not shut down up to 82 mail processing plants, stop slowing down mail service delivery in this country. Speed it up by reinstating strong overnight delivery standards for first-class mail.

I do not know about Arizona and I don't know about Wyoming, but I can tell you that in Vermont we have gotten a significant number of complaints from people who are upset by the slowdown of mail delivery standards. It is, to my mind, just unacceptable, and what we are saying now and will have to say in the months to come is you can't shut down another 82 processing plants, you cannot continue with these inadequate mail delivery standards, and it has to change. The American people and the business community are entitled to know that when they put a letter or document in the mail, it is going to get delivered in a prompt way. Today, that, sadly, is not the case.

For over 230 years and enshrined in our Constitution, the Postal Service has played an enormously important role for the people of our country and for our economy, and that mission today remains as important as it has ever been. The beauty of the Postal Service is that it provides universal service 6 days a week to every corner of our country, no matter how small or how remote. It will deliver mail on Wall Street and it will deliver mail to a home at the end of a back road in the State of Vermont.

The U.S. Postal Service supports, through its efforts, millions of jobs in virtually every sector of our economy. It provides decent-paying union jobs to some 500,000 Americans and, by the way, is the largest employer of veterans in this country.

Whether you are an elderly woman living on a dirt road in a rural area or you are a wealthy CEO executive on

Park Avenue, you get your mail delivered 6 days a week, and the American people pay for this service at a cost which is far less than any place else in the industrialized world. In other words, we get a pretty good bargain when we put a stamp on an envelope.

Unfortunately, despite the success and popularity of the Postal Service, it is under constant attack and has been under constant attack for years, including from those who would like to privatize the Postal Service and ultimately destroy it. Let's be clear. The same people who are attacking the Postal Service are often the same people who are attacking Social Security, Medicare, and so forth, and they essentially want to move to the privatization of virtually every major public institution in this country.

Today, the U.S. Postal Service is in the process of shutting down up to 82 mail processing plants and eliminating up to 15,000 decent-paying jobs. This is in addition to the 141 mail processing facilities that were closed between 2012 and 2013. In January, the Postal Service ended overnight delivery for first-class mail. It didn't get a whole lot of attention, but it happened.

The purpose of this motion is to put the Senate on record in strong opposition to these plant closings and to demand that the Postal Service reinstate strong overnight delivery standards and not destroy good-paying jobs.

We have been told that all of these horrendous cuts are necessary because the Postal Service is experiencing terrible financial problems. They are losing money every single year. Well, the truth is somewhat different. The major reason the Postal Service is in tough financial shape today is not because of email or the Internet, the major reason the Postal Service is hurting financially is because of a mandate signed into law by President Bush in December of 2006, during a lameduck session of Congress that forces the Postal Service to prefund 75 years of future retiree health benefits over a 10-year period. No other government agency or business in America is burdened with a mandate anywhere close to what the Postal Service has to expend, which is \$5.5 billion a year. So the main point is that when you see articles telling you the Postal Service is having financial problems, the main reason—the overwhelming reason—is this necessity to prefund 75 years of future retiring health benefits over a 10-year period at about \$5.5 billion a year. In fact, all—A-L-L—all of the so-called financial losses posted by the Postal Service since October 2012 are due to this prefunding mandate. That is it. Without that mandate, they would be making a modest amount of money.

We don't hear much about it, but I think it is very important for the American people to understand the reality of the finances in the Postal Service. Excluding the prefunding mandate, the Postal Service has actually made a \$1.8 billion profit. So it is a modestly

profitable operation excluding the \$5.5 billion prefunding mandate.

Revenue at the Postal Service has been increasing in recent years. At a time when Postal Service revenue is going up, it makes no sense to eliminate thousands of jobs and slow down the mail service that millions of Americans rely on.

We should be working to strengthen the Postal Service and not to send it into a death spiral. Before this prefunding mandate was signed into law, the Postal Service was also profitable. In fact, from 2003 to 2006, the Postal Service made a combined profit of more than \$5 billion.

I think there is broad bipartisan support, especially from Senators who come from rural areas and who understand just how important the Postal Service is to the people of our States.

Once again, when offered as an amendment at the vote-arama, this passed by voice vote. We are going to ask for a rollcall vote when the voting takes place. I hope we win this vote with a very strong vote and send a message to the Postal Service that we want our Postal Service to provide the quality mail service the American people deserve.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, that passed by a voice vote, which is considered unanimous around here. You cannot get more unanimous than that. I am hoping that out of the 10 to 13 votes we are going to have this afternoon, that some can be done on voice votes. I do not think there is anybody who disagrees with what the Senator has said about closing the postal plants and the extra time it is taking for deliveries. You can add to that how little money it saves because the employees who are in one town, even though their job got moved somewhere else, still have to be retained in that town at some job. It does not amount to much in the way of savings, but it really hurts in the way of efficiency, delivery, and trust in the post office.

So I think we will all be behind you on that one again. I hope that by the time we get to that, it will be a voice vote again.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up Senator BURR's motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. ENZI], for Mr. BURR, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to addressing student loan debt, which may include reducing overlapping student loan repayment programs and creating a simplified income-driven student loan repayment option, as included in section 358 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. ENZI. I would mention that this is a side-by-side to Senator WARREN's amendment. I am hoping that at the time we vote, we can do 1 minute on each side so they have a chance for their explanation.

I now yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Arizona.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

TRADE PROMOTION AUTHORITY

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the need for the Senate to pass trade promotion authority legislation. It is no secret that trade matters in the ability of the United States and our businesses here to sell goods to foreign markets and to buy what we need from abroad to keep our businesses humming along right here at home and to keep Americans employed. This is paramount to our Nation's prosperity. You do not need to be an economist to see it. Anyone who owns an iPhone, drives a foreign car, or shops at Costco—everyone understands even in a small way that trade is beneficial to American companies and to customers alike. Likewise, American farmers and manufacturers and service providers want and need to sell their corn, cotton, beef, tractors, furniture, airplanes, their businesses and financial services to customers around the world who want and need them. Sadly, not all countries see it that way, and they throw up barriers to American goods and services. They do not want them entering their countries. That is why passing trade promotion authority is so important.

Increasing free trade levels the playing field for U.S. companies. It increases competition. It increases access to foreign markets.

According to the Office of U.S. Trade Representative, the United States is the world's largest economy, the largest importer, and the largest exporter of goods and services. In 2014, figures from the International Trade Administration show that the United States exported a record \$2.35 trillion in goods and services.

For those of us who represent border States, this issue hits close to home. In recent years, Mexico has been America's third largest trading partner and our second largest export market. According to the Arizona-Mexico Commission, Arizona ports of entry are gateways to \$41.6 billion in U.S.-Mexican trade annually, of which nearly \$16 billion is attributed to Arizona's own trade with Mexico.

Simply put, without trade promotion authority, the United States would be forced to stand on the sidelines as other countries move forward with their own trade agreements. Without renewing fast-track authority, there is little chance of a successful resolution of the ongoing negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP. This agreement will allow American companies to do business more freely with some of the world's fastest growing economies.

As the Washington Post editorial put it this week, "To this boon to the U.S. and world economies, add the fact that TPP would ensure that the Pacific Rim plays by U.S.-style rules and regulations rather than China's neo-mercantilist rules, and you have a compelling case for swift approval." I agree. But unless we pass trade promotion authority legislation, it will be difficult for the United States to become part of this vital partnership.

I am proud to continue to voice my support for free trade. I look forward to the Senate giving trade promotion authority careful consideration in the coming weeks.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MIKULSKI] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to amending the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to allow for punitive damages, limit the any factor "other than sex" exception, and prohibit retaliation against employees who share salary information, as included in amendment 362 to S. Con. Res. 11 (as not agreed to by the Senate).

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to offer a motion to instruct the conferees based on a bill that I have offered for the last three Congresses; that is, the Paycheck Fairness Act.

What does the Paycheck Fairness Act do? It finishes the job that we started with Lilly Ledbetter. It would, in fact, instruct the conferees to make three reforms:

No. 1, to advance the cause of making sure that women get equal pay for equal work. It would stop retaliation for sharing pay information. Often workers are harassed and humiliated just for asking about coworkers' salaries.

No. 2, it would stop employers from using any reason to pay women less: Oh, the guys do harder jobs. Women aren't breadwinners. OK, it is time for equal pay for equal work.

It would also allow for punitive damages for women who are being discriminated against when the only deterrent against pay discrimination is the

threat of paying women backpay. Discrimination can be factored into the cost of doing business.

Yesterday was Equal Pay Day, something we, unfortunately, commemorate each year. It symbolizes that it takes 104 days longer in a year for a woman to earn what a man earned the previous year.

What does that mean? It means that for what a man earns in 365 days, it takes a woman 469 days to earn the same amount of money—104 days more.

We don't commemorate this day with joy but with a call to action. We need to make a change in the Federal lawbooks to finally get equal pay in the Federal checkbooks.

Now, we want this in the budget act because we know this will be an important way of dealing with a variety of issues. We worked on this legislation for a number of years and, quite frankly, we are frustrated. We are frustrated that time and again we are trying to advance this cause.

It started over 50 years ago. In 1963, Lyndon Johnson, moving on the civil rights legislation, thought that equal pay for women would be an easy thing to pass. At that time, only 11 percent of mothers were in the workforce. Now, there are over 70 percent of mothers in the workforce.

At that time, women were, again, paid 59 cents for every \$1 a man earned. Well, we passed the Civil Rights Act. Now, 50 years later, we are up to 78 cents for every \$1 a man earns. So it has taken us 50 years to advance 20 cents.

Well, that just doesn't work. The women in America feel sidelined, red-lined, and pink-slipped for the way they are discriminated against, and then they face the harassment and intimidation when they simply ask questions to get the pay they deserve.

What we now know, again, is that the facts speak for themselves. Women earn 78 cents for every \$1 a man makes. For women close to the retirement age, the wage gap increases to almost \$14,000 a year. By the time she retires, the average woman has lost almost \$400,000 in a lifetime of wages.

The impact is you get less in Social Security benefits, you have less in savings, and you face the grim possibility of poverty. What we also know is that this has a tremendous impact in terms of single mothers.

Over the weekend, there was a terrific article in the Washington Post saying if you wanted to eliminate poverty among children, you could take a major step in doing so if you closed the pay parity gap. In effect, by paying single women and single mothers equal pay for equal work, you could reduce the poverty rate among children by over 20 percent.

What a startling fact. Well, the fact is that we have been fighting for this for a long time.

I urge the adoption of this amendment. I think it makes important fiscal policy, and it is important for the

family's checkbook and for our checkbook.

I wish to close with these remarks. I think it was the day before, in the New York Times. They were talking about how we are essentially subsidizing those people who are paid the minimum wage.

Now, my background is that I was a social worker. The Presiding Officer is familiar with that. But when you look at the four major components of government subsidies to the poor—Medicaid, TANF, the child care development subsidy, and there is one other thing that I just don't recall at this minute—for actually people who are working—oh, food stamps. Working every single day, they are eligible for government subsidies because they are not paid enough for what they do.

What we often find is that not only is the minimum wage a terrible place to begin, but as you move up the work ladder, often women are in jobs where they are paid less than the men who work beside them. As a result—and it often is the case—we end, then, by dealing with that by our paying for it in Medicaid, in food stamps, and earned income tax credit.

Now, I support those programs. I think when people are poor they need our help, but our goal is to make sure that if you were poor and you want to have a way to get ahead, we should help you.

If you want to be middle class, we should help you get there. One of the ways to do that is to make sure we pay equal pay for equal work.

I hope that my amendment is adopted. I could debate this in more ways, but year after year we come to the floor and we show the disparity between what women make from men for the same job.

This isn't just a woman's issue. Many men here support this. I can tell you who supports it: fathers. Fathers, fathers, fathers. Why do they support it? They work hard to make sure that in many instances their daughters get a break, try to get an education, try to get ahead only to find that although they shouldered the same responsibilities for car payments, paying off student loans, and all of that, they, in fact, are not paid equal pay for equal work. We can change that by voting for the Mikulski amendment in this budget bill.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BENNET. 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. BENNET. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Colorado [Mr. BENNET] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed—

(1) to insist that the final conference report include provisions in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate for the establishment of deficit-neutral reserve funds relating to—

(A) responding to the causes and impacts of climate change, including the economic and national security threats posed by human-induced climate change; and

(B) Department of Defense initiatives to bolster resilience of mission critical department infrastructure to impacts from climate change; and

(2) to recede from the position of the Senate regarding provisions in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate for the establishment of deficit-neutral reserve funds that undermine the response to climate change, including prohibitions on the regulation by the Environmental Protection Agency of greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. BENNET. 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. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk a motion to instruct conferees. I am offering this motion on behalf of Senator MURRAY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to setting aside the pending motion?

Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for Mrs. MURRAY, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include the deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this is a motion to instruct budget conferees to keep in the bill the Senate-passed deficit-neutral reserve fund for legislation to allow Americans to earn paid sick time. This was an amendment which passed during a vote-arama of the Senate by a vote of 61 to 39. So it passed with pretty strong bipartisan support, and I would hope we could pass this language again.

The truth is, at a time when millions of Americans are working longer hours for lower wages, when our middle class

continues to decline, we also have another serious problem in that only 53 percent of workers report having paid sick leave. Well, you know, people get sick. That is a fact of life, and it is unfortunate that only 53 percent of workers report having paid sick leave. This means people are going to work when they are not well. I don't know about you, but I am not enthused about walking into a restaurant where someone who may have the flu or have some other problem is serving food or preparing food. I don't think that is terribly healthy for this country, not to mention that when there are so many contagious illnesses out there, I don't know that we want to have people who are ill and contagious going to work.

So this is a very simple motion and basically reiterates what we had in the first discussion. Again, it won by 61 to 39.

All over this country, States and cities are in the process of enacting paid sick leave legislation, and they are seeing economic benefits from that. They have seen mothers more likely to return to work and higher employment in the leisure, hospitality, education, and health sectors.

So, again, this is the same language Senator MURRAY offered. I strongly support this motion, and I hope my colleagues will vote for it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I send to the desk a motion to instruct conferees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for Mrs. MURRAY, moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision to build on the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 and provide sequester relief in 2016 and 2017 by closing tax loopholes.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this motion is being offered on behalf of Senator MURRAY, and it would instruct budget conferees to build on the Bipartisan Budget Act and provide sequester relief in 2016 and 2017 by closing tax loopholes.

As the ranking member of the Committee on the Budget, I rise today to offer a motion to instruct conferees, on behalf of Senator MURRAY, to S. Con. Res. 11, the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, to pro-

vide 2 years of sequester relief by closing tax loopholes. This is a concept, an idea I very strongly support. Many Members on both sides of the aisle are concerned that Congress will not be able to pass and enact appropriations bills at the sequester levels. The President's fiscal year 2016 budget provides sequester relief. Moreover, the President has indicated he will veto legislation that does not lift the sequester caps.

Discretionary spending has already been cut by \$1.6 trillion, and non-defense discretionary spending is currently on track to be the lowest in 50 years. Nondefense discretionary spending is on track to be the lowest in 50 years.

Instead of continuing to cut non-defense discretionary spending, we need to increase funding for programs, such as education and infrastructure, that reduce income inequality and that create the millions of jobs we so desperately need. We can fund these investments by looking at wasteful spending in the Tax Code that has allowed major corporations to pay very little, if anything, in Federal income taxes.

Each and every year, we are losing well over \$100 billion in revenue because large, profitable corporations and some of the wealthiest Americans in this country are stashing their profits in the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, and other offshore tax havens.

Further, the GAO has reported that the effective tax rate of large, profitable corporations is just 12.6 percent—much lower than the 35-percent statutory rate because of these tax loopholes. That is much lower than what millions of middle-class workers pay to the IRS because of the loopholes written into the Tax Code by corporate lobbyists.

In 1952, 32 percent of all of the revenue generated in this country came from large corporations. Today, that figure is down to just 11 percent. Right now, there are so many loopholes in our Tax Code that it ends up that many large corporations making billions of dollars in profit pay nothing—zero—in corporate taxes to the Federal Government.

As a few examples, General Electric made over \$5.8 billion in profits in the United States last year but paid just nine-tenths of 1 percent of that amount in Federal income taxes. Time Warner made \$4.3 billion in profits and paid nothing in Federal income taxes; in fact, it got a rebate of \$26 million. Xerox made \$628 million in profits in 2014 and paid nothing in Federal income taxes; in fact, it received a tax rebate of \$16 million.

I strongly support this motion which has been introduced by Senator MURRAY to provide sequester relief, particularly for nondefense discretionary programs, and I would hope very much that this motion to instruct will receive wide bipartisan support.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending motion be set aside so that I may call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Michigan [Ms. STABENOW] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the Senate, which would substantially increase out-of-pocket healthcare expenses for senior citizens, and not include the Medicare cuts in the concurrent resolution as agreed to by the House of Representatives, which would end Medicare as it currently exists by turning it into a voucher-based premium support system and eliminate the guaranteed healthcare benefits earned by the people of the United States.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, my motion would instruct conferees to remove from the budget resolution any Medicare cuts that would increase out-of-pocket costs for senior citizens, eliminate guaranteed benefits, or make structural changes to Medicare by turning it into a voucher-based premium support system.

It is incredibly important that something as important as health care for senior citizens and those with disabilities be protected and honored. People are paying into this system. They have paid into this system their whole lives. They have the confidence of knowing that health care is available to them, those now on Medicare, and we need to make sure we are strengthening this health care system, not fundamentally changing it from a guaranteed system to some kind of a voucher system or making other kinds of changes that will cost people more money.

When we began this process, my hope was that we could have a spending plan that really would address the middle class and a budget resolution that would make it very clear that this is about giving every American a fair shot—a fair shot to stay in the middle class or to work hard and get into the middle class—that this is really about strengthening our country. We don't have an economy without a middle class. It is not the other way around. We don't have an economy without a middle class. That is the economic engine.

I was hoping for a budget that would reflect one of our core beliefs—that if

you work hard in America, you are going to have a fair shot to be able to get ahead. But that is not what this budget is about. Unfortunately, this budget does not do that. Instead, Republicans have written a budget that continues to rig the system for the wealthy and the well-connected rather than creating opportunity for everybody to make it.

That is really the fundamental fight we have had through this whole budget process. How do we grow the economy? Is it the top down? Do we give to those one more time at the very top and hope that it trickles down and that somehow people who are working hard every day will actually feel it and have money in their pockets, or do we focus on the middle? Do we focus on those working hard to get into the middle class and create an opportunity to grow from the bottom up, which is the way we know the economies grow?

So I am deeply concerned about the cuts to Medicare in this budget. I am also deeply concerned about the other cuts to health care in this budget. We all wish we could control whether we get sick or whether our children get sick or whether moms and dads get sick, but the reality is that health care is an issue for all of us. It is not a frill; it is a necessity. Medicare has addressed that for seniors and people with disabilities in a way that gives them peace of mind and confidence in a quality medical system.

We just addressed through a bill last night the whole question of making sure that doctors are paid and that they are available to people who are on Medicare. We have another part of the health care system called Medicaid, which is a lifeline to so many Americans who continue to feel the effects of the great recession and are struggling for basic health care needs. In fact, 80 percent of the Medicaid Program spending—80 percent of the dollars—goes to seniors in nursing homes and in some way impacts all of us—friends, neighbors, relatives.

So we are looking at a budget on the Medicaid front—when we combine it all, eliminating the Medicaid expansion and having the other cuts in the budget—of a \$1.2 trillion cut in the Senate budget. The Senate Republican budget cuts Medicaid health care—80 percent of which goes to seniors in nursing homes—by \$1.2 trillion. It is even worse in the House. I worry when we are now looking at going to conference with the House of Representatives, where their combined cut was \$1.7 trillion to Medicaid, of which most of the money goes to low-income seniors in nursing homes. They would then also turn it into a block grant and cut it on top of that, and we don't even know if it would get spent on health care.

Unfortunately, this budget, while not really balancing, is attempting to be balanced on the backs of the most vulnerable Americans in our country, and our seniors are taking a huge hit in

this budget. The House cuts all together \$316 billion and moves away from the guaranteed benefit to something that has been called vouchers or premium support or other structures that don't look like Medicare.

In the Senate, all together now, when you add it up and the effects of what was done last night, we are looking at a cut of \$566 billion.

My amendment would stop that \$566 billion cut in Medicare or at least it would instruct—I should clarify that. I wish it would just automatically stop it, but it would instruct the final conference committee to not move forward on that \$566 billion in Medicare cuts. We are talking about Americans who have worked hard all their lives, and they have earned that health care benefit.

Let me also say that when we think about a budget that would reflect opportunity for everyone to get ahead or one that keeps a system rigged against the average American, we saw vote after vote where, unfortunately, colleagues on the other side of the aisle let opportunities slip away to provide real equal pay for women, equal pay for equal work. Yesterday was the day in which women finally made as much money in 2014 as a man made in 2014. It took the majority of women in this country until yesterday to make the same amount of money. We have an opportunity to fix that. The Republican colleagues said no. We had an opportunity to invest in rebuilding America—roads, bridges, water, sewer systems, crumbling infrastructure. Our distinguished ranking member is a champion on the issue of infrastructure. We had an opportunity to create millions of jobs and Republican colleagues said no. We had an opportunity to invest in education but instead we saw—and we see—a bill that takes away funding for Pell grants that doesn't help millions of Americans who are struggling to pay back college loans.

I just left a group of high school students from Brighton, MI, and the question I received was, What are you doing about the cost of college—and I am worried about the cost of college. I want to do the right thing. I want to go to school. They want to do what we are all asking them to do to get skills so they can compete in a global economy, be responsible adults.

Too many will come out of that college experience with more than enough debt to buy a big house, and then they will not be able to buy the house as they dig themselves out of debt.

We all know that in this bill, the Republican budget, both in the House and Senate, repeals the Affordable Care Act—between 16 million American people, health care gone, on top of all of the cuts to Medicare for senior citizens, senior citizens in nursing homes under Medicaid.

When we had an opportunity to close tax loopholes, I offered again my Bring Jobs Home Act to say a company

should not be able to move on paper out of this country and avoid paying their fair share to contribute to the services of America. They still breathe the air. They still drink the water. They still drive on the roads. They still get the educated workforce. But they move on paper, and now they are not a part of those contributing to America. I don't think that is very patriotic, frankly. We had a chance to close that and instead support the middle class, people working hard, increase their earned-income tax credit, and Republican colleagues said no.

So, unfortunately, we have in front of us a budget that says no to opportunity to the majority of Americans and yes to continued policies that, frankly, have not worked because they are focused on the privileged few.

If I might take just 1 more minute, I want to put my hat on as ranking member, former chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and say also that as a Member of the Budget Committee and the Agriculture Committee, I strongly urge the leadership in the Senate not to accept the reconciliation instruction related to agriculture and to, therefore, open the farm bill, all of the phases of the farm bill that we worked so hard to get passed in a bipartisan basis.

I commend the chairman for not including that reconciliation instruction in the Senate. I very much appreciate that, but the House does. We have Members on both sides of the aisle deeply concerned about reopening what is economic certainty. We have a lot of places that there is not certainty. But in rural America at least we have 5 years of economic certainty through the farm bill, and we have nearly 400 agricultural organizations led by the American Farm Bureau, food groups, conservation groups, nutrition groups that have asked us not to open the farm bill again in this process. I am very hopeful the Senate's position on that will be the position that is maintained.

I offer an amendment that we will be voting on Medicare. I think it will be wonderful if we came together and said no to the cuts in Medicare and that we would show that we understand what is at stake for that program. Also, I hope we will very clearly indicate that we want to stand with rural America and our farmers and make sure they do not have to worry about opening the policies of the farm bill until the 5 years on the farm bill has been completed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. I yield such time as the Senator from Nebraska needs to offer two motions. Those will be the last two offered, after which I think both sides are prepared to yield back their time and begin voting on the 13 different votes which we will be asking consent on when she finishes her speech.

I yield time to the Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Which motion does the Senator wish to call up first?

Mrs. FISCHER. Equal pay.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mrs. FISCHER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to promoting equal pay, which may include preventing discrimination on the basis of sex and preventing retaliation against employees for seeking or discussing wage information, as included in section 356 of S. Con. Res. 11, as agreed to by the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion and call up my motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mrs. FISCHER] moves that the managers on the part of the Senate at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the House amendment to the resolution S. Con. Res. 11 be instructed to insist that the final conference report include a provision relating to a deficit-neutral reserve fund relating to tax credits for employers providing paid family and medical leave.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENZI. 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. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back except for 5 minutes equally divided between the managers and that the Senate vote on the pending motions to instruct in the order listed, with 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form between each vote, and that all votes after the first in the series be limited to 10 minutes: No. 1 would be Brown on Wall Street banks; No. 2 would be Sanders, postal plant closures; No. 3 would be Burr, student loans; No. 4 would be Warren, student loans; No. 5 would be Sanders, Social Security; No. 6 would be Schatz, same-sex marriage benefits; No. 7 would be Bennet, climate change; No. 8 would be Fischer, side-by-side to Mikulski; No. 9, Mikulski, equal pay for equal work; No. 10, Fischer, side-by-side to Murray;

No. 11, Murray, paid sick leave; No. 12, Murray, eliminate sequestration; and No. 13, Stabenow, Medicare cuts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as I have indicated on many occasions, I think this Republican budget is, frankly, a disaster. It causes severe harm for some of the most vulnerable people in this country. It throws 27 million people off of health insurance. It forces elderly people to pay more for prescription drugs. It cuts \$90 billion in mandatory Pell grants at a time when young people are struggling to be able to afford to go to college. Pell grants are one of the significant ways that they are able to go to college; \$90 billion is cut. It cuts Head Start significantly, such that 110,000 fewer young children will be able to enroll in Head Start. It cuts title I education program money directed to schools with low-income kids, the schools who need help the most.

At a time when so many of our families are struggling to put food on the table, this budget cuts nutrition programs, including the WIC Program, by \$10 billion. That is the nutrition program that goes to pregnant women, mothers, and infants. It makes other massive cuts in nutrition. It makes cuts in affordable housing. It makes cuts in job training.

Now, in the midst of all of this, what it does also, unbelievably, while wreaking havoc on the lives of millions of working families, it decides that we can afford to give huge tax breaks to the very, very, very wealthiest—the top two-tenths of 1 percent—by abolishing the estate tax which would provide \$263 billion in tax breaks for the wealthiest two-tenths of 1 percent of the American people. But then, after giving huge tax breaks to the very, very, very rich, what it does is raise taxes for low-income and working-class families by increasing taxes by \$900 apiece for more than 13 million families by allowing the expansion of the earned-income tax credit and the child tax credit to expire.

So massive cuts in health care, education, and nutrition for working families; huge tax breaks—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for one more minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. As I was saying, huge tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires and then increased taxes for low-income and working people. This is moving the country in exactly the wrong direction.

Today, our side of the aisle brought forth 10 separate motions to instruct, which, if passed, would make this budget a much better document, and I hope very much that both sides of the aisle will support these motions.

With that, I yield the floor.
 The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I thank the ranking member for his cooperation to date and look forward to working with him on the conference committee, along with the Members of the House, both the Republicans and the Democrats. The purpose of that is to make this is a better budget bill.

I will reiterate that I had about 4 weeks to put it together and 4 months to get it done. We have not done one in 8 years, so it was quite a challenge. We are getting closer now, and today we will have an opportunity to voice some concerns. I am glad we are at this point. I look forward to working with the conferees.

I yield back any time.

BROWN MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Ohio related to Wall Street banks.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this motion is being offered by Senator BROWN of Ohio. Our big banks are too big. The largest banks are now 38 percent larger than they were before the crisis. In terms of outstanding loans, one out of seven Americans is being pursued by a debt collector. U.S. banks are so big that the six largest financial institutions in this country today have assets of roughly \$9.8 trillion, which is equivalent to 60 percent of the Nation's GDP.

Being big and powerful is good for the banks and bad for this country. For example, Bloomberg says the too-big-to-fail subsidy is massive. By being big, they get huge subsidies. It amounts to \$83 billion a year, and that is why I support this provision to stop too big to fail.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, this bill is cosponsored by Senator VITTER from our side. If a big bank fails under the Senator's reform, there is nothing that protects the taxpayers from having to save the bank. In other words, this approach does not do what many experts believe is needed, which is to expand the bankruptcy laws to permit an orderly disposition to failed banks without taxpayer bailouts.

I will note that the specific policies listed are all authorities that exist today in various financial regulatory agencies, and I believe all Senators support the goal of eliminating the risk of taxpayer bailouts.

Having said that, I ask that all the Republicans support this motion and offer to take it on a voice vote.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 86, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 146 Leg.]

YEAS—86

Ayotte	Gardner	Murphy
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Barrasso	Graham	Nelson
Bennet	Grassley	Paul
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Perdue
Blunt	Heitkamp	Peters
Booker	Heller	Portman
Boozman	Hirono	Reed
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Rounds
Cantwell	Isakson	Rubio
Capito	Johnson	Sanders
Cardin	Kaine	Schatz
Carper	King	Schumer
Casey	Kirk	Scott
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Sessions
Cochran	Lankford	Shaheen
Collins	Leahy	Shelby
Coons	Lee	Stabenow
Corker	Manchin	Sullivan
Cornyn	Markey	Tester
Daines	McCain	Thune
Donnelly	McCaskill	Udall
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Warren
Ernst	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Mikulski	Wicker
Fischer	Moran	Wyden
Franken	Murkowski	

NAYS—11

Alexander	Crapo	Sasse
Burr	Flake	Tillis
Coats	Hatch	Toomey
Cotton	Risch	

NOT VOTING—3

Cruz	Reid	Vitter
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The motion was agreed to.

SANDERS MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion to instruct offered by the Senator from Vermont relative to postal plant closures.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, in the State of Vermont and I expect all over this country, especially in rural areas, what we have seen is a significant slowdown in mail delivery by the U.S. Postal Service. What this provision is about is the establishment of a deficit-neutral reserve fund which establishes a moratorium to prevent the shutting down of up to 82 mail processing plants all across this country. It is asking that we reinstate overnight delivery standards, undo what the Postal Service has done, that we protect rural services, and that we allow the Postal Service to innovate and adapt to compete in a digital age.

The basic financial problems of the Postal Service are that they have to pay \$5.5 billion every year in retirement benefits. That program already has \$50 billion in its account. Do away

with that, and the Postal Service will make a modest profit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, there is a huge concern, particularly in rural America, about the closing down of the processing centers in States. Our State no longer has a processing center. It takes at least an extra day to get the mail.

So I would urge my colleagues to accept this motion, and I would ask if the sponsor would take it by voice vote.

Mr. SANDERS. I have to call for a rollcall vote on this one.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 85, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 147 Leg.]

YEAS—85

Alexander	Franken	Murphy
Ayotte	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Barrasso	Graham	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Portman
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Blunt	Heinrich	Risch
Booker	Heitkamp	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rounds
Brown	Hirono	Sanders
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Cantwell	Inhofe	Schatz
Capito	Isakson	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson	Scott
Carper	Kaine	Sessions
Casey	King	Shaheen
Cochran	Klobuchar	Shelby
Collins	Lankford	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Manchin	Tester
Cotton	Markey	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wicker
Ernst	Mikulski	Wyden
Feinstein	Moran	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NAYS—11

Cassidy	Kirk	Rubio
Coats	Lee	Tillis
Corker	Paul	Toomey
Flake	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—4

Boxer	Reid
Cruz	Vitter

The motion was agreed to.

BURR MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the

motion to instruct by the Senator from North Carolina relative to student loans.

The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise to offer a motion to instruct conferees that would insist that the final conference report on the budget include a provision to address student loans. This very simple motion to instruct tracks the amendment introduced by me and Senators KING, WARNER, and ALEXANDER that was included in the budget resolution by a voice vote.

The Senate has already demonstrated its support by unanimously passing this under a voice vote.

I yield to my cosponsor, Senator KING.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise to support this amendment. This simply simplifies the repayment options for students under the present student loan program, which is, frankly, very confusing—up to nine different programs with confusing names and confusing terms. This boils it down to two simple ones: a fixed repayment schedule or a variable schedule based upon income. I should mention that I see this as an important stand-alone provision.

I am also going to support Senator WARREN's amendment on refinancing student loans.

I believe this is an important amendment. I urge my colleagues to vote yes.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 148 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Brown	Cochran
Ayotte	Burr	Collins
Baldwin	Cantwell	Coons
Barrasso	Capito	Corker
Bennet	Cardin	Cornyn
Blumenthal	Carper	Cotton
Blunt	Casey	Crapo
Booker	Cassidy	Daines
Boozman	Coats	Donnelly

Durbin	Lankford	Rounds
Enzi	Leahy	Rubio
Ernst	Lee	Sanders
Feinstein	Manchin	Sasse
Fischer	Markey	Schatz
Flake	McCain	Schumer
Franken	McCaskill	Scott
Gardner	McConnell	Sessions
Gillibrand	Menendez	Shaheen
Graham	Merkley	Shelby
Grassley	Mikulski	Stabenow
Hatch	Moran	Sullivan
Heinrich	Murkowski	Tester
Heitkamp	Murphy	Thune
Heller	Murray	Tillis
Hirono	Nelson	Toomey
Hoeven	Paul	Udall
Inhofe	Perdue	Warner
Isakson	Peters	Warren
Johnson	Portman	Whitehouse
Kaine	Reed	Wicker
King	Reid	Wyden
Kirk	Risch	
Klobuchar	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
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The motion was agreed to.

WARREN MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Massachusetts relative to student loans.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I support simplifying student loans—the motion that just passed 97 to 0—and I commend Senators KING and BURR, but it is not enough. We need to cut the interest rate on student loans. The Federal Government should not be making a profit off the backs of our kids who are trying to get an education.

This bill is paid for by asking millionaires and billionaires to pay taxes at the same rate as middle-class families.

This is a bill which really puts it to the Senate. Are we here to work just for the millionaires and billionaires or are we here to work for young people who are trying to get an education? This Senate works all the time for billionaires. Today, I hope we can make it work for our students.

I urge adoption of this motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to vote against the Warren motion. What the Senator wants to do is to create yet another repayment program, which ultimately ends up costing students more than the income-based repayment. She puts hundreds of billions of private debt on the Federal books and pretends the cost is free. Rather than fixing the maze of repayment programs, she adds to it with a new program that is ultimately less generous than the existing program. Whereas the Federal Government income-based repayment program and other related loan repayment programs will cap payments as a percentage of an individual's income, Senator WARREN's legislation would only lower the interest rate on those payments, potentially steering students into higher monthly payments than they face in those other programs. So I urge my colleagues to oppose the Warren motion.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Ms. WARREN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 149 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Peters
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Reid
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Leahy	Schumer
Carper	Manchin	Shaheen
Casey	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	McCaskill	Tester
Donnelly	Menendez	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warren
Franken	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden

NAYS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Ayotte	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Isakson	Sessions
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Corker	Kirk	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Udall
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
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The motion was rejected.

SANDERS MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Vermont relative to Social Security.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, Social Security is arguably the most important Federal program we have. It is life and death to millions of senior citizens, people who have to figure out how they pay for food, how they heat their homes, how they pay for their medicine. Social Security is not going broke. It could pay out all benefits for the next 18 years.

What this provision does is make it clear that we go on record to not cut Social Security benefits, not raise the

retirement age, not privatize Social Security. Let's stand with the seniors of this country. Let us protect Social Security, not cut it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, under the budget rules we can't do anything to Social Security. So this doesn't provide permission or denial of anything that we can do at the present time. We cannot touch Social Security under the budget.

So I ask for the Senator to take a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 84, nays 13, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 150 Leg.]

YEAS—84

Alexander	Feinstein	Murray
Ayotte	Fischer	Nelson
Baldwin	Franken	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Bennet	Gillibrand	Portman
Blumenthal	Graham	Reed
Blunt	Grassley	Reid
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeben	Sanders
Capito	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Kirk	Shelby
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Sullivan
Coons	Manchin	Tester
Corker	Markey	Thune
Cornyn	McCain	Tillis
Cotton	McCaskill	Toomey
Crapo	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Merkley	Warner
Donnelly	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Moran	Whitehouse
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—13

Coats	Johnson	Sasse
Cochran	Lankford	Scott
Flake	Lee	Sessions
Hatch	McConnell	
Inhofe	Perdue	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
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The motion was agreed to.

SCHATZ MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Hawaii relative to same-sex marriage benefits.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, on this motion, I think we are willing to yield

back all time and accept it on a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I would like the RECORD to reflect that had the vote on the Schatz motion to instruct conferees been conducted by a rollcall vote, I would have voted nay.

BENNET MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Colorado relative to climate change.

The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, I rise to offer a very simple motion to instruct the budget conferees. It encourages the conferees to address the economic and national security threats posed by climate change. During our consideration of the budget, I offered an amendment that outlined these threats and highlighted the need to act. That amendment passed the Senate by a 53-to-47 vote. It was supported by both Republicans and Democrats. The same language should be included in the final budget conference.

During the markup, the Budget Committee adopted a complementary amendment which discussed the importance of climate change initiatives in the Department of Defense. The language should be included in the final budget resolution.

Let's make it clear that the Congress plans to respond to the serious economic and national security threats posed by climate change.

I urge a "yes" vote on this motion to instruct.

I yield the floor, and I ask for a voice vote.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, we are willing to accept it on a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the motion?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

FISCHER MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Nebraska relative to equal pay.

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, this motion takes an important step forward by providing necessary updates to current law regarding nonretaliation. The change was supported on a bipartisan during our recent budget debate.

This motion reinforces current law by banning gender discrimination under both the Equal Pay Act and title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Contrary to the claims of some, both of these laws enable women to sue for discrimination.

Furthermore, my motion contains language similar to President Obama's

April 2014 Executive order stating that employees cannot be punished for exercising their First Amendment rights by speaking with employers or coworkers about their wages.

I cannot support the motion of the Senator from Maryland. It removes merit pay, which I believe provides women with opportunities to advance in their careers, and merit pay recognizes a woman's hard work and her contributions. It also eliminates any liability cap under the motion of the Senator from Maryland, which I believe benefits only attorneys and not families. For the first time we are able to do this.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

All time has expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 57, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 151 Leg.]

YEAS—57

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoeben	Rounds
Coats	Inhofe	Rubio
Cochran	Isakson	Sasse
Collins	Johnson	Scott
Corker	Kaine	Sessions
Cornyn	King	Shelby
Cotton	Kirk	Sullivan
Crapo	Lankford	Thune
Daines	Lee	Tillis
Donnelly	Manchin	Toomey
Enzi	McCain	Warner
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker

NAYS—40

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reid
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Klobuchar	Schatz
Brown	Leahy	Schumer
Cantwell	Markey	Shaheen
Cardin	McCaskill	Stabenow
Carper	Menendez	Tester
Casey	Merkley	Udall
Coons	Mikulski	Warren
Durbin	Murphy	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	Wyden
Franken	Nelson	
Gillibrand	Peters	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
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The motion was agreed to.

MIKULSKI MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Maryland related to equal pay.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I have an alternative and far more comprehensive approach than the Senator from Nebraska just offered. Although I respect her and her advocacy for women, the Mikulski amendment in the well would really finish the job we started with Lilly Ledbetter. Yes, it would deal with the issue of harassment on the job if one asks for information, which the Fischer amendment only dealt with. My amendment would go several steps further. No. 2, it would provide punitive damages for women who have been wrongly denied equal pay for several years. No. 3, it also eliminates the false reasons people give for not paying equal pay for equal work.

The Mikulski amendment is more comprehensive, more robust, and will really finish the job and close the loopholes big corporations have had for years. So if my colleagues like the Fischer amendment, they will be crazy about the Mikulski amendment. Go all the way, not just part of the way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does anyone wish to speak in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. We yield back our time, and we will take a voice vote.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays have been requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 44, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 152 Leg.]

YEAS—44

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cantwell	Leahy	Schumer
Cardin	Manchin	Shaheen
Carper	Markey	Stabenow
Casey	McCaskill	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Donnelly	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Mikulski	Warren
Feinstein	Murphy	Whitehouse
Franken	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Nelson	

NAYS—53

Alexander	Fischer	Murkowski
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rubio
Coats	Inhofe	Sasse
Cochran	Isakson	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Sessions
Corker	King	Shelby
Cornyn	Kirk	Sullivan
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Daines	McCain	Toomey
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
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The motion was rejected.

FISCHER MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Nebraska relative to paid sick leave.

The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Thank you, Mr. President.

Workplace flexibility is a necessity for our 21st-century families, and Senator KING and I have come up with a proposal that I think really addresses this in a way that is voluntary and incentivizes businesses to truly help families, help those hourly workers meet the needs they are facing in this workplace environment and in their family environments.

I yield the rest of my time to Senator KING.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise in support of this amendment and in support of the United States finally joining the civilized nations of the world in providing for family leave for our citizens. I know this amendment doesn't go as far as some would like, but I believe it is very credible, enforceable legislation that can move forward and really change the lives of thousands and millions of people across this country.

I commend the Senator from Nebraska for bringing this amendment forward, and I intend to support it and urge my colleagues to do likewise.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, if all time is yielded back, we would be willing to take a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

MURRAY MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Washington relative to paid sick leave.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Mr. President.

Congress, we have to vote on an economy that works for all of our families, not just the wealthiest few. Today, 43 million Americans do not have access to paid sick days, and when they are sick, they have to choose between losing money out of their paycheck or toughing it out and showing up to work.

I was delighted that during our budget debate, a bipartisan majority—61 Senators strong—agreed that Congress should allow workers to earn paid sick days. The amendment that just passed is voluntary. It would only benefit a select number of people who work for employers who already do the right thing.

This amendment will make sure that we boost worker productivity and reduce turnover, which are benefits to both employers and employees. I urge my colleagues to vote for this in a strong vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, we would be willing to accept this on a voice vote, and we yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded back, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

MURRAY MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Washington relating to sequestration elimination.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, Democrats and Republicans agree that the automatic spending cuts across defense and nondefense investments are terrible policy and need to be fixed. The bipartisan Budget Act we passed last Congress did exactly that for the past 2 years and offered us a template for how we can tackle this challenge in a bipartisan way, once again.

We do not need to rely on gimmicks in this budget or the hopes that we will somehow solve this later. We can fix this now in this conference. I urge my colleagues to support this vote instructing the conferees to roll back sequestration, allow the Appropriations Committee to do their work and not kick this can down the road for all of us to address later.

I urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, there is a difference between how it got voted through last year, which was actually an appropriation rather than a budget. This does raise taxes in order to overcome the sequestration. So I am urging a "no" vote. We have agreed to have a voice vote on this one.

We yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded back, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was rejected.

STABENOW MOTION TO INSTRUCT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2

minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote in relation to the motion offered by the Senator from Michigan relating to Medicare cuts.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, my motion would instruct conferees to remove from the final budget resolution any Medicare cuts that would increase out-of-pocket costs for senior citizens, eliminating guaranteed benefits or making structural changes to Medicare by turning it into a voucher-based system or premium support system.

I think one of our greatest concerns in this budget, among many, is the fact that when you add it all up, there are \$566 billion in Medicare cuts in this Senate resolution. Shockingly, it is more than even the House cuts. I would urge that we stand with people who pay into a health care system that works. They have earned those benefits. They are counting on those benefits.

Seniors and people with disabilities across the country need to know Medicare is an intact, guaranteed health care system for them.

I urge support for my motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I am going to urge my colleagues to reject this motion to instruct. I credit Senator STABENOW's instincts to approach the question of Medicare seriously. I am sure she knows we all take Medicare's future seriously. There are some problems with Medicare that need to be solved.

The budget shows Medicare's rate of growth for an average annual rate of 6.4 to 5.5 percent over the next 10 years. Why does the budget resolution adopt these numbers? Because Republicans and the President agree we must act on policies which extend the life of the Medicare trust fund.

The budget does this by adopting the President's goal of extending the life of Medicare's hospital insurance trust fund by at least 5 years. According to the Medicare trustees themselves, the hospital insurance fund could be insolvent as early as 2021, just 6 years from now.

Independent actuaries at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid report that over the next 75 years, the Federal Government has promised more than \$35 trillion in Medicare benefits. So Republicans joined with the President in looking to extend the life of the hospital insurance trust fund and make the Medicare program sustainable.

So I ask that you reject this motion to instruct.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, if I might take just 1 more moment, I do not think I used all my time.

I just want to say for the record, the President of the United States is not supporting \$566 billion in cuts to Medicare.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

Ms. STABENOW. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 153 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Peters
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Kaine	Reid
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Leahy	Schumer
Carper	Manchin	Shaheen
Casey	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	McCaskill	Tester
Donnelly	Menendez	Udall
Durbin	Merkley	Warner
Feinstein	Mikulski	Warren
Franken	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wyden

NAYS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Paul
Ayotte	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Isakson	Sessions
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Corker	Kirk	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	
Ernst	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—3

Boxer	Cruz	Vitter
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The motion was rejected.

The Presiding Officer appointed Mr. ENZI, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CORKER, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. SANDERS, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINÉ, and Mr. KING conferees on the part of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING THE KILGORE COLLEGE RANGERETTES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me today in hon-

oring the world famous Kilgore College Rangerettes on the occasion of their 75th anniversary.

In an effort to increase female enrollment and to keep fans in their seats during halftime at football games, Kilgore College Dean of Students B.E. Masters invited Gussie Nell Davis to create an all-women's precision dance-and-drill team. On September 19, 1940, the Rangerettes performed their first halftime show during a Kilgore College football game.

With their signature Western-styled red, white, and blue uniforms and cowboy hats, the Kilgore College Rangerettes brought show business to the football field. Their precise and graceful performances captured the hearts of the fans and pioneered a brandnew type of halftime show.

The Rangerettes have attained national and international recognition. Dubbed "The Sweethearts of the Gridiron," the Rangerettes travel across the country performing at high-profile events, including every Cotton Bowl halftime show since 1951, the 60th Pearl Harbor Memorial Commemoration, Presidential inaugural events, and multiple Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parades. Their fame and prestige have spread across the globe with performances in Venezuela, the millennial St. Patrick's Day Parade in Ireland, and a 15-day tour of Romania.

The Rangerettes' achievements and honors have been highlighted in cover stories in magazines including *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Esquire*, *Texas Monthly*, and *Texas 24/7*. Additionally, they were featured in the Cinerama movie "The Seven Wonders of the World." Today, they continue to set training and performance standards to which other drill teams aspire.

I am honored to congratulate the Kilgore College Rangerettes on their 75th anniversary and look forward to their continued tradition of excellence as they perform across Texas, the United States, and the world.

LYNCH NOMINATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Loretta Lynch's nomination to be Attorney General has languished on the Senate floor for 48 days. This unnecessary wait time is twice as long as the last seven Attorney General nominees combined. Under any standard, she is not being treated fairly. For nearly 7 weeks, she has waited for her confirmation vote to be scheduled by the majority leader. She has now earned the support to be confirmed, and if the leader would simply schedule her vote, this eminently qualified prosecutor could get to work as our next Attorney General.

Last month, after Ms. Lynch's nomination had already been pending on the floor for weeks, the majority leader inexplicably chose to hold her nomination hostage until he got his way on a partisan provision in unrelated legislation. That Loretta Lynch is being denied a confirmation vote over human

trafficking legislation is a cruel irony since she has a proven record of prosecuting child rapists and human traffickers. If Members want a prosecutor with a deep commitment to fighting human trafficking, then they should support Loretta Lynch.

The American people deserve to know that while the majority leader said he would block a confirmation vote on Ms. Lynch until we passed unrelated legislation, the Senate has voted 74 times on other matters. If the Senate can vote on a Republican budget, legislation to increase payments to doctors, and on the confirmation of several other nominees, then of course we can and should vote on the nomination of our Nation's next chief law enforcement officer. There is simply no excuse.

Every additional day that Ms. Lynch's nomination languishes on the floor is another day Senate Republicans fail to govern responsibly. This Congress, it took more than 3 months for Senate Republicans to schedule a vote on a single judicial nominee. And even though the Senate finally did confirm a district court nominee this week, nine more judicial nominees are waiting to be considered. This is no way to respect the dedicated public servants who have been nominated and no way to treat our coequal branches of government.

The Republican leader has the opportunity to show the American people what we can do when we work together. He should call Loretta Lynch's nomination up for a vote without further delay.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with my colleague from Maine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JOB CORPS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator KING in recognizing the Job Corps program on its 50th anniversary. Job Corps helps at-risk young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. On August 30, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed legislation creating Job Corps. Today, one-half century later, generations of graduates in Maine and across America demonstrate why Job Corps has been one of our Nation's best investments.

Since its founding, more than 2.7 million young people have entered the Job Corps program with the determination to succeed and have graduated with the confidence and the skills to do so. The success rate is extraordinary. Nearly 86 percent of Job Corps graduates find employment in their fields, go on to higher education or serve our country in uniform. Job Corps students do not just learn a trade—they cultivate high aspirations and a commitment to service.

As I travel throughout Maine, I have extensive conversations with small business owners and workers about the

challenges they face. While there is no doubt that our Nation's unemployment rate remains unacceptably high, I have met with employers in Maine who have jobs available but who cannot find qualified and trained workers to fill these vacant positions.

With two centers in Maine, Job Corps not only helps young people in our State gain the skills that lead to rewarding careers, but it also improves their lives, assists employers, and strengthens communities. The Penobscot Job Corps Academy in Bangor, ME, and the Loring Job Corps Center in Limestone, ME, have the capability to serve nearly 800 at-risk youth on a daily basis. Over the past several decades, these two centers have compiled an impressive record of success in preparing disadvantaged youth for the workplace or higher education.

The combination of skills, self-confidence, and determination Job Corps offers can help young people overcome the setbacks, obstacles, and failures that often are part of life. The focus on community service at both centers helps to create the involved citizens that are so important to Maine's future. These centers put these young men and women on a path to being successful and vital contributing members of our country.

Job Corps was founded on the noble idea that, if given the opportunity, the support, and the training, America's young people could overcome any obstacles and achieve. For 50 years, Job Corps graduates have turned that idea into reality. I congratulate Job Corps again on this accomplishment.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I join the senior Senator from Maine in congratulating Job Corps on 50 years of service to our country's youth. Across the Nation, Job Corps provides training and career skills to economically disadvantaged young adults, helping them attain a high school diploma or equivalent and career technical training to prepare them for success in today's job market. This program is extremely important, giving young people who need a second chance the opportunity to forge a better career for themselves through hard work and meaningful study.

The Penobscot Job Corps Center in Bangor, ME, and the Loring Job Corps Center in Limestone, ME, have consistently proven to be outstanding assets to our State, helping young Mainers prepare to enter the workforce or pursue post-secondary education every year. Through a combination of unique learning experiences, these institutions are helping the next generation of Maine students work towards stable, long-term jobs.

In October of 2013 I was proud to congratulate the Penobscot Job Corps Academy for its certification as a Center of Environmental Excellence. This distinction recognizes Job Corps campuses that show leadership in implementing Job Corps' guiding principles for high performance green buildings.

At the time, the Penobscot Job Corps was one of only two centers in the country to receive this distinction.

This initiative prompted Job Corps facilities across the United States to not only reduce their environmental impact, but to also teach their students to live and work sustainably. The skills and knowledge that students receive from this program will surely help them compete in an increasingly environmentally focused labor market.

Job Corps centers are an important facet of our workforce development system and have a proven record of success in preparing disadvantaged students to obtain and hold a job or pursue opportunities in higher education. I wish Job Corps another 50 years of success, and I am proud of the many young people in Maine and across the country who have used this program to make a better life for themselves.

The contributions of Maine's Job Corps centers simply cannot be overstated, and I look forward to watching their continued development.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

GREELEY HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL OBSERVANCES

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, this year marks 70 years since the spring of 1945, when Allied forces liberated concentration camps, a major milestone in the end of the Holocaust.

For more than 30 years, the Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances has helped raise awareness of the atrocities of Nazi crimes and the perils of anti-Semitism, hatred, and intolerance. This month, the Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances will continue its longstanding tradition of remembering the victims of the Holocaust, commemorating the end of this horrific part of our history, and educating Coloradans about the importance of the Holocaust with discussions, films, exhibits, and workshops. This year's events will include presentations by Holocaust survivor Nathan Taffel.

It is my pleasure to commend the Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances Committee for their dedicated service to this critical cause and to congratulate the Committee on its 32nd Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances, 70 years after the end of the Holocaust.●

RECOGNIZING EDGEWATER, NEW JERSEY FIRST RESPONDERS

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize and pay tribute to the heroic first responders of Edgewater, NJ, and surrounding communities, who successfully extinguished one of the largest fires in the history of Bergen County. On Wednesday, January 21, 2015, a massive fire destroyed an apartment building and displaced over 1,000 Borough residents, leaving many homeless during the bitter mid-winter months.

At 4:20 p.m. that day, smoke billowed along the western skyline of the Hudson River as Edgewater first responders rushed to the scene of a 7-alarm fire. Mayor Michael McPartland declared a local state of emergency, and the Edgewater Fire Department fought to control the blaze, which ultimately destroyed 240 of the 408 apartments in the complex. While civilians and first responders reported no serious injuries, hundreds of residents lost their homes, pets, and possessions. Were it not for the quick response of Edgewater's dedicated first responders, there could easily have been loss of life, and property damage would have been far greater.

By the end of the event, 35 departments and agencies from across the region had responded to the call for help. Over 500 police officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and other emergency personnel were on the scene, many of whom stayed until 7 a.m. the next morning. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and honor some of these brave individuals for their fearless service to our community:

Chief of Police William Skidmore, head of the 27-member Edgewater police force, who made sure his officers secured the fire perimeter and controlled crowds, ensuring that both emergency personnel and residents remained at a safe distance.

Emergency Management Coordinator Robert Christiansen, who worked closely with Chief Skidmore to lead coordination efforts among the many county, State, and Federal emergency services that responded to the fire.

Fire Chief Tom Jacobson, who managed the overall firefighting response and coordinated 250 firefighters, 2 fireboats from the Fire Department of the City of New York, 2 Jersey City marine units, and 1 New Jersey State Police boat in fighting the blaze.

First Aid Squad Captain Kathy Frato, who led her team of EMTs in assisting residents and those firefighters who continued to battle the fire into the morning hours.

The firefighters of the Edgewater Volunteer Fire Department, who worked through the night to battle this massive blaze.

All of the first responders of the Edgewater Fire Department, Police Department, and First Aid Squad, in addition to the first responders from the 35 assisting municipalities, who helped to protect life and property. Their courage and commitment to their community is an example to all, and I could not be more grateful for their service.●

CONGRATULATING JOE VENTO

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today, I wish to congratulate Grammy Award-winning musician Joe Vento on receiving the Century Award, an accolade well deserved in recognition of his many sacrifices. Mr. Vento has served both this great Nation and the city of Las Vegas throughout his life and is a true inspiration for all Nevadans.

Mr. Vento's passion for music began at an early age and had him playing the piano and accordion in New York by age 4. He later used his talents in a different setting, bringing the joy of music to those around him in time of war. Mr. Vento was in the U.S. Army Band near the end of World War II and served in World War II, the Korean war, and Vietnam. He received a battlefield commission of three stars from Marine Commandant Lew Walt during his time in Vietnam at a special concert for U.S. troops. Mr. Vento not only deserves recognition for his bravery in serving our country but also for his determination in providing entertainment for those courageously fighting for our freedom alongside him. His actions prove his selflessness and compassion for others.

There is no way to adequately thank the men and women who lay down their lives for our freedoms. I extend my deepest gratitude to Mr. Vento for his courageous contributions to the United States of America. His service to his country and his bravery and dedication earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals who serve our Nation but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation.

Mr. Vento's service to others did not end on the battlefield. He spent the next 70 years bringing incredible music to the city of Las Vegas. In the 1950s, he began performing with the Three Sons and remained with the group for 27 years. He made numerous appearances on prestigious shows, appeared in command performances at the White House and Imperial Palaces in Tokyo and Beijing, and conducted performances with Victor Borge, Nelson Eddy, and the Veteran Tonight Show Big Band. He also performed at the Paris hotel in Las Vegas. Most recently, Mr. Vento has lent his musical talent to the Royal Resort just off the strip. Mr. Vento's unwavering commitment to the Las Vegas community will never be forgotten. His music will be legend for years to come.

Today, I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in congratulating Mr. Vento on his award and in recognizing his years of service to both the United States of America and the Las Vegas community. I wish him the best of luck in all of his musical years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SAM KAPOURALES

● Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize a dear friend, a dedicated public servant and a passionate West Virginia leader, Sam Kapourales, who is celebrating his 80th birthday on

April 19, 2015. After proudly knowing Sam and his lovely wife Dee for more than four decades, it is a special privilege to celebrate Sam's vast achievements and his many years of steadfast service to Mingo County, to West Virginia, and to our Nation.

I have never met anyone more humble, community-minded and family-oriented than Sam. Throughout his 80 years, and still today, Sam has always answered the call of service. At every turn of the road—whether as the mayor of Williamson in Mingo County for nearly 21 years, as the prosperous business owner of Kapourales Properties, as a successful pharmacist or as an invaluable member of countless boards and organizations that focused on helping others and impacting our local communities—Sam has never lost touch with his faith, his family and those in need.

As a devout Mason, Sam has led a life devoted to personal reflection, self-improvement and social betterment. He is a pure, true-blue West Virginian who has shown time after time that he loves his State and the people of West Virginia through his actions of service and philanthropy. For instance, Sam served as president of the Childhood Language Center in Charleston, where children with speech impediments could receive necessary treatments and services.

He also helped recruit much-needed medical services and physicians to the Tug Valley region as a sponsor of the Tug Valley Area Ambulance Service. And as proud Shriner and member of the Beni Kedem Temple in Charleston, even serving a term as Potentate—a true honor indeed—Sam helped raise funds to transport disabled, burnt or sick children to regional medical facilities. Sam and Dee even started a scholarship to provide additional educational opportunities for graduating seniors at Mingo Central High School.

Yet Sam's tireless community efforts do not even begin to stop there. Throughout the years, Sam served as a member on the West Virginia Board of Pharmacy, the West Virginia Health Care Authority Board, and the West Virginia Housing Development Authority Board. He was Director of the First National Bank of Williamson, the First Bank of Charleston, the Summit State Bank, and the Energy Services of America Corporation. He also chaired the advisory board of Southern West Virginia Community College of Nursing.

Because of his passion, discipline, and staunch work ethic, it is no surprise that Sam has been recognized for his community efforts multiple times throughout the years. Yet to Sam, he says that the greatest of honors bestowed upon him is being a recipient of the 33rd Degree of the Scottish Rite, which is only granted for exceptional service to Freemasonry. His entire life, I never knew Sam to turn down participating in worthwhile cause or helping a neighbor in need. And I truly think

that dedication stems from that of Sam's mission as a heartfelt Mason.

Sam's unwavering dedication to Mingo County and the Mountain State, accompanied by his innovative vision, inspirational spirit, and savvy aptitude, have helped countless West Virginians throughout the years. His loyalty, trustworthiness, and dedication know no bounds. So today, I join his wife Dee his two wonderful daughters, Stephanie-Anna and Susanna, and all West Virginians in wishing Sam Kapourales a very happy birthday. I look forward to celebrating many more birthdays with my dear friend for years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:54 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agrees to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, with an amendment.

The message also announced that the House insists upon its amendment to the concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 11) setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2016 and setting forth the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2017 through 2025, and asks a conference with the Senate on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon; and appoints Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. YARMUTH, and Ms. MOORE as managers of the conference on the part of the House.

At 12:43 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 650. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

H.R. 685. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to improve upon the definitions

provided for points and fees in connection with a mortgage transaction.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 650. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 685. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to improve upon the definitions provided for points and fees in connection with a mortgage transaction; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

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-1152. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Difenoconazole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9923-82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1153. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Thiram; Pesticide Tolerance" (FRL No. 9924-86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1154. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Deltamethrin; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9924-60) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1155. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2-Propanoic acid, 2-methyl-, 2-methylpropyl ester; Tolerance Exemption" (FRL No. 9924-33) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1156. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions (Multiple Chemicals)" (FRL No. 9924-40) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1157. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 3 (Native) Spearmint Oil for the 2014-2015 Mar-

keting Year" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0087; FV14-985-1C IR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1158. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 1 (Scotch) Spearmint Oil for the 2014-2015 Marketing Year" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0087; FV14-985-1A FIR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1159. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fruit, Vegetable, and Specialty Crops—Import Regulations; Changes to Reporting Requirements to Add Electronic Form Filing Options" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0093; FV15-944/980/999-1 IR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1160. A communication from the Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Residual Interest Deadline for Futures Commission Merchants" (RIN3038-AE22) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1161. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual Report on the Impact of the Homeland Security Act on Immigration Functions Transferred to the Department of Homeland Security"; to the Committees on the Judiciary; and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1162. 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 15-010); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1163. 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 14-147); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1164. 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 14-140); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1165. 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 14-121); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1166. 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 2015-0029—2015-0031); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1167. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report of the Attorney General to the Congress of the United States on the Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, for the six months ending June 30, 2014"; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-1168. A joint communication from the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, transmitting a request relative to issuing a travel restriction on senior officials' travel to Afghanistan for the period of June 1, 2015 through September 30, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1169. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting, a report of proposed legislation entitled "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1170. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Salvatore A. Angelella, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1171. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Thomas W. Travis, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1172. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Department of Defense, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1173. A communication from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Program Acquisition Unit Cost (PAUC) and Average Procurement Unit Cost (APUC) for the Unitary and Baseline/BLU-108 variants of the Joint Standoff Weapon (JSOW) Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1174. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2015 Annual Report to Congress on the Department of Defense Chemical and Biological Defense Program"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1175. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting, a report of proposed legislation entitled "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1176. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 of April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1177. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of Housing-Federal Housing Commissioner, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Housing Administration (FHA): Removal of Section 235 Home Ownership Program Regulations" (Docket No. FR-5829-F-01) received during adjournment of the Sen-

ate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1178. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Council's 2014 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1179. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notice of the continuation of the national emergency with respect to South Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1180. A communication from the Secretary, Division of Corporate Finance, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendments to Regulation A" (RIN3235-AL39) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1181. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1182. A communication from the Executive Director of the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2014 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1183. A communication from the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Bank's 2014 management reports; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1184. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1185. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to Support Documents Requirements for License Applications Under the Export Administration Regulations" (RIN0694-AG00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1186. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Beyond Traffic 2045: Trends and Choices"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1187. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Commerce, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1188. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands" (RIN0648-

XD813) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1189. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands; 2015 and 2016 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish" (RIN0648-XD587) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1190. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Gulf of Alaska; Final 2015 and 2016 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish; Final Rule" (RIN0648-XD516) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1191. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Olympia Coast National Marine Sanctuary Regulations; Correction" (RIN0648-BE48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1192. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Expansion of Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries, and Regulatory Changes; Final Rule" (RIN0648-BD18) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1193. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Gulf of the Farallones and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries Regulations on Introduced Species" (RIN0648-BC26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1194. A communication from the Associate Bureau Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Connect America Fund; Developing a Unified Inter-carrier Compensation Regime" ((RIN3060-AG49) (DA 15-249)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1195. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Vessels Using Jig Gear in the Central Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska" (RIN0648-XD800) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1196. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 53rd Annual Report of the activities of the Federal Maritime Commission for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1197. A communication from the Deputy Chief Management Officer, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1198. A communication from the Director of Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Food and Drug Administration Regulations; Change of Addresses; Technical Amendment" (Docket No. FDA-2015-N-0011) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1199. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a financial report relative to the Generic Drug User Fee Amendments of 2012 for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1200. A communication from the Director of Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Advisory Committee; Anti-Infective Drugs Advisory Committee" (Docket No. FDA-2009-N-0443) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1201. A communication from the Deputy Director, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Technical Regulation: Removal of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Act Implementing Regulations" (45 CFR Part 1340) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1202. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Performance Report to Congress for the Medical Device User Fee Amendments of 2012"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-1203. A communication from the Division Chief of Regulatory Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oil and Gas; Hydraulic Fracturing on Federal and Indian Lands" (RIN1004-AE26) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 26, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1204. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Acquisition Regulation: Technical and Administrative Changes to Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation" (RIN1991-AC07) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 25, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1205. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chief Financial Officer, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in

the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1206. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director, Advanced Research Projects Agency Energy, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1207. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Science, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1208. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of Energy, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1209. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1210. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1211. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1212. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Principal Deputy Administrator, National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1213. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Nuclear Security, National Nuclear Security Administration, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1214. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Energy (Fossil Energy), Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to

the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1215. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1216. A communication from the Chief Human Capital Officer, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Energy (Environmental Management), Department of Energy, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 2, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1217. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Demand and Energy Data Reliability Standard" (RIN1902-0261) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 9, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1218. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2015 Annual Determination to Implement the Sea Turtle Observer Requirement" (RIN0648-BE35) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1219. A communication from the Chief of the Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Threatened Species Status for the Northern Long-eared Bat with 4(d) Rule" (RIN1018-BY98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1220. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP); Amending the NCP for Public Notices for Specified Superfund Activities" ((RIN2050-AG76) (FRL No. 9924-66-OSWER)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1221. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Determination of Attainment of the 1-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard in the Southeast Desert Nonattainment Area in California" (FRL No. 9925-32-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1222. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives: Cellulosic Waiver Credit Price and Minor Amendments to Renewable Fuel Standard Regulations" ((RIN2060-AS48) (FRL No. 9924-71-OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1223. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval of Tribal Implementation Plan and Designation of Air Quality Planning Area; Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians" (FRL No. 9924-45-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1224. 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; Texas; Public Participation for Air Quality Permit Applications" (FRL No. 9925-19-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1225. 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; State of Missouri, Control of Sulfur Emissions from Stationary Boilers" (FRL No. 9925-24-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1226. 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; State of Iowa; 2014 Iowa State Implementation Plan; Permit Modifications; Muscatine, Iowa" (FRL No. 9925-60-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1227. 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; Alabama; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9925-53-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1228. 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 Federal Implementation Plan for Oil and Natural Gas Well Production Facilities; Fort Bethold Indian Reservation (Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation), North Dakota; Correction" (FRL No. 9923-70-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1229. 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; Virginia; State Boards Requirements; Infrastructure Requirements for the 2008 Lead and Ozone and 2010 Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standards" (FRL No. 9925-46-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1230. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule en-

titled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Montana Second 10-Year Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan for Great Falls" (FRL No. 9925-50-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1231. 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; State of Montana Second 10-Year Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan for Billings" (FRL No. 9925-51-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1232. 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; Pennsylvania; Revision to Allegheny County Rules; Preconstruction Permit Requirements—Non-attainment New Source Review" (FRL No. 9922-77-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1233. 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; Idaho; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference" (FRL No. 9925-65-Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1234. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Applications of Bioassay for Radioiodine" (Regulatory Guide 8.20, Revision 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1235. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Withdrawal of Partial Exemption for Certain Chemical Substances" ((RIN2070-AK01) (FRL No. 9924-84)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1236. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "TENNESSEE: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions" (FRL No. 9924-83-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1237. 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, Placer County Air Pollution Control District and the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 9924-73-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1238. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmit-

ting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Priorities List" (FRL No. 9924-32-OSWER) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1239. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval, Disapproval, and Limited Approval and Disapproval of Air Quality Implementation Plans; California; Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District; Stationary Source Permits" (FRL No. 9924-49-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1240. 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; Texas; Reasonably Available Control Technology for the 1997 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard" (FRL No. 9925-13-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1241. 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; Pennsylvania; Plan Approval and Operating Permit Fees" (FRL No. 9925-17-Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1242. 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; New Mexico; Albuquerque/Bernalillo County; Revisions to Emission Inventory Requirements, and General Provisions" (FRL No. 9925-11-Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 24, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1243. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "State of Washington Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program Revision Approval" (FRL No. 9924-94-OW) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1244. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "State of Tennessee Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program; Primacy Approval" (FRL No. 9924-92-OW) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1245. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Listing of Substitutes for Refrigeration and Air Conditioning and Revision of the Venting Prohibition for Certain Refrigerant Substitutes" ((RIN2060-AS04) (FRL No. 9922-26-OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1246. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan National Priorities List" (FRL No. 9925-52-Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1247. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; California; San Joaquin Valley; Reclassification as Serious Non-attainment for the 1997 PM2.5 Standards" (FRL No. 9925-30-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1248. 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; Idaho" (FRL No. 9925-77-Region 10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 1, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1249. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Justice's 2014 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Litigation and Compliance Report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1250. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1251. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1252. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Characteristics of H-1B Specialty Occupation Workers"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1253. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1254. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Detainees Not Seeking Asylum"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1255. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on Adjustments of Status Granted Under Section 13 of the Act of September 11, 1957"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1256. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "H-2B Nonagricultural Temporary Worker Visa and Status"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1257. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report on crime victims' rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-1258. 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 "Allocation of Controlled Group Research Credit" ((RIN1545-BL77) (TD 9717)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1259. 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 "Employee Plans Compliance Resolution System Update Relating to Plans with Automatic Contribution Features" (Rev. Proc. 2015-28) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1260. 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 "Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates" (Notice 2015-24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1261. 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 "Treasury Decision (TD): Amendments to Excepted Benefits" ((RIN1545-BM44) (TD 9714)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1262. 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 "Applicable Federal Rates—April 2015" (Rev. Rul. 2015-7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1263. 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 "Revenue Procedure: United States and Area Median Gross Income Figures" (Rev. Proc. 2015-23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1264. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting the report of proposed legislation entitled "Generating Renewal, Opportunity, and Work with Accelerated Mobility, Efficiency, and Rebuilding of Infrastructure and Communities throughout America Act" or the "GROW AMERICA Act"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1265. A communication from the Executive Analyst (Political), Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1266. 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 "Corrections to Rev.

Proc. 2014-59" (Rev. Proc. 2015-24) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1267. 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 "Section 911(d)(4)—2014 Update" (Rev. Proc. 2015-25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 27, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-1268. A communication from the Director, Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2014 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1269. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1270. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "District of Columbia Agencies' Compliance with Fiscal Year 2014 Small Business Enterprise Expenditure Goals"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1271. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-81; Introduction" (FAC 2005-81) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 8, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1272. A communication from the Chief Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the District of Columbia Family Court Act; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1273. A communication from the Director, Employee Services, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prevailing Rate Systems; Abolishment of the Portland, ME, Appropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Area" (RIN3206-AN11) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 31, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1274. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1275. A communication from the Director, Office of Economic Impact and Diversity, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2014 report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1276. A communication from the Director of the Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Peace Corps' fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination

and Retaliation Act of 2002; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1277. A communication from the Director, Government Publishing Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's Annual Report for fiscal year 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1278. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Oversight Improvements Must Continue to Ensure Accountability in Use of Public Funds by D.C. Public Charter Schools"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1279. A communication from the Secretary to the Board, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Railroad Retirement Board's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1280. A communication from the General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1281. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Transportation's fiscal year 2014 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-1282. A communication from the Chairman, Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the memorial construction; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-1283. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report relative to the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-1284. A communication from the Chief of the Regulation Policy, Tracking, and Control Office of the General Counsel, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reimbursement for Caskets and Urns for Burial of Unclaimed Remains in a National Cemetery" (RIN2900-AO99) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BURR, from the Select Committee on Intelligence:

Report to accompany S. 754. An original bill to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 114-32).

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 Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 940. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to study the feasibility of providing certain taxpayers with an optional, pre-prepared tax return, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 941. A bill to provide for the termination of employment of employees of the Internal Revenue Service who take certain official actions for political purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 942. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a deduction from the gift tax for gifts made to certain exempt organizations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN:

S. 943. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that a duty of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue is to ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with and act in accord with certain taxpayer rights; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 944. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to prohibit certain waivers and exemptions from emergency preparedness and response and security regulations; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. SANDERS):

S. 945. A bill to amend the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to provide for the expansion of emergency planning zones and the development of plans for dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 946. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit the transportation of horses in interstate transportation in a motor vehicle containing 2 or more levels stacked on top of one another; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 947. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the depreciation rules for property used predominantly within an Indian reservation; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE:

S. 948. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the taxable income limit on percentage depletion for oil and natural gas produced from marginal properties; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. HELLER, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 949. A bill to provide a taxpayer bill of rights for small businesses; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 950. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. AYOTTE:

S. 951. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that a duty of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue is to ensure that Internal Revenue Service employees are familiar with and act in accord with certain taxpayer rights; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. AYOTTE (for herself, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MERKLEY, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 952. A bill to provide for duty-free treatment of certain recreational performance outerwear, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself and Mr. REID):

S. 953. A bill to facilitate certain pinyon-juniper related projects in Lincoln County, Nevada, to modify the boundaries of certain wilderness areas in the State of Nevada, and to provide for the implementation of a conservation plan for the Virgin River, Nevada; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. VITTER, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 954. A bill to establish procedures regarding the approval of opioid drugs by the Food and Drug Administration; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 955. A bill for the relief of Vichai Sae Tung (also known as Chai Chaowasaree); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HETKAMP:

S. 956. A bill to clarify the collateral requirement for certain loans under section 7(d) of the Small Business Act, to address assistance to out-of-State small business concerns, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KING, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 957. A bill to increase access to capital for veteran entrepreneurs to help create jobs; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 958. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide for team and joint venture offers for certain contracts; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 959. A bill to establish a tax credit for on-site apprenticeship programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. HIRONO:

S. 960. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make improvements in the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program, and to provide for Social Security benefit protection; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CARPER (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 961. A bill to protect information relating to consumers, to require notice of security breaches, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 962. A bill to extend the same Federal benefits to law enforcement officers serving private institutions of higher education and rail carriers that apply to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. COONS):

S. 963. A bill to require the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration to submit a report on small business innovation; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. SANDERS (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 964. A bill to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to provide for consultation with State and local governments, the consideration of State and local concerns, and the

approval of post-shutdown decommissioning activities reports by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 965. A bill to prohibit the use of funds by Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 966. A bill to extend the low-interest re-financing provisions under the Local Development Business Loan Program of the Small Business Administration; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 967. A bill to require the Small Business Administration to make information relating to lenders making covered loans publicly available, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 125

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) were added as cosponsors of S. 125, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bullet-proof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2020, and for other purposes.

S. 235

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 235, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 299

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 299, a bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba.

S. 384

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 384, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate water leasing and water transfers to promote conservation and efficiency.

S. 439

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 439, a bill to end discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity in public schools, and for other purposes.

S. 525

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 525, a bill to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) to reform the Food for Peace Program, and for other purposes.

S. 539

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr.

DURBIN) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 539, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare outpatient rehabilitation therapy caps.

S. 590

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor 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. 611

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 611, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes.

S. 615

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 615, a bill to provide for congressional review and oversight of agreements relating to Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes.

S. 624

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 624, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening.

S. 637

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 637, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 713

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 713, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 725

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 725, a bill to amend the Toxic Substances Control Act, and for other purposes.

S. 729

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 729, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, with respect to certain exceptions to discharge in bankruptcy.

S. 743

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi

(Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) were added as cosponsors of S. 743, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law, and for other purposes.

S. 751

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 751, a bill to improve the establishment of any lower ground-level ozone standards, and for other purposes.

S. 757

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 757, a bill to modify the prohibition on recognition by United States courts of certain rights relating to certain marks, trade names, or commercial names.

S. 774

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 804

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 804, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes.

S. 812

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 812, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 843

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 843, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 860

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 860, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the estate and generation-skipping transfer taxes, and for other purposes.

S. 867

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 867, a bill to improve student academic achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects.

S. 901

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to establish in the Department of Veterans Affairs a national center for research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of the descendants of veterans exposed to toxic substances during service in the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure, to establish an advisory board on such health conditions, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act with respect to the timing of elections and pre-election hearings and the identification of pre-election issues, and to require that lists of employees eligible to vote in organizing elections be provided to the National Labor Relations Board.

S. RES. 116

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 116, a resolution providing for free and fair elections in Burma.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 959. A bill to establish a tax credit for on-site apprenticeship programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to speak in support of the Apprenticeship and Jobs Training Act, which I have introduced with my colleague Senator CANTWELL. Few issues are as important to the American people as the availability of good jobs in our communities. Unemployment in Maine and across the country remains unacceptably high. It is crucial that we continue to improve job training initiatives to help people find jobs in fields with open positions.

Many business owners in Maine have told me that they have jobs available, but they cannot find qualified and trained workers to fill these vacant positions. One way for employees to acquire the skills needed to succeed in these in-demand fields is through apprenticeship programs. Apprentices gain hands-on experience that is invaluable to employers and can help workers secure a well-paying job.

According to the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Ad-

ministration, more than 44,000 participants graduated from the apprenticeship system in fiscal year 2014. In Maine, there were almost 700 registered apprentices. That number, however, is likely insufficient to meet tomorrow's needs. One manufacturer in Maine estimates that nearly 2.7 million manufacturing employees are expected to retire in the next decade. We must do all we can to ensure that an adequate pool of skilled workers is available to fill these well-paying jobs.

Our bill helps achieve this goal by giving tax credits to businesses that hire apprentices. To ensure that workers are given adequate time to prove their value, the apprentice must be employed for seven months in order for a business to claim the credit. Our bill also provides incentives for experienced workers who spend at least 20 percent of their time passing their hard-earned knowledge on to the next generation. These workers would be allowed to receive some retirement income early, without facing tax penalties. Finally, our bill ensures that the brave men and women who defend our country are given credit for the skills they learn while serving. Training received while serving in the Armed Forces would count toward an apprentice's training requirement.

This bill would help better align the needs of our Nation's employers with potential employees to promote hiring and the creation of new jobs. I encourage all my colleagues to support this bill, and I am pleased to join Senator CANTWELL in introducing it.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 962. A bill to extend the same Federal benefits to law enforcement officers serving private institutions of higher education and rail carriers that apply to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local government; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today I am reintroducing the Equity in Law Enforcement Act to extend Federal benefits to law enforcement officers who serve at private institutions of higher education and rail carriers. Through this legislation, these individuals would be eligible for many of the same benefits provided to public law enforcement officers, including line-of-duty death benefits and access to federal grant opportunities through the Department of Justice's Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant and Byrne Justice Assistance Grant, JAG, programs.

In 1976, the Public Safety Officers' Benefits PSOB program was enacted to aid in the recruitment and retention of public safety officers. Recognizing the danger that law enforcement officers, firefighters, and first responders face while serving in our communities, the PSOB provides a one-time financial benefit to survivors of officers who die as a result of injuries sustained in the line of duty.

Although the officers protecting our private universities and railways face the same risks, they are currently not included in the PSOB program. These brave individuals protect our communities every day, enforce the law within their jurisdiction, and receive similar training to their government counterparts. However, they are currently excluded from the line-of-duty federal death benefits available to law enforcement officers serving units of State and local governments, and from access to federal grant programs for protective body armor and other equipment.

Since 1960, approximately 35 college or university law enforcement officers have lost their lives while protecting our communities. While some families of officers that have been gravely injured while serving at public universities have received PSOB line-of-duty death benefits, the families of those who lost their lives while serving at private institutions have been ineligible. We should fix this inequity.

Inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial are the names of the heroes who gave their full measure while protecting our communities. This memorial includes Patrol Officer Joseph Francis Doyle, who was killed in the line of duty at Brown University in 1988, as well as the other officers who died while working at private universities and colleges and on our railways.

A recent name on the Memorial is Patrol Officer Sean Collier. Today, we mark the second anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombings, an act of terror that tragically killed three and injured hundreds of others. Three days after the bombings, during the manhunt for the attackers, Officer Collier of the MIT Police Department was shot and killed by the perpetrators on the university's campus. Officer Collier died while not only bravely serving the students and faculty of MIT. He was also serving the city of Boston, working with others in the law enforcement community during an exceptionally difficult time to keep the city and our nation safe. However, since he was employed by a private university, Officer Collier was not eligible for line-of-duty death benefits. To honor Officer Collier's service and sacrifice, this bill would be retroactive to April 15, 2013, the day of the Boston bombings.

I am pleased that Senators AYOTTE, LEAHY, WHITEHOUSE, and MARKEY have once again joined me in introducing this legislation, which would ensure that officers who have lost their lives protecting our communities and their families are eligible for the benefits associated with law enforcement work as well as access to the protective equipment they need. The bill would only apply to officers who are sworn, licensed, or certified to enforce the law within their jurisdiction, and is supported by the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators.

I urge our colleagues to join us in co-sponsoring and passing the Equity in Law Enforcement Act.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 965. A bill to prohibit the use of funds by Internal Revenue Service to target citizens of the United States for exercising any right guaranteed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce a bill that would prohibit the IRS from the targeting any U.S. citizens for exercising their constitutional rights under the First Amendment.

The history of the IRS offers abundant examples of the Agency trampling on these rights. In the most recent controversy, which came to light in 2013, the IRS applied a heightened scrutiny to applications from conservative groups that were seeking tax-exempt status. Delaying these groups' applications suggests an attempt to chill the constitutional right of speech and association by groups that hold conservative views. No matter what your political views, the details that have emerged are truly alarming. The IRS admitted that it deliberately targeted conservative groups' applications for tax-exempt status for extra review if they included such words as "tea party," "patriots," or "9/11" in their names. It also acknowledged targeting applications from groups that criticized how this country is being run or whose purpose was to address government spending, government debt, taxes, or simply to make America a better place. These inappropriate criteria stayed in place for more than 18 months and resulted in substantial delays in processing the applications of many different groups. In some cases, the applications remained outstanding for more than 2 years.

The IRS also sought to compel some of the targeted groups to divulge their membership lists. IRS officials have subsequently admitted there was absolutely no reason for Agency personnel to have sought that kind of information.

Such behavior, unfortunately, is not a one-time aberration, and the targets have been on both sides of the aisle. A May 2013 Time magazine article noted that the IRS has been involved in scandals going back at least as far as the Kennedy administration, which used the service to investigate so-called rightwing groups. President Nixon employed a secret IRS operation to investigate and audit political opponents. During the Johnson administration, the IRS targeted some antiwar activists. In the decades since, a number of political activists from both the conservative and liberal ends of the spectrum, as well as whistleblowers, have been subjected to intimidating and discriminatory scrutiny by the IRS.

The IRS's history of abuses demonstrates that Congress must be ever-

vigilant in protecting taxpayers. The Agency's power allows it to pervade the most sensitive aspects of Americans' private lives. Irrespective of whether those singled out are liberal or conservative, Democrat or Republican, Independent or Green Party members, regardless of their personal views, the targeting of private citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights is out of bounds and cannot be tolerated.

Seventeen years ago, when the IRS was accused of using abusive tactics towards taxpayers, Congress responded by passing the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act. That act created the Taxpayer Bill of Rights, strengthened taxpayer protections against unauthorized collection activities, and established an oversight board to ensure that taxpayers are properly treated by the IRS.

The bill I am introducing today builds on the 1998 act, as well as an amendment I authored in 2013, which became law, that prohibited the IRS from using funds provided through the fiscal year 2014 IRS funding bill to target American citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights. That prohibition on the use of funds was continued in the fiscal year 2015 funding bill, and the legislation I am offering today would make that prohibition permanent.

The First Amendment is one of our most cherished and sacred freedoms, and its free exercise must be vigorously protected.

It has been said the power to tax is the power to destroy. The American people cannot and will not tolerate any abuse of that power.

It is imperative that Congress act to make sure the power of the IRS is never again used to harass or abuse Americans for exercising their First Amendment rights. The bill I have introduced is tailored to that end. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. ENZI. 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 April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Oversight Hearing: The President's FY 2016 Budget Request for Nuclear Regulatory Commission."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "American Food Aid: Why Reform Matters."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "IRS Challenges in Implementing the Affordable Care Act."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "The Need to Reform Asset Forfeiture."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 2:45 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 1:30 p.m., in room SD-562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Catch Me If You Can: The IRS Impersonation Scam and the Government's Response."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER

Mr. ENZI. 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 April 15, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on April 15, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed

to executive session at 2 p.m., on Thursday, April 16, to consider the following nominations: Calendar No. 1 and Calendar No. 5; that the Senate then vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's actions, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2015

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 16; 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 then resume consideration of S. 178, with the time until 11 a.m. divided in the usual form; and finally that the filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to the Cornyn amendment be at 10:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. ENZI. 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 7:34 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 16, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

LINDA STRUYK MILLSAAPS, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE OVERSIGHT BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 14, 2018, VICE PAUL JONES, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

THOMAS EDGAR ROTHMAN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 3, 2016. (NEW POSITION)

THE JUDICIARY

WILHELMINA MARIE WRIGHT, OF MINNESOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA, VICE MICHAEL J. DAVIS, RETIRING.

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

PETER J. OLSON, OF MARYLAND
BENJAMIN I. PETLOCK, OF FLORIDA
NICOLAS RUBIO, OF FLORIDA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS ONE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CRAIG A. ANDERSON, OF WASHINGTON

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

MIKE OKAMURA, OF VIRGINIA
PETER O'MEARA EVANS, OF VIRGINIA
MARCUS A. MCCHRISTIAN, OF VIRGINIA
ERIC JAMES MENDENHALL, OF VIRGINIA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

OMAR AHMED ALI, OF GEORGIA
KATHLEEN A. BRESNAHAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ARLEEN GRACE R. GENUINO, OF CALIFORNIA
GABRIEL HONS-OLIVIER, OF FLORIDA
DIANE MARGARET KOHN, OF MICHIGAN
TRACY R. THORNTON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JOSEPH W. A. VASQUEZ, OF ALASKA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

FAREED A. ABDULLAH, OF GEORGIA
JAMES ROBERT ABESHAUS, OF FLORIDA
EMILY GRACE ABRAHAM, OF ILLINOIS
YVON ACCIUS, OF FLORIDA
JONATHAN DANIEL ADAMS, OF VIRGINIA
CASEY L. ADDIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BOBBY (ROBERT) ADELSON, JR., OF FLORIDA
OMAR SYED AHMED, OF VIRGINIA
RACHEL A. AICHER, OF NEW YORK
CAROLINE A AMBERGER, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW R. ANDRIS, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DAVID N. ARIZMENDI, OF FLORIDA
LAUREN BROOKS ARMENISE, OF MARYLAND
BRANDON C. BARON, OF FLORIDA
DEANNA KRISTINE BEARDEN, OF TEXAS
HARVEY LEWIS BEASLEY, JR., OF FLORIDA
ALISON L. BEHLING, OF WEST VIRGINIA
GEOFFREY N. BENLISHA, OF TENNESSEE
AARON S. BENESE, OF FLORIDA
ADAM RYDER BENZ, OF FLORIDA
SOMER BESSIRE-BRERS, OF NEVADA
THOMAS DEE BEVAN, OF UTAH
RAIN CHE BIAN, OF NEW YORK
CORI BICKEL, OF GEORGIA
THOMAS M. BILLS, OF OHIO
IRMIE KEELER BLANTON III, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW L. BLIVINS, OF COLORADO
CARLO WISE BOEHM, OF TEXAS
BENJIMAN C. BOHNM, OF ARKANSAS
THOMAS CHARLES BOLLATI, OF FLORIDA
COREY BORDENKECHER, OF INDIANA
ADRIENNE C. BORY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
JON BOWERMASTER, OF MICHIGAN
ERIN ELIZABETH BOYER, OF NORTH CAROLINA
ALEXIA MCNEAL BRANCH, OF CALIFORNIA
STEVEN ARTHUR CONNETT BREMNER, OF MISSOURI
M. ALYNN BROOKS-LASURE, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE BROSIUS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS V.B. BROUNS, OF CALIFORNIA
ALISON SARAH BROWN, OF WASHINGTON
IAN T. BROWN, OF TEXAS
ANYA YAKHEDTS BRUNSON, OF FLORIDA
ZSOFIA BUDAI, OF MINNESOTA
CHRISTINE BUZZARD, OF OKLAHOMA
SARAH EMILY CALDERON HAMILTON, OF TEXAS
JUAN MANUEL CAMMARANO, OF MARYLAND
JUN CARLOS CAMPOS, OF FLORIDA
ALFRED JOHN CANIGLIA III, OF MISSOURI
AMELLE S. CANTER, OF TEXAS
CHRISTIAN HIRAM CARDONA, OF NEW YORK
ELLIOT ROSS CARMEAN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
DAVID RYAN CARR, OF OREGON
MELNIE ROSIE CARTER, OF WASHINGTON
AMANDA J. CAULDWELL, OF CALIFORNIA
MICHAEL CAVIE, OF WISCONSIN
VICTORIA MORGANNE TYSZKA CEDENO, OF MICHIGAN
ANDREW CHARPAM, OF NORTH CAROLINA
HOWARD H. CHYUNG, OF NEW YORK
EMILY KATHLEEN CINTORA, OF ARIZONA
BENJAMIN LEE COBURN, OF GEORGIA
WILLIAM BENJAMIN COCKS, OF FLORIDA
PAUL C. COLOMBINI, OF MARYLAND
PATRICK EVANS CONNALLY, OF WASHINGTON
JOSEPH G. CORDARO, OF TENNESSEE
SETH AARON CORNELL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
JOANNE ILENE COSSITT, OF CONNECTICUT
ROCCO COSTA, OF CALIFORNIA
LOGAN RISHARD COUNCIL, OF NORTH CAROLINA
GREGORY ROY COWAN, OF TEXAS
LISA MARGARET COWLEY, OF TEXAS
TODD WILSON ARDELL CRAWFORD, OF OREGON
ANDREW D. CROSSON, OF TENNESSEE
ROBERT J. CROTTY, OF WASHINGTON
EVA HELENE D'AMBROSIO, OF INDIANA
JACKSON C. DART, OF MICHIGAN
IRENE ARINO DE LA RUBIA, OF FLORIDA
CARRIE A. DENVEU, OF VIRGINIA
JULIA SAMPSON DILLARD, OF CALIFORNIA
AMANDA WICKHAM DIXON, OF TENNESSEE
CHRISTOPHER J. DOSTAL, OF PENNSYLVANIA
RUTH LILLIAN DOWE, OF NEW YORK
MICHAEL JOSEPH DURAN, OF FLORIDA
SHEILA-ANNE F. EBERT, OF NEVADA
JESSICA DAWN EICHER, OF COLORADO
DONYA SHANE ELDRIDGE, OF FLORIDA
BENJAMIN S. EMBURY, OF VIRGINIA
DONALD CLAYTON EMERICK, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
RYAN SCOTT ENGEN, OF WASHINGTON
MARY CHRISTINE ERMEL, OF TEXAS
ANNA ESTRINA, OF VIRGINIA

JACQUES PAUL ETIENNE, OF NEW YORK
ALEXANDRA ELIZABETH EVANS, OF TEXAS
MONICA SAGEBIEL EWING, OF TEXAS
S. ADAM FERGUSON, OF UTAH
SAMUEL R. FERGUSON, OF UTAH
KEVIN CHRISTOPHER FISHER, OF UTAH
DOUGLAS GEORGE FOWLER, OF WYOMING
JASON O. FROHNMAYER, OF OREGON
KEVIN T. FUREY, OF MONTANA
MAIDA A. FURNIA, OF VIRGINIA
BRENDA B. GABRIEL, OF FLORIDA
SOPHIE YAN GAO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
MARC GARTNER, OF CALIFORNIA
PHILLIP M. GATINS, OF FLORIDA
JOSEPH P. GIBLIN, OF NEW YORK
DAMON MATTHEW GOFORTH, OF TEXAS
ARIEL M. GORE, OF ILLINOIS
NAIMA NILAJA MARIAMA GREEN, OF OHIO
ANDREW M. GRILLOS, OF CALIFORNIA
NATALYA IVANOVNA GROKH, OF VIRGINIA
GRETA L. GROMOVICH, OF KANSAS
SARAH REBECCA GROSSBLATT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

CASSANDRA HAGAR, OF TEXAS
KRISTY L. HALLER, OF MARYLAND
JAMES W. HALLOCK, OF NEW YORK
JASON MATTHEW HAMMONTREE, OF CALIFORNIA
PAUL MICHAEL HANNA, OF FLORIDA
CHRISTINE L. HARPER, OF ALABAMA
VANESSA H. HARPER, OF CONNECTICUT
NOEL URBANO HARTLEY, OF TEXAS
HAKIM J. HASAN, OF OREGON
JOHN TRYGVE HAS-ELLISON, OF TEXAS
KRISTIN KARIN HAWKINS, OF VIRGINIA
ANNALEISE HEILGENSTEIN, OF TEXAS
CHRISTOPHER D. HELMKAMP, OF VIRGINIA
CHARLES A. HENDRIX, OF MINNESOTA
JAMES M. HENRY, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HEIDI HERSCHDE, OF WISCONSIN
ZEIRA HIR-JI, OF NEW YORK
JOHN OMAR HISHMEH, OF VIRGINIA
CHRISTIN HO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
KURT DANIEL HOLMGREN, OF VIRGINIA
DANIEL JOSEPH HORSFALL, OF TENNESSEE
BRIAN HOYT, OF CALIFORNIA
JULIA MARGARETA HOZAKOWSKA, OF PENNSYLVANIA
TRAVIS A. HUNNICUTT, OF CALIFORNIA
SHARLINE HUSSAIN-MORGAN, OF NEW YORK
JASON S. HWANG, OF NEW JERSEY
THOMAS S. HWELI, OF CALIFORNIA
MEGAN R. HRID, OF TENNESSEE
GREG PARDO III, OF TEXAS
RYAN SCOTT INGRASSIA, OF CALIFORNIA
RYAN M. JANJA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
CYNTHIA L. JEFFERIES, OF TEXAS
JAMES WESLEY JEFFERS, OF WEST VIRGINIA
SAMANTHA ANN JENKINS, OF WASHINGTON
JEREMY R. JEWETT, OF WISCONSIN
CHRISTOPHER A. JONES, OF ILLINOIS
TODD HAROLD JUNGEBERG, OF TENNESSEE
ANDREA R. KALAN, OF TEXAS
IVAN FALAMA KAMARA, OF ARIZONA
CHRISTOPHER A. KEELLY, OF UTAH
ANDREW E. KELLY, OF VIRGINIA
MATTHEW A. KELLY, OF NEW YORK
DEVIN JAMES KENNINGTON, OF MARYLAND
JOHN PAUL KILL, JR., OF GEORGIA
CRAIG P. KIM, OF WASHINGTON
MICHAEL KISELYCZNYK, OF NEW YORK
NOLAN S. KLEIN, OF TENNESSEE
JEFFREY KLICK, OF TEXAS
JOHN CHARLES KMETZ, OF OKLAHOMA
JOEL ERIK KNIGHT, OF NEW MEXICO
THOMAS D. KOHL, OF FLORIDA
DEREK R. KOLB, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIELLE KORSHAK, OF NEW YORK
LYNN CHUANG KRAMER, OF TEXAS
JINGPING LAI, OF CALIFORNIA
NATALIE BONJOC LEAHY, OF CALIFORNIA
ANDREW D. LEBKUCHEER, OF MINNESOTA
STEPHEN F. LECOMPT, OF TEXAS
CHUNG JOON-WEI, OF CALIFORNIA
SONAM LIBERMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH SHU-ING LU, OF FLORIDA
EMMA CONDOLOMACH, OF MINNESOTA
BENJAMIN J. LOWENBERG, OF WISCONSIN
BONNIE M. MACE, OF IOWA
DANIELLE ANNE MANISCALCO, OF MASSACHUSETTS
RACHEL M. MARTINEZ, OF FLORIDA
THEODORE THOMAS MASSEY, OF VIRGINIA
ALEXANDER MAYER, OF TEXAS
MOLLY KATHERINE MAYFIELD BARBEE, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW ROBERT MCCALLISTER, OF PENNSYLVANIA
PATRICK CALEY MCCORMICK, OF TEXAS
DEBORAH M. MCFARLAND, OF ARIZONA
BRADLEY T. MCCUIRE, OF VIRGINIA
KERRY EVELYN MCINTOSH, OF VERMONT
DAVID DIXON MCKAY, OF UTAH
MAUREEN A. MCNICHOILL, OF VIRGINIA
THEODORE ANDREW MEINHOVER, OF MINNESOTA
MARC A.J. MELNIN, OF WASHINGTON
MEGHAN E. MERCIER, OF FLORIDA
MEREDITH T. METZLER, OF TEXAS
ADAM L. MICHELOW, OF ARIZONA
KARL J. MILLER, OF FLORIDA
SCOTT M. MILLER, OF TEXAS
CATHERINE T. MILLER-LITTLE, OF TEXAS
MOLLY LYNN MITCHELL-GOODS, OF NORTH CAROLINA
YANG ZHANG MONTEIRO, OF FLORIDA
JAIME LYNETTE MOODY, OF LOUISIANA
KRISTINE MORRISSEY, OF MARYLAND
GRANT HANLEY MORROW, OF PENNSYLVANIA
KATHLEEN D. MUENCH, OF CONNECTICUT
VINCENT M. MUT-TRACY, OF VERMONT
JULIE NAUMAN, OF FLORIDA
RAY PATRICE NAYLER, OF CALIFORNIA
BOBBIE S. NEAL, OF VIRGINIA

MARK L. NEIGHBORS, OF VIRGINIA
 KEVIN D. NELSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 DANIEL WESLEY NEWMAN, OF NEW YORK
 KRISTLE WANITA ONIKE NORMAN, OF VIRGINIA
 EMILY YASMIN NORRIS, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 BRANDON RENE NUGENT, OF TENNESSEE
 VAYRAM A. NYADROH, OF ILLINOIS
 MARTIN N. OBERMUELLER, OF NEBRASKA
 ALBERT FRANCISCO OFRECIO, OF CALIFORNIA
 LARA A. O'NEILL, OF FLORIDA
 MELISSA S. O'SHAUGHNESSY, OF FLORIDA
 MARCIA Y. OUTLAW, OF ARIZONA
 BENNY A. PADILLA, OF CALIFORNIA
 DANIEL L. PALMQUIST, OF MINNESOTA
 JACK PAN, OF NEVADA
 CHARLES PARK, OF NEW YORK
 CAROLYN JOY RATZLAFF PARKER, OF TENNESSEE
 DIANA CHU PARTRIDGE, OF ARIZONA
 STEPHEN PATRICK PAZAN, OF NEW JERSEY
 DAVID D. PEMBERTON, OF INDIANA
 MICHAEL PENNELL, OF TENNESSEE
 DEAN R. PETERSON, OF NORTH CAROLINA
 JESSICA BRIANNA PFLIEDERER, OF MINNESOTA
 MARLENE HESS PHILLIPS, OF TEXAS
 JEAN PHILLIPSON, OF VIRGINIA
 JONATHAN PINOLI, OF FLORIDA
 ALISANDE L. PIPKIN, OF NEW YORK
 MICHAEL A. POINTER, OF LOUISIANA
 MICHAEL JOHN POLYAK, OF MICHIGAN
 KATHRYN STANSBURY PORCH, OF VIRGINIA
 KIRK S. PORTMANN, OF WASHINGTON
 CHRISTINE ANANDA PRINCE, OF CALIFORNIA
 PAUL PROKOP, OF CALIFORNIA
 SARAH R. QUINZIO, OF VIRGINIA
 RENEE MICHELLE RAGIN, OF NEW YORK
 HEIDI M. RAMSAY, OF VIRGINIA
 JEFFREY R. RANDS, OF IDAHO
 AJAY SHASHIKANT RAO, OF NEW MEXICO
 KATHERINE REEDY, OF NEW YORK
 CHRISTOPHER T. REYES, OF VIRGINIA
 JOHN LUKE REYNOLDS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 CHRISTOPHER M. RICHARDSON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 ABIGAIL ELIZABETH RICHEY-ALLEN, OF MINNESOTA
 ANNA ELIZABETH RICHEY-ALLEN, OF MINNESOTA
 JEFFREY M. RIDENOUR, OF WASHINGTON
 GLORIA P. RIGOR, OF VIRGINIA
 BENJAMIN PATRICK RINAKER, OF NEBRASKA
 NATHAN P. RINGGER, OF UTAH
 DANIEL O'MALLEY RITTENHOUSE, OF NEW YORK
 LASHANDA LELIA ROBERTS, OF MARYLAND
 DAVID ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ, OF FLORIDA
 SETH R. ROGERS, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 TANIA J. ROMANOFF, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
 HELEN V. ROMANOW ROSEMONT, OF VIRGINIA
 ZACHARY R.S. ROTHSCHILD, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 LADONNA S. SALES, OF TENNESSEE
 TODD BENSON SARGENT, OF VERMONT
 RICHARD SAUNDERS, OF FLORIDA
 TIMOTHY LINCOLN SAVAGE, OF CALIFORNIA
 JOSEPH R. SCHALLER, OF WASHINGTON
 ANDREW J. SCHEINSON, OF VIRGINIA
 KATHRYN SCHLEPER, OF WASHINGTON
 SCOTT EVAN SCHLOSSBERG, OF CALIFORNIA
 DEMARK F. SCHULZE, OF NEVADA
 TAMARA F. SCOTT, OF MARYLAND
 BRIAN A. SELLS, OF OHIO
 VIKRAM AARON SEQUEIRA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 ELIZABETH E. SHACKLEFORD, OF MISSISSIPPI
 SUJATA PRADDEEP SHARMA, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 ALEXANDER DANIEL PERRY SHARP, OF KANSAS
 JEROME L. SHERMAN, OF NEW YORK
 JASON MATHEW SHOW, OF TEXAS
 JAMIE LEIGH SHUFFLEBARGER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
 JOHN THOMAS WOODRUFF SLOVER, OF COLORADO
 CESAR GUILLERMO SORIANO, OF VIRGINIA
 JUDITH CHRISTINE SPANBERGER, OF MINNESOTA
 LANTVA V. SPICER, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 MATTHEW RYAN STEELE, OF KANSAS
 KRISTEN L. STOLT, OF VIRGINIA
 BRIAN M. STRAIGHT, OF VIRGINIA
 PAUL STRAUSS, OF CALIFORNIA
 DANIEL STREBE, OF TEXAS
 BRIAN J. STREET, OF FLORIDA
 GEORGE JAMES SULLIVAN, OF NEW YORK
 PAUL SWIDER, OF FLORIDA
 MICHAEL CHARLES TAPEY, OF TEXAS
 ANOOD MEHMOOD TAQUI, OF CALIFORNIA
 DENISE M. TAYLOR, OF PENNSYLVANIA
 MORGAN C. TAYLOR, OF MONTANA
 RONALD M. TAYLOR, OF VIRGINIA
 DENIS TEST, OF MAINE
 DARREN THIES, OF WISCONSIN
 MARTIN K. THOMEN IV, OF TEXAS
 HEATHER JOY THOMPSON, OF NEW YORK
 JAMES PORTER THROWER, OF FLORIDA
 BRETT FORSTER THURMAN, OF ILLINOIS
 MATTHEW A. TOTILO, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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 EVELINE W. TSENG, OF NEW YORK
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DEREK WONG, OF MARYLAND
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 THOMAS TUNG-WEI WONG, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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 NIAMBI A. YOUNG, OF GEORGIA
 WILLIAM QIAN YU, OF WASHINGTON
 NADIA ZIYADEH, OF VIRGINIA
 ANDREW J. ZVIRZDIN, OF NEW YORK
 THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 27, 2012:
 CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:
 DANIEL M. PERRONE, OF MASSACHUSETTS
 THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 27, 2013:
 CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:
 PAUL DAVID BROWN, OF TEXAS
 THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED, EFFECTIVE APRIL 15, 2014:
 CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:
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 HENRY KAMINSKI, OF CONNECTICUT
 THE FOLLOWING-NAMED MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.
 THE FOLLOWING-NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE TO BE CONSULAR OFFICERS AND SECRETARIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:
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 KELLY RAY BROWNE, OF VIRGINIA
 A. ANTHONY BURRELL, OF VIRGINIA
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 SPENCER KEITH CARGILL, OF VIRGINIA
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