

AMENDMENT NO. 1142

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1142 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1142 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1143

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1143 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1144

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1144 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1145

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1145 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1145 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1147

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1147 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1148

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1148 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

At the request of Mr. LEE, his name was added as a cosponsor of amend-

ment No. 1148 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 1150

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1150 proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 1151

At the request of Mr. GARDNER, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 1151 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1191, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. HELLER):

S. 1108. A bill to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to include court security officers in the public safety officers' death benefits program; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1108

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Stanley Cooper Death Benefits for Court Security Officers Act".

SEC. 2. PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' DEATH BENEFITS.

Section 1204(9) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796b(9)) is amended—

- (1) in subparagraph (C)(ii), by striking "or" and inserting a semicolon;
- (2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting "or"; and
- (3) by adding at the end the following:

"(E) a court security officer who is under contract with the United States Marshals Service."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated \$1,000,000 for each fiscal year to carry out the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 4. APPLICABILITY.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply to any injury sustained on or after January 1, 2010.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 1109. A bill to require adequate information regarding the tax treatment of payments under settlement agreements entered into by Federal agencies, and for other purposes; to the

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Truth in Settlements Act. This bipartisan legislation, which I introduced earlier today with my colleague from Oklahoma Senator LANKFORD, the Presiding Officer, will help the public hold Federal agencies accountable for settlements they make with corporate wrongdoers.

When companies break the law, Federal enforcement agencies are responsible for holding them accountable. In nearly every instance, agencies choose to resolve cases through settlements rather than a public trial. They defend this practice by arguing that settlements are in the best interest of the American people. That sounds good, but their actions paint a very different picture.

If agencies were truly confident that these settlements were good deals for the public, they would be willing to publicly disclose all of the key details of those agreements. Instead, time after time, agencies do the opposite, hiding critical details about their settlements in the fine print—or worse, hiding them entirely from public view.

Consider that copies of these agreements or even basic facts about them are not easily accessible online. Many agencies regularly deem agreements confidential without any public explanation of why the public cannot see what has been done in their name. When agencies do make public statements about these agreements, they often trumpet large dollar amounts of money recovered for taxpayers while failing to disclose that this sticker price isn't what the companies will actually pay, since the number that is listed includes credits for engaging in routine activities and doesn't reflect massive tax deductions that many of these companies get.

Add all of these tricks, and you will end with a predictable result. Too often the American people learn only what the agencies want them to learn about these agreements. That is not good enough.

These hidden details can make a huge difference. Below the surface, settlements that seem tough and fair don't always look so impressive.

For example, 2 years ago, Federal regulators entered into a settlement with 10 mortgage servicers accused of illegal foreclosure practices. The sticker price on the settlement was \$8.5 billion. Now, that is a big number. But \$5.2 billion was in the form of credits, or what the agencies described in their press release as "loan modifications and forgiveness of deficiency judgments."

That vague public statement left out a key detail: Servicers could rack up those credits by forgiving mere fractions of large, unpaid loans. For example, a servicer that wrote down \$15,000 of a \$500,000 unpaid loan balance would get a credit for \$500,000—not the \$15,000 that was actually written down. That

undisclosed method of calculating credits could end up cutting the overall value of the \$8.5 billion settlement by billions and billions of dollars.

Failure to disclose possible tax deductions is another way agencies can hide the ball. Two years ago, a Federal court found that a company that allegedly defrauded Medicare and other Federal health programs—for years—was entitled to a \$50 million tax deduction for government settlements that it had made. That deduction came on top of earlier tax deductions the company had already taken in their settlement payment.

The end result? A \$385 million settlement that was touted at the time as the largest civil recovery to date in a health care fraud case was, in fact, \$100 million smaller once taxpayers had picked up part of the settlement.

At least in these two cases, the text of the settlements was public, allowing the American people the chance to dig into the fine print and uncover these unflattering details. But for settlements that are kept confidential, the public is kept entirely in this the dark.

Recently, Wells Fargo agreed to pay the Federal Housing Finance Agency \$335 million for allegedly fraudulent sales of mortgage-backed securities to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. That is about 6 percent of what JPMorgan Chase paid in a public settlement with FHFA to address very similar claims. Now, in what ways did the actions of Wells Fargo differ from those of JPMorgan? We will never know, because while the JPMorgan settlement is public, the much smaller Wells Fargo settlement is held confidential.

The American people deserve better. These enforcement agencies don't work for the companies they investigate; they work for us. Agencies should not be able to cut bad deals and then hide the embarrassing details. The public deserves transparency.

The Truth in Settlements Act requires that transparency. It requires agencies making public statements about their settlements to include explanations of how those settlements are categorized for tax purposes and what specific conduct will generate credits that apply toward the sticker price. The bill also requires agencies to post text and basic information about their settlements online. And while the legislation does not prohibit agencies from deeming settlements confidential, it requires agencies to disclose additional information about how frequently they are invoking confidentiality and their reasons for doing so.

If we expect agencies to hold companies accountable for breaking the law, then we should be able to hold agencies accountable for enforcing the law. We cannot do that if we are being held in the dark. The Truth in Settlements Act shines a light on these agency decisions and gives the American people a chance to hold agencies accountable for enforcing our laws.

I introduced this bill in the last Congress with Senator LANKFORD's prede-

cessor, Senator Coburn. The bill advanced through the Senate's Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee by voice vote but was blocked on the Senate floor.

I hope that in this Congress we can finally make this commonsense legislation law.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 1112. A bill to amend the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 to expand coverage under the Act, to increase protections for whistleblowers, to increase penalties for high gravity violations, to adjust penalties for inflation, to provide rights for victims or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the need for a safer and healthier workplace and to urge my colleagues to join me and Senator MURRAY in supporting the Protecting America's Workers Act, which I am proud to introduce today.

Today, April 28, is Workers' Memorial Day—a day for our Nation to remember and focus on those workers who have died or been injured on the job. Today is also a day to acknowledge the significant suffering experienced by families and communities when workers die or are injured and to recommit ourselves to maintaining safe and healthy workplaces for all of our workers.

April 28 is also the anniversary of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, the OSH Act, which created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. When the bill was passed on a bipartisan basis and signed into law by President Nixon 45 years ago, 14,000 workers were dying on the job each year. Now the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that there were 4,405 worker fatalities in 2013. That is a huge improvement, and it would not have happened without the OSH Act. But it also means that far too many workers are still getting hurt and dying on the job.

Our workforce and workplaces have changed significantly in 45 years, but our laws have not kept pace. We have made no real updates to our workplace safety laws even though thousands of workers die every year on the job, many in large industrial disasters that could be prevented.

Unfortunately, too often, we are told that we cannot afford to strengthen our workplace safety laws. But I believe our country cannot afford the economic and emotional costs incurred by middle-class families when workers lose their lives or their livelihoods on the job. And it is not just those families; law-abiding businesses that invest in safe workplaces cannot afford to subsidize the corporations that cut corners on workplace safety and then leave the American public to pick up the tab.

Let me remind you of a few of the tragedies that have happened in just

the past decade that show the cost to our country.

On March 23, 2005, fire and an explosion at BP's Texas City Refinery killed 15 workers and injured more than 170 others. On February 7, 2008, 13 people were killed and 42 people were injured in a dust explosion at a sugar refinery in Port Wentworth, GA.

On April 17, 2014, 15 people were killed—13 of them volunteer first responders—and another 200 people were injured after a fertilizer company in West Texas exploded. The explosion leveled roughly 80 homes and a middle school. Mr. President, 133 residents of a nearby nursing home were trapped in the ruins.

And just last week, we recognized the 5-year anniversary of the explosion and sinking of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. That accident killed 11 workers and is considered the largest accidental marine oilspill in the history of the petroleum industry, costing millions to the local economy and causing unprecedented damage to the environment.

All of the reports following these accidents cited weak compliance and gaps in our safety laws. They all point to the fact that our workplace safety laws are too weak. They are so weak that they cannot ensure the safety of American workers, and they do not level the playing field for law-abiding businesses that make sure their workers are safe.

These are not isolated incidents. Since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began collecting data on worker fatalities on the job in 1992, over 124,000 workers have died on the job. To put that in perspective, on average, in the United States, about six times as many people die on the job each year as died in airplane crashes last year worldwide. The fact is that many of these accidents could have been prevented. Many of these workers could still be with their families today. But, unfortunately, even after the reports outlining the details of these accidents and recommending commonsense updates to our laws to protect workers from these types of incidents, there have been no significant updates made to the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

We all rely on the sacrifice of American workers who are employed in difficult and often dangerous industries. We all depend on construction, manufacturing, natural gas production, and agriculture to help build and heat our homes and put food on the table. The Americans who work in those fields should not have to choose between their health and safety and providing for their families.

We can do something about that. That is why today I am proud to reintroduce the Protecting America's Workers Act with Senator PATTY MURRAY, who has long been a champion of workers' rights. After 45 years, this legislation will modernize the Occupational Safety and Health Act for the 21st century.

This legislation will expand the number of workers in safe workplaces and make it harder to violate workplace safety laws. It will also protect whistleblowers who bravely speak out about unsafe work conditions for themselves, their coworkers, and their families. This legislation protects the public's right to know about safety violations and about OSHA investigations. It will also help us track and respond to workplace safety issues by requiring tracking of worker injuries.

Nothing can bring back the workers lost in Texas City; Port Wentworth, GA; West Texas; the Deepwater Horizon disaster; or the many tens of thousands of other workers who have lost their lives on the job. But we owe it to those who have died and to their surviving families to learn from those accidents and to try to stop them from happening so that other families do not have to suffer the same loss.

Good jobs are safe jobs, and I believe this bill will help us create safer workplaces. I urge my colleagues to join me and Senator MURRAY in supporting the Protecting America's Workers Act.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I believe that we in Congress should be working to grow the economy from the middle out, not from the top down, and we should make sure that our government is working for all of our families, not just the wealthiest few. An important part of this is making sure that workers have access to a safe and healthy workplace and the basic protection of earning a living without fearing for their safety.

That effort takes on special meaning today. April 28, today, is Workers' Memorial Day, the day when we remember those who lost their lives just for doing their job. When a worker is injured or is killed on the job, it has devastating impacts for their families and their communities. In 2014, more than 4,500 workers were killed on the job. That is more than 12 deaths every single day.

So we need to do everything we can to make sure employers are taking the necessary precautions to keep their workers safe.

So today, let's keep the families and communities that have suffered from these losses in our thoughts, and let's make sure this Workers' Memorial Day is about recommitting ourselves to improving safety protections at workplaces across the country. Every worker in every industry should have basic worker protections. While workers are doing their jobs, employers should be doing everything they can to protect them.

In 1970, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act to protect workers from unsafe working conditions. Back in 1970, that law finally gave workers some much needed protection so they could earn a living without sacrificing their health or safety.

Since then, of course, American industry has changed significantly. Busi-

nesses have become more complex. Workers are performing 21st-century tasks, but we are still using a 1970s approach to protect employees. That doesn't make sense, and it is time for it to change.

I support the bill Senator FRANKEN introduced today called Protecting America's Workers Act. I want to note that Senator FRANKEN is the new ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety. In that role, he will bring a focus and a passion for moving this legislation forward, and I look forward to working with him to that end.

The Protecting America's Workers Act is a long overdue update to the Occupational Safety and Health Act and is a good step toward making workplaces across America safer and healthier. The legislation will increase protections for workers who report unsafe working conditions, and adding these whistleblower protections will protect workers from retaliation. The bill will make sure workers have the option to appeal to Federal courts if they are being mistreated for telling the truth about dangerous practices. This bill will also improve reporting, inspection, and enforcement of workplace health and safety violations. It expands the rights of victims of unsafe workplaces and makes sure employers quickly improve unsafe workplaces to avoid further endangering worker health and safety because we owe it to all workers to make sure they are truly protected on the job.

Our economy is finally recovering after the worst downturn since the Great Depression. We are not all the way back yet, and there is a lot more that needs to be done to create jobs and help our middle class and working families. But while we continue that work, we must also recommit to our bedrock responsibilities to workers and their safety. Workers should be able to go to work confident their employers are doing their part to provide safe and healthy workplaces, and they should know their government is looking out for them, their families, and their economic security.

Today, I urge my colleagues to reflect on the workers who lost their lives this past year. I am hopeful we can honor their legacy by working together to pass the Protecting America's Workers Act and make these commonsense updates to meet our obligations to the best workforce in the world and continue our work growing the economy from the middle out, not the top down.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. REED) (by request):

S. 1118. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense and for military construction, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, Senator REED and I are introducing, by request, the administration's proposed National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2016. As is the case with any bill that is introduced by request, we introduce this bill for the purpose of placing the administration's proposals before Congress and the public without expressing our own views on the substance of these proposals. As Chairman and Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee, we look forward to giving the administration's requested legislation our most careful review and thoughtful consideration.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. TILLIS, and Mr. BURR):

S. 1120. A bill to make aliens associated with a criminal gang inadmissible, deportable, and ineligible for various forms of relief; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to discuss a bill I am introducing today with my colleagues from North Carolina, Senators TILLIS and BURR, related to criminal gangs. Our bill would reform our immigration laws to protect the homeland and the public's safety by ensuring that criminal gang members are not eligible for deportation relief and are swiftly removed from the country.

Under current immigration laws, alien gang members are generally not deportable or inadmissible based on their gang membership, and they are eligible for various benefits and forms of relief.

Just this month, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, USCIS, admitted it erred in granting deferred deportation to a known gang member who is now charged with four counts of 1st degree murder in North Carolina. In response to a letter Senator TILLIS and I sent them, USCIS stated that Emmanuel Jesus Rangel-Hernandez's request for deferred deportation under President Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, executive order "should not have been approved" based on its procedures and protocols. This individual was placed in the removal process in March 2012, following drug charges, but was shielded from removal by USCIS even though the agency knew of his gang membership. After having received DACA, Mr. Rangel-Hernandez allegedly murdered four people.

Secretary Johnson testified today before the Senate Judiciary Committee and said, "If you are a member of a gang, a known member of a criminal gang, you should not receive DACA. You should be considered priority for removal." The Secretary said that Rangel-Hernandez should not have been approved for DACA, and that there was a lapse in the background checks for this applicant.

The Rangel-Hernandez case shows that USCIS is not doing a thorough job reviewing the individuals who it allows

to stay in this country under the President's deferred action program. It remains unclear whether USCIS has a zero tolerance policy for criminals and criminal gang members applying for DACA, or any other immigration benefit or form of relief from removal. It is unclear how many individuals have received DACA that shouldn't have. So far, since 2013, 282 individuals who are known gang members or criminals have had their DACA benefit terminated. The review of all cases, as ordered by Secretary Johnson, is ongoing, so that number could climb.

In April 2015, nearly 1,000 gang members and associates from 239 different gangs were arrested in 282 cities across the U.S. during Project Wildfire, a 6-week operation led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's, ICE, Homeland Security Investigations. Of those arrested, 199 were foreign nationals from 18 countries in South and Central America, Asia, Africa, Europe and the Caribbean.

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director expressed concern about criminal gangs and said, "Criminal gangs inflict violence and fear upon our communities, and without the attention of law enforcement, these groups can spread like a cancer."

Despite the concern about violent criminal gangs, ICE arrests are down. According to the Center for Immigration Studies, "arrests peaked in 2012, then dropped by more than 25 percent in 2013, and continued to decline in 2014."

Furthermore, under the Fourth Circuit's decision in *Holder v. Martinez*, former gang members may argue that their status as a former gang member similarly entitles them to remain in the United States. This ruling has opened the door to violent gang members renouncing their membership as a ruse to stay in the country. Unfortunately, the Department of Justice didn't appeal the ruling, signaling support for gang members to remain in the country.

The Grassley-Tillis-Burr bill seeks to ensure that alien gang members are not provided a safe haven in the United States. It defines a criminal alien gang, renders them inadmissible and deportable, and requires the government to detain them while awaiting deportation. The bill also prohibits criminal alien gang members from gaining U.S. immigration benefits such as asylum, Temporary Protected Status, Special Immigrant Juvenile visas, deferred action or parole, with limited exceptions for law enforcement purposes. Lastly, the bill provides an expedited removal process for terrorists, criminal aliens and gang members.

I hope my colleagues will agree that our immigration laws, and the administration's policies, must be reformed so that those who pose a threat to the public are not allowed to remain in the United States and take advantage of the benefits we provide.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 1122. A bill to provide that chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code, relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements, shall not apply to enrollment agreements made between students and certain institutions of higher education, and to prohibit limitations on the ability of students to pursue claims against certain institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1122

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Court Legal Access and Student Support (CLASS) Act of 2015".

SEC. 2. INAPPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER 1 OF TITLE 9, UNITED STATES CODE, TO ENROLLMENT AGREEMENTS MADE BETWEEN STUDENTS AND CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code (relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements) shall not apply to an enrollment agreement made between a student and an institution of higher education.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term "institution of higher education" has the meaning given such term in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON LIMITATIONS ON ABILITY OF STUDENTS TO PURSUE CLAIMS AGAINST CERTAIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

Section 487(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(30) The institution will not require any student to agree to, and will not enforce, any limitation or restriction (including a limitation or restriction on any available choice of applicable law, a jury trial, or venue) on the ability of a student to pursue a claim, individually or with others, against an institution in court."

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 1123. A bill to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, almost 2 years ago, Vermonters and the American people learned for the first time the shocking details of the National Security Agency's dragnet collection program. Relying on a deeply flawed interpretation of section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act, the NSA has been indiscriminately sweeping up Americans' private telephone records for years.

It is long past time to end this bulk collection program. Americans have made clear that they will not tolerate such intrusion into their private lives. The President has called for an end to bulk collection under section 215. The Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General supported legislation last year that would have shut this program down. National security experts have testified that the program is not necessary, and the American technology industry has called for meaningful reform of this program because it has lost billions to competitors in the international marketplace due to a decline in the public's trust.

Yet in the face of this overwhelming consensus, Congress has failed to act. Last year, when we had an opportunity to pass my bipartisan legislation to end this program and reform other surveillance authorities, some Members of this body chose to play political games rather than engage in constructive debate.

The time for posturing and theatrics is over. It is time for Congress to answer to the American people.

Today, I—along with Senator MIKE LEE—introduce the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015. This bipartisan bill is also being introduced in the House today by Congressman JIM SENSENBRENNER, House Judiciary Committee chairman BOB GOODLATTE, ranking member JOHN CONYERS, and a large bipartisan group of House Judiciary Committee members.

If enacted, our bill will be the most significant reform to government surveillance authorities since the USA PATRIOT Act was passed nearly 14 years ago. Most importantly, our bill will definitively end the NSA's bulk collection program under section 215. It also guarantees unprecedented transparency about government surveillance programs, allows the FISA Court to appoint an amicus to assist it in significant cases, and brings the national security letter statutes in line with the First Amendment.

The bipartisan, bicameral bill we introduce today is the product of intense and careful negotiations. It enacts strong, meaningful reforms while ensuring that the intelligence community has the tools it needs to keep this country safe.

Some will say that this bill does not go far enough. I agree. But in order to secure broader support for reform legislation that can pass both the House and Senate and be signed into law, changes had to be made to the bill that I introduced last year. This new bill

does not contain all the reforms that I want. It contains some provisions I believe are unnecessary but that were added to secure support from the House Intelligence Committee. But we should pass it and continue fighting for more reform.

I have been in the Senate for more than 40 years—and I have learned that when there is a chance to make real progress, we have to seize it. This is not my first fight and certainly will not be my last. I have a responsibility to Vermonters and the American people to do everything I can to end the dragnet collection of their phone records under section 215. And I know for a fact that the upcoming June 1 sunset of section 215 is our best opportunity for real reform. We cannot squander it.

Last year, a broad and bipartisan coalition worked together to craft reasonable and responsible legislation. Critics resorted to scare tactics. They would not even agree to debate the bill. I hope that we do not see a repeat of that ill-fated strategy again this year. The American people have had enough of delay and brinksmanship. Congress now has an opportunity to show leadership and govern responsibly.

The intelligence community is deeply concerned about the possibility of a legislative standoff that could result in the expiration of section 215 altogether. The USA FREEDOM Act is a path forward that has the support of the administration, privacy groups, the technology industry—and most importantly, the American people. I urge congressional leaders to take up and swiftly pass the USA FREEDOM Act of 2015—because I will not vote for reauthorization of section 215 without meaningful reform.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 152—RECOGNIZING THREATS TO FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND EXPRESSION AROUND THE WORLD AND REAFFIRMING FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AS A PRIORITY IN EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 152

Whereas Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in Paris, France on December 10, 1948, states that “[e]veryone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”;

Whereas in 1993, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed May 3 of each year as “World Press Freedom Day” to celebrate the fundamental principles of freedom of the

press, evaluate freedom of the press around the world, defend against attacks on the independence of the media, and pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives in the exercise of their profession;

Whereas on December 18, 2013, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 163 (2013)) on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity, that unequivocally condemns, in both conflict and nonconflict situations, all attacks on and violence against journalists and media workers, including torture, extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, and intimidation and harassment;

Whereas 2015 is the 22nd anniversary of World Press Freedom Day, which focuses on the theme “Let Journalism Thrive! Towards Better Reporting, Gender Equality, and Media Safety in the Digital Age”;

Whereas the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act of 2009 (22 U.S.C. 2151 note; Public Law 111-166), which was passed by unanimous consent in the Senate and signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2010, expanded the annual Human Rights Reports of the Department of State to include the examination of freedom of the press;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, freedom of the press suffered a “drastic decline” across all continents;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, 69 journalists and 19 citizen-journalists were killed in connection with the collection and dissemination of news and information;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in 2014, the 3 deadliest countries for journalists on assignment were Syria, Ukraine, and Iraq;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, more than 40 percent of the journalists killed in 2014 had been targeted for murder and 31 percent of journalists murdered had reported receiving threats;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 650 journalists were killed between 1992 and April 2015 and the perpetrators have not been punished;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, the 5 countries with the highest number of unpunished journalist murders between 2004 and 2014 are Iraq, Somalia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Syria;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, 853 journalists and 122 citizen-journalists were arrested;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, as of December 1, 2014, 221 journalists worldwide were in prison;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, the 5 countries with the highest number of journalists in prison as of December 8, 2014, were China, Eritrea, Iran, Egypt, and Syria;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, in 2014, the 5 countries with the highest number of journalists threatened or attacked were Ukraine, Venezuela, Turkey, Libya, and China;

Whereas, according to the 2015 World Press Freedom Index of Reporters Without Borders, Eritrea, North Korea, Turkmenistan, Syria, and China were the countries ranked lowest with respect to “media pluralism and independence, respect for the safety and freedom of journalists, and the legislative, institutional and infrastructural environment in which the media operate”;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in 2014, Syria was the world’s deadliest country for journalists for the third year in a row;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, the Government of the Russian Federation continued to pressure the media to control independent news outlets to an ex-

tent that may lead to the termination of the outlets;

Whereas Freedom House has cited a deteriorating environment for Internet freedom around the world and in 2014 ranked Iran, Syria, China, Cuba, and Ethiopia as the countries having the worst obstacles to access, limits on content, and violations of user rights among countries and territories rated by Freedom House as “Not Free”;

Whereas freedom of the press is a key component of democratic governance, activism in civil society, and socioeconomic development; and

Whereas freedom of the press enhances public accountability, transparency, and participation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses concern about the threats to freedom of the press and expression around the world following World Press Freedom Day on May 3, 2015;

(2) commends journalists and media workers around the world for their essential role in promoting government accountability, defending democratic activity, and strengthening civil society, despite threats to their safety;

(3) pays tribute to journalists who have lost their lives carrying out their work;

(4) calls on governments abroad to implement United Nations General Assembly Resolution 163 (2013);

(5) condemns all actions around the world that suppress freedom of the press, including: brutal murders of journalists by the terrorist group Islamic State in Syria, violent attacks against media outlets such as the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, and the kidnappings of journalists and media workers by pro-Russian militant groups in eastern Ukraine;

(6) reaffirms the centrality of freedom of the press to efforts of the United States Government to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance domestically and around the world; and

(7) calls on the President and the Secretary of State—

(A) to improve the means by which the United States Government rapidly identifies, publicizes, and responds to threats against freedom of the press around the world;

(B) to urge foreign governments to conduct transparent investigations and adjudications of the perpetrators of attacks against journalists; and

(C) to highlight the issue of threats against freedom of the press year round.

SENATE RESOLUTION 153—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP TO SAFEGUARDING GLOBAL SECURITY, PROSPERITY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. CORKER (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. PERDUE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 153

Whereas the United States-Japan alliance is a cornerstone of global peace and stability and underscores the past, present, and future United States commitment to the stability and prosperity of Japan and the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas the United States and Japan established diplomatic relations on March 31, 1854, with the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Amity;

Whereas 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, a conflict where the