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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 29, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHARLES J. FLEISCHMANN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, predictably, Congress is sidestepping the transportation funding issue for the 34th time with yet another short-term extension, this one until the end of October.

No nation has become great building its infrastructure 3 months, 8 months, 10 months at a time. This is a symbol of the failure of Congress and the last two administrations to deal meaningfully with the need to rebuild and renew America.

Our country is falling apart as we fall behind. We all can remember the days when the United States had the finest infrastructure in the world. Well, those days have long since passed. By any objective measure, we are now down about 25th in the world, and we continue to fall further.

This failure has consequences for Americans every single day. The average damage to a car is over $500 a year in maintenance costs due to poor road conditions, more than $125 billion a year to the economy with congestion, being stuck in traffic.

Because of poor road conditions, infrastructure failures, and an inability to keep pace with growth, there are people being killed and injured every day across America. It doesn't have to be this way.

The failure to get a 6-year reauthorization, which we haven't had since 1998, is due to one simple fact: Congress is still trying to pay for 2015 infrastructure with 1993 dollars.

The solution is simple. Over three dozen Members of Congress have cosponsored legislation to raise the gas tax for the first time in 22 years, legislation that is supported by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, AFL–CIO, local government, transit, environmentalists, contractors, the largest collection of groups supporting any major issue before Congress.

It is a solution that was advocated by President Ronald Reagan when he led the effort in his administration to raise the gas tax 125 percent. It is a solution that has been embraced by six red Republican States already this year.

The latest failure to slide into the end of October could actually be our salvation. I have personally lobbied President Obama to call for an end to this charade. The President believes in infrastructure and every year has offered up an approach from his perspective.

I would urge the Congress and all of us to draw one final red line. This October 31 deadline ought to be it. Let Congress stew. Let things grind to a halt if we don't do our job.

The gas tax legislation is already written and can be approved if the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee would deal with it for a week.

It is a simple one-page bill. It is not necessary to tie ourselves in knots. And then, if we give a number to the authorizing committee, in a matter of weeks, they can develop that 6-year bill that would make such a difference.

We could meet the President's deadline, have this done once and for all, put hundreds of thousands of people to work at family-wage jobs all across the country, improving the quality of life, making our communities more livable, our families safer, healthier, more economically secure, and stop playing with gimmicks that highlight our dysfunction.

Let's prove to the American public and, more importantly, to us that we can actually function the way things were designed, using a user fee that is perfectly attuned to road needs that have served us well for over half a century.

So, please, Mr. President, why don't you make it clear that you are going to call an end to this charade. Give Congress 3 more months to do our job. It doesn't need any more.

We operate from cliff to crisis. Deadlines are simply an alarm clock to get started. Well, this particular alarm clock could start ticking now if you are calling a halt to our continued irresponsibility.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

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IRAN-NORTH KOREA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, a bad deal is a bad deal under a Republican President or a Democratic President. This Iran nuclear deal is a bad deal because we have seen this movie before. We know how it ends.

I have repeatedly stated that Iran has been following the North Korean playbook on exactly how to extract concessions from the United States and the international community while simultaneously continuing to improve its nuclear program, expand its infrastructure, and support its illicit activities.

Many analysts have made the same observations, including Alan Dershowitz in a Jerusalem Post article last week.

It is not just how the process unfolded and how the international community fell for the tricks of the rogue regimes that are so scary.

Because, obviously, Iran saw North Korea as having been the victors in its battle over its nuclear program; so, naturally, it would want to replicate that.

But it is alarming and striking just how similar the rhetoric is between President Clinton's announcement of a nuclear agreement with North Korea and President Obama's announcement of a nuclear agreement with Iran.

Let's look at the similarities that Mr. Dershowitz noted between President Clinton's remarks in 1994 and President Obama's from earlier this month. Then, Mr. Speaker, it will be easy to understand why so many of us oppose this nuclear deal.

In 1994, President Clinton said that the North Korea agreement will make the U.S., the Korean Peninsula, and the world safer. Earlier this month President Obama said that this deal will bring about change that makes the U.S. and the world safer and more secure.

In 1994, President Clinton assured the world that the North Korea deal ''does not rely on trust. Compliance will be certified by the International Atomic Energy Agency.''

Last week President Obama proclaimed, ''This deal is not built on trust. It is built on verification.''

President Clinton predicted—as we now are painfully aware, inaccurately—that the North Korea agreement would be ''a crucial step toward drawing North Korea into the global community'' and predicted the end of the rogue regime's isolation.

Similarly, last week's statement poses that the Iran deal ''offers an opportunity to move in a new direction'' because we have taken a different path that ''leads to more integration into the global economy, more engagement with the international community, and the ability of the Iranian people to prosper and thrive.''

And, of course, there was the spurious promise to an ally to assuage them that we didn't just put their national security in jeopardy.

First, President Clinton reaffirmed our commitment to protect South Korea. Now, President Obama, already knowing that Israel vehemently objects to this deal and feels as though this gives Iran—an existential threat to its existence and a regime that has promised to wipe the Jewish state off of the map—the ultimate weapon to achieve its goals, promises to ''continue our unprecedented effort to strengthen Israel's security, efforts that go beyond what any American administration has done before.''

Not only are these empty words, Mr. Speaker, but they are disingenuous to boot.

When the North Korea deal was reached, one of the most significant flaws was that it failed to dismantle any of North Korea's nuclear infrastructure.

The deal was designed merely to delay the North Korean bomb, not prevent it. That is what this nuclear deal with Iran is designed to do.

We saw what happened with North Korea, and we can be sure that Iran plans to follow suit.

The totality of this deal hinges on a bet by the administration and the rest of the P5+1 that the Iranian regime will see the error of its ways and wants to be part of the global community and forsake its support for terror and other illicit behavior.

That is a dangerous gamble to make with U.S. national security, and it is not a gamble that I or any one of us should be willing to take.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, we must reject this deal and demand a better deal or else reimpose the sanctions and use the only thing, the only tactic, that Iran understands—strength—to force it to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

PUERTO RICO

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke about Puerto Rico's debt crisis and how there must be a sense of urgency because, without action, bondholders will be paid, but teachers, cops, and nurses won't.

I want to continue today and make two points. Number one, let's not let bondholders bleed Puerto Rico at a discount. Number two, let's work together on what unites us, not what divides us.

Because the only way we will make any progress is if the people of Puerto Rico come together to make a plan and demand that the Congress of the United States work with Puerto Rico on Puerto Rico's plan.

Without consistent and persistent pressure from Puerto Rico, Washington will do nothing, as both the administration and the Congress are content to let the bondholders on Wall Street call the tune.

We all know Washington should start with H.R. 870, the bankruptcy bill. It is simply a bill that will allow Puerto Rico to declare bankruptcy and restructure its debt within the U.S. legal system.

This would allow an orderly and fair restructuring of the debt in a court of law. It is an important step, but will not solve all of Puerto Rico's problems.

What Puerto Rico should do right now is demand to know what Wall Street vulture capitalists are paying for the bonds.

We hear a report that the bonds are selling for 15 and 20 cents on the dollar, yet the bond owners want a full dollar's worth of interest.

I say Puerto Rico should pay interest based on the price the billionaires actually paid and that they should disclose this amount, just as a congressman does in this Congress every time we make an investment.

Then Puerto Rico can service its debt based on what was paid to buy the debt. I came here to protect people, not the profits of billionaires on Wall Street.

Secondly and most importantly, for the time being, we must set aside politics and get away from the smokescreen of the status issue in Puerto Rico.

Whether Puerto Rico should be a State, an independent nation, or remain a commonwealth cannot be the priority right now before this Congress.

If everyone leaves Puerto Rico—and they are leaving by 5,000 a month—it will not matter what kind of government is left behind.

Mr. Speaker, nobody should use the current debt crisis as an opportunity to score political points for their party.

At a time when the people of Puerto Rico must be clear, precise, and unified, the status issue divides Puerto Ricans.

I read in The New York Times the argument of the Resident Commissioner of the Statehood Party that the only solution to Puerto Rico's problems is to make it a State.

Really? That is going to solve the debt crisis? The power crisis? The public employees' pension gap crisis? The Medicare Advantage budget crisis?

We should be working together to figure out how Puerto Rico is going to pay teachers and honor their pensions, how we will make sure health care is delivered to all and bridges do not collapse. A statehood bill is not going to provide housing, create a job, or heal a sick child.

When Members of Congress ask me about Puerto Rico, they ask me: Which is it? Is it statehood? Do you want a bankruptcy bill? Do you want more Medicaid?

We have to prioritize. We have to be clear and put aside the status issue. Please, we need to work together.

I would like to use my remaining minute to restate my call to action in Spanish.

(English translation of the statement made in Spanish is as follows:)

Politics and divisions could destroy the chances of forcing Washington to help resolve Puerto Rico's debt crisis.

Puerto Rico must have a common plan that has support across all of the parties, and most importantly, across the Island.

The Governor must find a way to work with the Resident Commissioner and the Resident Commissioner cannot view this crisis as a campaign tool for higher office.

Puerto Rico will only be helped by this Congress if and when there is a consistent and persistent call on Congress by Puerto Ricans to act. And Puerto Ricans need to specify what they expect Congress to do.

The Bankruptcy Bill is only part of it. If we still have the Jones Act and the same economy and economic prospects as we have now, we will not advance.

The people must tell Wall Street that Puerto Rico is not some store to be looted and that the Puerto Rican people will not sit and starve as Wall Street counts its profits.

If Wall Street is buying bonds at a discount, they should be paid at a discount.

But most importantly, we have to work together for the betterment of Puerto Rico. And we cannot let political divisions over statehood divide us.

I commit to putting aside my own passionate feelings about Puerto Rico's status and working with other Puerto Ricans in the Congress and other leaders in both Parties who will help us. But we must first come together, begin helping ourselves, and have a clear plan.

La política y las divisiones podrían destruir las posibilidades de obligar a Washington a ayudar a resolver la crisis de la deuda de Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico debe de tener un plan común que cuente con el apoyo de todos los partidos y sobre todo, a través de la Isla.

El Gobernador debe encontrar una manera de trabajar con el Comisionado Residente y el Comisionado Residente no puede ver esta crisis como una herramienta en sus campañas para un puesto más alto.

El Congreso sólo ayudará a Puerto Rico siempre y cuando haya un llamado constante y persistente de los puertorriqueños exigiendo que el Congreso cumpla. Y los puertorriqueños tienen que indicar lo que esperan de parte del Congreso.

La Legislación de Bancarrota es sólo una parte. Pero si todavía tenemos la Ley Jones y la misma economía y perspectivas económicas que tenemos ahora no avanzaremos.

El pueblo debe decirle a Wall Street que Puerto Rico no es una tienda para ser pirateada y que el pueblo de Puerto Rico no esperará a morir de hambre mientras Wall Street cuenta sus ganancias.

Si Wall Street está comprando bonos con descuentos, deben ser pagados con descuentos.

Pero sobre todo, tenemos que trabajar juntos por el bien de Puerto Rico. Y no podemos dejar que las divisiones políticas sobre la estadidad nos dividan.

Me comprometo como siempre lo he hecho a poner a un lado mis propios sentimientos sobre el estatus de Puerto Rico y a trabajar con otros puertorriqueños en el Congreso y otros líderes en los dos Partidos que estén dispuestos a ayudarnos. Pero primero tenemos que unirnos, empezar a ayudarnos a nosotros mismos, y tener un plan claro.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Illinois will provide a translation for the RECORD.

□ 1015

SOUTHERN PIPING COMPANY

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding family business in my home State of North Carolina.

When Southern Piping Company opened in 1965, it had two employees and a loan from the Small Business Administration. The two employees were Peggy Williford and her husband, Buren, who was one of the first licensed mechanical contractors in North Carolina—SPC, a classic family business, with all three of Peggy and Buren's sons—Chris, Mark, and Tim—continuing to lead the company.

Since 1965, the Willifords and the SPC family have weathered recessions and hard times, and over the years, through good old-fashioned hard work, they have grown.

Starting with one office in Wilson, SPC has expanded their plumbing, heating, and air-conditioning business to four offices statewide, and their SPC trucks are a familiar sight on the roads across North Carolina, but the biggest story is the family they have built through SPC, today providing jobs to 450 people.

When it came to building the company, Buren Williford always had a commonsense philosophy. He said: ''Successful companies look for like-minded people to do business with.''

Today, Southern Piping Company is adopting a new name—SPC Mechanical—to more accurately describe its growth and success. The Williford family still practices the old-fashioned principles of integrity, safety, and giving back to their community, for example, by offering young employees scholarships to attend nearby Barton College.

This year represents a landmark for the Williford family. They have now been in business for 50 years. It is my pleasure today to recognize the accomplishments of Peggy and Buren Williford.

RECOGNIZING CONNIE JEAN HUMPHREY

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise to recognize my longtime chief of staff, Connie Jean Humphrey, who is retiring after a long and distinguished career on Capitol Hill.

It is an honor and a privilege to recognize Connie's many years of service and achievements. She has proven herself as a talented and dedicated public servant, who has made innumerable contributions in the service of my constituents residing in Texas' 15th Congressional District along the Rio Grande Valley.

Connie has compiled a long list of accomplishments throughout her career and as a senior member of my staff, and she has earned an impeccable reputation on Capitol Hill among her peers and my colleagues in the Texas congressional delegation with whom she has worked very closely in support of our mutual objectives for our great State of Texas.

Connie brought an array of talents and experience as my chief of staff. She has a thorough understanding of Federal policy, particularly in the areas of health care, education, transportation, the environment, and on women's issues.

She is fluent in many other policy areas important to my constituents in the valley, and she has been an invaluable source of guidance and counsel during my appointments on the House Education and the Workforce Committee, as well as on the Financial Services Committee.

Connie approaches her position as the leader of my office with the training and detail-oriented scrutiny of an attorney, who graduated from the University of Maryland, and with the policy expertise of a congressional aide who served in staff leadership positions for nearly three decades.

She was instrumental in helping me lead the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2010, which is aiding organizations like Workforce Solutions, based in McAllen, Texas, and is committed to the success of the employers and workforce of the Rio Grande Valley by matching them with skilled, productive employees and upgrading the skills of their current workforce.

Connie has been particularly effective in helping me address urgent needs in deep south Texas. Latino students aspiring to attain the dream of a college education are that much closer to realizing their hopes, thanks to Connie's involvement, resulting in passage of the Higher Education Opportunity Act and the student loan and healthcare reconciliation bill of 2010, among the largest investments in higher education since the GI bill, particularly for Latino- and minority-serving higher education institutions in our country.

This crucial legislation also created an unprecedented healthcare system that complements the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 that Connie also played a major role in helping shepherd through the Education and the Workforce Committee, and that is now providing millions of Americans with affordable health care who previously had no coverage.

Mr. Speaker, it is with much more than coincidence that the high school graduation rate in my congressional district has accelerated—from 55 percent to 85 percent—during Connie's tenure as my chief of staff.

This sharp increase has lifted up a generation of young Latinos, who are making significant contributions to our communities and regional economy; and it is a direct result of Connie's advocacy and leadership contributing to the passage of each of these four aforementioned bills.

These public laws constitute my collection of framed legislation in my congressional office that I was very proud to pass as either chairman or ranking member of the Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee with Connie at the helm of my office.

I am also indebted to Connie for her tireless efforts in helping me facilitate two new international land bridges designed to stimulate commercial activity, economic growth, and stability to the Rio Grande Valley.

Her intimate knowledge of transportation policy was a key element in the process culminating in the approval of Presidential permits that paved the way to open the Donna-Rio Bravo and the Anzalduas International Bridges.

Similarly, Connie was influential in securing $300 million in Federal investments for floodway levee improvements along the Hidalgo County, Texas, and Mexican borders.

We still remember the impact of Hurricane Dolly in 2008 that brought between a foot and 15 inches of rain to the Valley. Hurricane Ike followed shortly thereafter, with storm surges as high as 20 feet and caused almost $20 billion in damages.

My district would have been more highly susceptible to damage and our residents even more imperiled if the levees were breached by a hurricane or heavy rains without this assistance. As a result, hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of property were spared during the landfall of Hurricane Alex in 2010, when the Rio Grande River crested to a record of 59 feet.

In the wake of economic crisis, Connie led my team in preparing our communities to apply for assistance that ultimately received over half a billion dollars for Hidalgo County alone under the ARRA.

Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to lose Connie as a trusted and beloved member of my staff, but I am happy for her as she embarks upon a new endeavor as the senior vice president of public and community relations and special counsel of the Doctors Hospital at Renaissance, where she will continue to serve my constituents and be uniquely positioned to help the hospital deliver and expand the reach of health care to underserved communities and economically disadvantaged families.

I wish to, again, thank Connie Humphrey for all of her hard work, steadfast commitment to the people of south Texas, and for her skillful management of my staff and congressional offices.

On behalf of the 15th Congressional District of Texas, I congratulate Connie for her excellent service and for a job very well done.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

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

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday was a special and historic day. It marked 25 years since the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law.

The ADA has had a profound impact on our country and its citizens. It speaks to the best about our country; toward forming a more perfect union, it aims to provide equal opportunity for those who have a disability.

This anniversary, I feel, allows us to reflect on something that unites us; that is it is estimated that one in five Americans is living with a disability. Disabilities affect individuals in every congressional district in this country, in every State, in every neighborhood. It touches the lives of everyone—race, gender, income. No demographic is exempt from disability.

This law provides hope for those who have a disability and offers promise that opportunities exist for self-fulfillment.

On both a philosophical and practical level, it stands for the proposition that providing reasonable accommodations to those with a disability is how a civil society addresses an imbalance borne through no fault of the individual.

The law and its legislative, regulatory, and judicial progeny enables us to address issues such as public transportation, housing, education, and social services in a more thoughtful, proactive, effective, and humane way. While there is no doubt that substantial progress has been made, I am not here on the House floor to say that our work is done—because it isn't.

Thanks to the law, about 50 million Americans have been helped, and that doesn't include their families and loved ones who can point to how laws do matter and can make a positive impact.

Let's focus on the challenges that we still confront that relate to access and opportunity on holding up the standard of self-sufficiency for individuals with a disability and looking at how public policy can be shaped to help achieve this standard for disabled Americans. The crux is often that time between ending in the classroom and looking for employment opportunity.

Just yesterday, I met with Abilities in Motion, a Berks County organization in my district that provides outstanding services to individuals and families in Berks County.

During our discussion, I heard from individuals and parents who, through grit and determination, were able—and are able—to navigate the complex maze of programs and services and funding streams to coordinate caregivers, transportation, and employment in the postacademic world.

Let's focus on streamlining and better integrating these programs and funding streams, and let's focus on encouraging job opportunities for disabled individuals who want to work and build a meaningful career.

□ 1030

Let's also focus on improving transportation options so that individuals who want to work are able to get to work without difficulty.

Let's continue to set forth and advance good policy, like the ABLE Act from the last Congress, which will encourage individuals and families to save tax-free dollars to help finance the costs associated with disabilities.

I am grateful for the tireless work of Abilities in Motion and other organizations that serve families and individuals in my district, such as the National Federation of the Blind, The Arc Alliance, the Disability Rights Network, and the Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council. These organizations, their employees, and their volunteers work day in and day out to improve everyday lives.

Last, let's also thank the families who sacrifice for their loved ones who have disabilities, and let's recognize the courage and the hard work of those who have disabilities as they endure every day to become self-sufficient. It really speaks to what is great about this country.

Everyone out there who suffers from a disability and who wakes up every day with optimism and purpose, you are to be commended. You are the American success story.

Mr. Speaker, over the past 25 years, the ADA has increased accessibility and has empowered millions of Americans with disabilities. It is important to acknowledge the progress, but it is also important to recognize that there are still challenges that we should address from a public policy perspective. We must continue our efforts, in a bipartisan manner, to advance policy that keeps us a step ahead and that meets the needs of disabled Americans today and tomorrow.

RICKETY PATCHWORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, work on the Nation's bridges, highways, and transit has all but stopped because of 34 patch extensions that keep everything—except patchwork—on hold.

Today, the House is rushing out of town early, leaving a new 3-month patch. This time, though, the Republican House is scrambling out of the Capitol, literally, to get away from the Republican Senate, which had been trying for a 6-year bill. The Republican House's ''my way or the highway'' was addressed to the Republican Senate, and the public be damned—and it worked. The Republican Senate has given up on the Nation's infrastructure, too. The Republican Senate announced this morning that it will accept the House's 3-month patch. Six months of control of the House and Senate by the Republicans has made Congress even more dysfunctional.

The new House 3-month patch has nothing to do with roads and bridges. Who knows what will get done this time? House Republicans see political goals at the end of their 3-month road, when the must-pass highway bill could serve their purposes, such as the usual, if dangerous, dispute over an extension of the debt ceiling.

Yet, Republican and Democratic States alike keep meeting their obligations under the State-Federal partnership. Eighteen States and the District of Columbia have raised their gas user fees, going as high as 10-cent increases in Iowa and in Wyoming; but the roads, bridges, and transit remain stalled because the Federal partner keeps dropping out. More than half of the funds for a nationwide system that connects our States with one another comes from the Federal trust fund.

During the 34 patch delays, not a lick of work on a final bill has been done except the Senate's current try at a 6-year bill. There have been no serious talks here on alternatives to the gas user fee, although it long ago was swallowed by today's hard-won fuel efficiency that leaves the transit trust fund thirsty for a refill after a year and a half or so.

Democrats, however, have offered four alternatives to the current user fee, which is the legacy of the Eisenhower years. House Republicans have offered none. Congress has refused to raise the Federal user fee since 1992, adding to the woes of the 1950's method we use to pay for our roads.

The Republican House runs out of town today to hide from the Republican Senate. As they run home, I can only hope they run into the arms of their own angry constituents on their own rickety roads. House Republicans can run, but they can't hide from the broken down bridges, roads, and transit they will use back home.

DEMAND FOR TRANSPARENCY IN THE REGULATORY AND RULEMAKING PROCESS

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

Mr. HARDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to address a concern that anyone who has ever owned or has run a business truly understands—the negative effects of unchecked government regulations on our American economy.

No matter how large or small, Federal regulations are being added each day into law by the hundreds—and even sometimes by the thousands—most of which are not directly approved by Congress.

By allowing Washington bureaucrats to continue to stuff the overwhelming number of regulations into congressionally passed legislation, we are essentially handing over authority to the Federal agencies for them to legislate as they please. It is our job in Congress to oversee these regulations as they are being generated in order to provide that our constituents are not left behind.

During this Congress, we have made great strides in reforming the regulations process in order to help the economy grow. A great example of that occurred yesterday with the passage of the REINS Act. There should be no question that any regulation that makes an annual impact of $100 million on the economy should require congressional approval before it can become law.

As my colleagues are aware, a copy of the day's Federal Register is delivered to each of our offices daily. This book provides a hard copy of every new regulation that ranges from environmental protection to labor standards, to health guidelines, to restrictions on financial institutions.

Last year, the Federal Register contained over 77,000 pages, with 3,554 new regulations. Even though this large number of pages is absurd, it was only the sixth highest page count in the Federal Register's history. As of this morning, the 2015 Federal Register sits at over 45,000 pages.

It is unthinkable to me that the most important document—the Constitution—can fit on 39 pages, in this little book. In comparison, this is the July 13 edition of the Federal Register. It is 627 pages, and it is only one of three editions from that day alone.

Mr. Speaker, when is enough enough, and when does it become too much?

The continual expansion of our government through a vast number of regulations causes our economy to become as shaky and unstable as the Federal Registers that are stacked up in my office from this year, which is unacceptable and very concerning.

An even larger issue comes from how the general public is made aware of these proposed rules and the opportunity to voice one's concerns on the rules. While we are provided with a daily index of rules and new regulations through the Federal Register, the American taxpayers, for whom we work, are left in the dark.

Since these regulations do not take into account the economic impact that is placed on American businesses and families, each new regulation can lead to lower wages, job losses, and higher prices for goods. In 2014, Federal regulations cost American families an estimated $1.88 trillion in financial burden, representing, roughly, $15,000 per household. This cost is also larger than Canada's economy, is larger than Mexico's economy, and is larger than the economies of Australia, Russia, Spain, and South Korea, just to name a few. In fact, the economies of only nine nations in the world are larger than the cost of our regulations.

Although all sized businesses and industries feel the effects of government regulations, it is the small businesses that face greater adversity from regulations due to costs attributed to comply. In addition to compliance costs, limited comment periods, and a lack of information pertaining to how they make their opinions heard, business owners are usually those who end up being left out in the cold.

I ask my colleagues to join me in demanding more transparency in the regulatory and rulemaking process because it is our duty to our constituents.

GIVING SENIORS A MEDICARE BIRTHDAY PRESENT

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

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago this week, President Lyndon Johnson signed the law that created Medicare and Medicaid—the most important healthcare programs in our country's history prior to the Affordable Care Act. With one stroke of his pen, President Johnson guaranteed both poor Americans and older Americans the right to high-quality, affordable medical treatment.

Thanks to Medicare, for 50 years now, our seniors have received the health care they have needed to stay healthy and to live full lives; but despite the success, there are gaps in Medicare coverage that need to be closed. The most glaring gap is the fact that Medicare does not provide basic medical coverage for seniors' eyes, ears, and teeth. It is as though Medicare assumes that seniors don't need to see or to hear or to chew.

We are not talking about exotic, high-tech treatments. We are talking about no Medicare coverage for eyeglasses, eye exams, hearing aids, cavity fillings, and dentures. We are talking about no treatment for medical conditions that lead to blindness, deafness, lost teeth, and serious gum disease, which has been strongly linked to heart disease. It is unthinkable that we deny our seniors this elementary level of care.

There are 2.7 million seniors in America who are blind. How many of them would be able to see today if they had received simple annual eye exams as part of their Medicare coverage?

Medicare is a promise that we make to ourselves—the young to the old, one generation to the next. The promise is that, after you reach your 65th birthday, your medical needs will be met. To keep that promise, our seniors have paid into the system, in some cases for a half a century, before they receive a single earned benefit. They deserve the best care we can provide for them.

This week, to honor the 50th anniversary of this lifesaving program we call Medicare, I am introducing the Seniors Have Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Act. This bill will amend title XVIII—the Medicare provision of the Social Security Act—to repeal the arbitrary exclusion of eyeglasses, eye exams, hearing aids, hearing exams, and dental care from Medicare coverage. Two short lines in the U.S. Code have barred that coverage for 50 years. I simply delete those lines. I urge my congressional colleagues to enact this quick, easy, and necessary reform.

Medicare should provide health coverage for every part of your body, including eyes, ears, and teeth. Over 50 million Americans enjoy Medicare coverage. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicare, let's guarantee to 50 million Americans the health care they need in order to look into the eyes of the ones they love, to see our Fourth of July fireworks each year, and to hear it when freedom rings.

□ 1045

EMBRACE TRADE OPPORTUNITIES WITH ASIA

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer Democrats and Republicans came together to pass a trade authorization bill that set the standards for any trade deal that the United States negotiates with other countries.

It guarantees oversight by Congress, it guarantees transparency for the public, and it guarantees that our negotiators have the opportunity to get the best deal for our workers, our farmers, our ranchers, and our employers.

This week trade negotiators from 12 different countries around the Pacific Rim are meeting in Hawaii for negotiations with the Trans-Pacific Partnership. It is a deal that will open doors for American businesses to sell their products overseas and create jobs right here at home.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is this: 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside of the United States; 80 percent of the world's purchasing power is outside of the United States.

We need to allow our American companies to compete and to be able to sell their products and goods and services or we will fall behind.

In addition, these negotiations will allow America to act as a counterweight to the growing influence of China in the region.

If the United States doesn't write the rules for the global economy, China will step in and write them, and it won't be to the benefit of American workers and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, while Congress and the American people should and will vet any deal that results from the current Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, it is important to understand what a successful agreement will mean here at home.

For starters, it means boosting pay and higher wages. That is because jobs that rely on trade pay 18 percent higher than those jobs that don't. It also means boosting job growth right here in America. That is because one in five jobs are tied to trade.

In Minnesota, Mr. Speaker, 775,000 jobs are currently supported by trade, and new trade with Asia will enhance and support that opportunity to build on new success.

It also means boosting our country's small- and medium-sized businesses. In Minnesota, 90 percent of these small businesses are the companies that export goods and services.

Now, that being said, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done by our negotiators to make sure they reach an agreement that is best for the American people. We need cooperation from the other countries that are involved in these negotiations.

Canada needs to step up to the plate on tariff and quota issues dealing with their dairy and their egg industries. Japan needs to step up on agriculture issues.

Progress still needs to be made to ensure that American intellectual property is protected. However, with commitment from our trading partners, I am confident that we can overcome these remaining hurdles.

Mr. Speaker, we need trade deals where everyone benefits and everyone follows the rules. We live in an interconnected world, and we should be embracing opportunities that open more markets for American goods and services.

It is time to show the world that America will continue to lead the way in the 21st century global economy.

REMEMBERING DIRECTOR ROBERT PARKER OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. I am deeply saddened by the death of former Miami-Dade County Police Director Robert Parker. I extend my sincerest sympathies to his family at this difficult time.

Director Parker was a friend and a true humanitarian. Throughout his career in law enforcement with the Miami-Dade County Police Department, he was committed to making south Florida a safer place to work, to live, and to visit. He was well respected and celebrated, and he fought to create opportunities for men and women of color.

As a longtime mentor and leader of the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project, Director Parker worked closely with me to save at-risk minority boys and young men.

His impact is evident by the thousands of success stories of Role Model boys who, under his mentorship, have gone on to college and thriving careers. The 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project in south Florida owes Director Parker a huge debt of gratitude.

Director Parker testified before Congress on behalf of violence in the Black community. He testified before Congress about the tragic death of Trayvon Martin. He went on to be featured on CNN, MSNBC, and all of our local TV shows.

Because of his knowledge, he went on to serve as a consultant for cities all over this country. Our boys and our community were so very, very proud of this wonderful role model.

Mr. Speaker, Director Parker adored his family, his sweet, sweet grandchildren, his daughter, Kalika, his son, Robert, Jr., his son, Kyron, and his devoted wife and the love of his life, Veronica.

Our great Nation has lost a patriot who lived to embody the principles of equality, justice, and freedom upon which America is founded. To fully understand our loss, you must first understand the treasure that we all shared in Director Parker.

Director Parker showed a bright intellect and caring nature, growing up as a child in the rural community of Monticello, Florida.

He bravely served in the United States Army. He joined the Miami Police Department in 1976, when it was still known as the Dade County Police Safety Department. He was a bright and eager young officer who wanted to make his community safer.

Mr. Speaker, Director Parker was an officer's officer. He worked hard, and he made great sacrifices for his career through the love and support of his family.

He enjoyed a storied rise up the ladder of police leadership because of his determination to solve crimes. He was affectionately called ''Bobby'' by his friends and colleagues, but he was also nicknamed ''Marathon Man.''

He famously earned that name by giving a foot chase to catch one of the most notorious thieves in Miami-Dade County history.

The suspect had consistently eluded capture because he was too crafty and fast for most officers, but not too fast for Robert Parker.

His determination is what set him apart from others. He did not view his

responsibility to his community as an adjective, something that was hard or tedious. However, he saw it as a verb. It was something that he had to do.

He was never concerned about the spotlight or awards, but his dutiful nature and bravery made it almost impossible to deny him recognition.

Mr. Speaker, Director Parker's service to south Florida and our Nation had an underlying theme that permeated everything he did: his love for his community.

He understood that the best police officers are not the police who wore the badges, but the best police officers were the people who paid their mortgages, who sent their kids to school, and who worked hard to build their community.

Residents were always quick to ignore the false notion of no snitching and gave Director Parker information that solved crimes.

His sense of community and respect eventually led to his promotion to director of the Miami-Dade Police Department in 2004. His appointment was historic by his being the very first African American to hold that post, and he opened the door for many others to follow.

Dade County has the largest police force in the southeast United States, leading over 4,700 sworn and civilian employees.

As director, he worked to create a more diverse agency and create opportunities for minorities and women. He was an exemplary leader and even earned the respect of the police union.

He retired in 2009 after 33 years. Our mentors look up to him. His absence will create a huge void.

Mr. Speaker, America has lost an iconic law enforcement officer. His legacy will live in the hearts of all of us forever. My remarks will be entered into the official CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and they will then be permanently placed in the Library of Congress.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 64. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal to the Monuments Men.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills and a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 242. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide leave to any new Federal employee who is a veteran with a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent or more for purposes of undergoing medical treatment for such disability, and for other purposes.

S. 614 An act to provide access to and use of information by Federal agencies in order to reduce improper payments, and for other purposes.

S. 764. An act to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

S. Con. Res. 20. Concurrent resolution recognizing and honoring the 25th anniversary of the date of enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

THE IMPROVING COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS REGULATION ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PAULSEN). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, responsible use and recycle of coal ash has the ability to reduce waste, provide construction materials, and keep utility costs low.

This past April the EPA released yet another rule aimed at coal by mandating new standards for the disposal and storage of coal combustion residuals.

As a result of this proposal, the House considered and passed H.R. 1734, the Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2015. This legislation codifies the base standards of EPA's final proposed rule, while also giving flexibility to the States to implement.

Specifically, H.R. 1734 will allow States to create and enforce their own coal ash recycling permit programs. It also sets up enforceable State permit programs while utilizing the EPA's minimum requirements and will protect 316,000 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, States also have the option to make their requirements more stringent than the EPA's final rule if they choose. I strongly support and was happy to vote for H.R. 1734 and the responsible use of coal and coal ash.

PENNSYLVANIA HEMLOCKS AND THE WOOLLY ADELGID

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, recently I visited the Tionesta Research Natural Area of the Allegheny National Forest. This old-growth area is home to many 600-year-old hemlock trees.

During this visit, Mr. Speaker, I spoke to forestry officials about efforts to fight the woolly adelgid. I even applied a treatment designed to combat the invasive insect to one of these massive trees.

Mr. Speaker, many States are involved in the effort to fight the adelgid, which originated in Japan and was first found in the United States in the early 1950s. It can kill a hemlock tree within a few years after it becomes infested.

In 2012, I teamed with Federal researchers and those from my alma mater, Penn State University, at a forum I hosted to discuss efforts to save our State tree, the Eastern Hemlock.

As the chairman of the Conservation and Forestry Subcommittee, I am proud Pennsylvanians are among those leading the way in fighting this disease and protecting our forests and the economic stimulus that these forests provide both through timber and through tourism, making sure that these magnificent trees which have stood for centuries will stand tall for future generations.

SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, July 26, we marked the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The passage of this landmark legislation signified a commitment to eliminating barriers faced by millions of individuals with differing levels of disability.

It required businesses, buildings, transportation, and other services to accommodate those living with disabilities and guaranteed equal opportunities for workers with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, 25 years later it is apparent that we have made tremendous strides in upholding the intent of this vastly important civil rights law.

Today countless Americans are empowered to shape their own lives and plan their own futures as they experience their daily obstacles decreasing over time. While we have so much to celebrate, there is always more progress to be made.

This Congress I introduced the Special Needs Trust Fairness Act with the goal of eliminating a current prohibition on a person with a disability to create his or her own special needs trust.

This long overdue legislative fix was recently passed by the Senate Finance Committee, and I am committed to working with my colleagues to guide this and similar measures through the legislative processes here in the House.

THE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, we are on a dangerous path. First, my Republican colleagues pulled two critical appropriation bills from the floor simply because their party cannot come to an agreement on a flag that represents a very dark time in our Nation's history.

Second, my colleagues across the aisle, rather than focusing their energy on passing comprehensive immigration reform, passed a poisonous anti-immigrant bill in response to an isolated incident in the city of San Francisco, pulling money away from our law enforcement funding for public safety.

Then they refuse to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, which helps ensure that Americans' businesses can compete with their global competitors.

And now the House Republicans refuse to come to the table yet again to provide a robust, long-term funding bill for our decaying infrastructure system in America.

Why do we continue to refuse and cut services that our communities need? The American people need good-paying jobs, safe and modern infrastructure, and efficient transportation in order to provide a better life for themselves and for their families. We need to end these stopgap extensions.

□ 1100

How do we fix a broken bridge or a broken highway? Two months of highway funding will not do that. In my home State of California, 60 percent of our roads are in poor or mediocre condition; and, moreover, almost 30 percent of California's bridges have been recognized by the Department of Transportation as structurally deficient.

Just a little bit over a week ago, California residents experienced the real-life consequences of this statistic when the Interstate 10, which connects California and Arizona, collapsed, injuring a resident and shutting down the highway for several days. This highway is critical to our Southwest economy, which is already suffering from deficiencies because of our water infrastructure and the drought that we have going on.

With more than 60,000 bridges throughout the United States in need of drastic repairs, failing to provide Americans with a long-term highway bill, we are putting jobs at risk, and we are putting our lives at risk, which is why my fellow House Democrats have come together to provide a 6-year funding bill known as the GROW AMERICA Act. The bill will provide for $178 billion over 6 years, so that States and local municipalities can address critical infrastructure needs.

This commonsense legislation would help pay for the investments by ending an unfair tax loophole and limiting corporate inversions, meaning that big corporations, when they are renouncing their United States citizenship, they do that in order to avoid paying taxes.

Let's use that money for transportation investments here in America. Investing in local public transportation projects not only helps to improve our traffic flow, but it also helps create good jobs.

As we look for ways to put our economy back on track, we must be mindful of the services that we provide to the American people. We need to stop slashing, and we need to start providing. We need to get away from sequestration and patchwork funding mentality to actually fulfill our duty as public servants to the American people.

Our families, our roads, and our economy deserve a highway funding bill that will invest in America's future, invest in better infrastructure, and invest in bigger paychecks for our hardworking families who are trying to make it in America.

RESEARCH AND SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY

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

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on matters of research and scientific integrity.

To begin with, I am absolutely, resolutely provaccine. Advancements in medical immunization have saved countless lives and greatly benefited public health.

That being said, it is troubling to me that, in a recent Senate hearing on childhood vaccinations, it was never mentioned that our government has paid out over $3 billion through the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program for children who have been injured by vaccinations.

Regardless of the subject matter, parents making decisions about their children's health deserve to have the best information available to them. They should be able to count on Federal agencies to tell them the truth.

For these reasons, I bring the following matter to the House floor. In August 2014, Dr. William Thompson, a senior scientist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, worked with a whistleblower attorney to provide my office with documents related to a 2004 CDC study that examined the possibility of a relationship between the mumps, measles, and rubella vaccine and autism.

In a statement released in August 2014, Dr. Thompson stated: ''I regret that my coauthors and I omitted statistically significant information in our 2004 article published in the Journal of Pediatrics.''

Mr. Speaker, also quoting Dr. Thompson:

> My primary job duties while working in the immunization safety branch from 2000 to 2006 were to lead or colead three major vaccine safety studies. The MADDSP MMR-Autism Cases Control Study was being carried out in response to the Wakefield Lancet study that suggested an association between the MMR vaccine and an autism-like health outcome.
>
> There were several major concerns among scientists and consumer advocates outside the CDC in the fall of 2000 regarding the execution of the Verstraeten study.
>
> One of the important goals that was determined upfront in the spring of 2001 before any of these studies started was to have all three protocols vetted outside the CDC prior to the start of the analyses so that consumer advocates could not claim that we were presenting analyses that suited our own goals and biases.
>
> We hypothesized that if we found statistically significant effects at either 18- or 36-month thresholds, we would conclude that vaccinating children early with MMR vaccine could lead to autism-like characteristics or features.
>
> We all met and finalized the study protocol and analysis plan. The goal was to not deviate from the analysis plan to avoid the debacle that occurred with the Verstraeten Thimerosal study published in Pediatrics in 2003.
>
> At the September 5 meeting, we discussed in detail how to code race for both the sample and the birth certificate sample. At the bottom of table 7, it also shows that for the nonbirth certificate sample, the adjusted race effect statistical significance was huge.
>
> All the authors and I met and decided sometime between August and September 2002 not to report any race effects for the paper. Sometime soon after the meeting, where we decided to exclude reporting any race effects, the coauthors scheduled a meeting to destroy documents related to the study.
>
> The remaining four coauthors all met and brought a big garbage can into the meeting room and reviewed and went through all the hard copy documents that we had thought we should discard and put them in a huge garbage can.
>
> However, because I assumed it was illegal and would violate both FOIA and DOJ requests, I kept hard copies of all documents in my office, and I retained all associated computer files.
>
> I believe we intentionally withheld controversial findings from the final draft of the Pediatrics paper.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is our duty to ensure that the documents Dr. Thompson provided are not ignored; therefore, I will provide them to Members of Congress and the House committees upon request.

Considering the nature of the whistleblower's documents, as well as the involvement of the CDC, a hearing and a thorough investigation is warranted.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, I beg, I implore my colleagues on the Committee on Appropriations to please, please take such action.

THE REINS ACT

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House passed a measure I cosponsored, H.R. 427, known as the REINS Act, to end this administration's disregard for the separation of powers.

The bill rightly reasserts Congress' proper role in writing our Nation's laws by requiring that any regulation written with a cumulative impact of over $100 million be reviewed and approved by Congress before going into effect, instead of the stifling of innovation that we have seen the effects of.

Too often, we have seen this administration attempt to use creative interpretation of the law or aggressive rulemaking that have had a massive negative impact on our State's economy, resulting in higher prices, thousands of dollars per cost additionally per family per year, lower wages, fewer working hours, or complete loss of job opportunities altogether.

For example, the proposed waters of the United States regulation would insert the Environmental Protection Agency in local land use planning areas across the Nation.

Do we really need the Federal Government telling us how to landscape our own backyards? Is that even proper? I think not.

Do we really think the Federal Government should be regulating man-made ditches along country roads or fields or dry streambeds and puddles which hold water only during and immediately after rainstorms or irrigation and drainage ditches which wouldn't even exist if not created by water districts and the people involved?

What a giant leap of grab of power by the Federal Government in asserting itself over these private properties via these regulations written by bureaucrats and not overseen by Congress directly.

In my district, Federal bureaucrats are unilaterally deciding, with no evidence or science, that small depressions in fields are linked to distant waterways, placing vast areas of land out of production. Despite bipartisan congressional opposition, the administration is attempting to move forward with this aggressive regulation, waterways of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the examples of this administration's aggressive and careless decisions, increasing costs, eliminating jobs are almost too numerous to count.

In 2014, Federal regulations cost our economy $1.88 trillion in higher prices for food, energy, and goods, averaging about $14,000 per U.S. household. This price tag has spiked, thanks to the President Obama administration, which added nearly 500 new regulations, 184 of which have combined to raise costs to Americans of about $80 billion. The result is 81 new major regulations per year.

Mr. Speaker, unelected bureaucrats shouldn't be imposing their will on the American people at a cost of billions of dollars each year. This is not the way to stop the difficult headwinds our economy faces. Indeed, this is causing more economic problems for us to recover from in this Nation.

It is time for the Senate to join the House and send H.R. 427, the REINS Act, and help with our job economy, with the boost we all need—that we have needed for so long during this last 6 years. The REINS Act is needed to indeed rein in an out-of-control government.

Even the President himself said in his State of the Union Address in January 2011:

> To reduce barriers to growth and investment . . . when we find rules that put an unnecessary burden on businesses, we need to fix them.

The REINS Act is that fix. Let's get it done. Let's get the Senate to get it done.

STORIES IN THE NEWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great privilege, first of all, to speak about the first item of interest to America and to many of us as certainly when the President represents the United States of America overseas. I had the privilege of traveling with the President for a most dynamic, unique, and historic mission, and that was to Kenya and Ethiopia.

Let me congratulate him for a stupendous diplomatic success and interaction with a continent that will be the largest populated land area in the 21st century. What an amazing experience to be able to engage with businesses and see the opportunity for economic empowerment and cooperation between the United States and the many nation-states of the continent of Africa.

It was exciting to see new, young businesspersons seeking an opportunity to work in their countries, but work with the United States, eager to work with U.S. businesses, welcoming U.S. investment, creating jobs in Africa, creating jobs in America—in particular, a broadcasting company that had been there for 50 years creating jobs in the United States, creating jobs in Kenya.

Let me indicate what a success this story was. Along with the regional security issues, there was a commitment with the African Union to stand against Boko Haram and a commitment to establish civility and peace in South Sudan by demanding that there be a resolution of this by August 17—not the President standing alone, but working with the African Union, representing the tens upon tens of African nations, it was a resounding success, and I congratulate the President.

As I come home and as a member of the Committee on the Judiciary, I am reminded of the tragedy of a young woman who had all of her life before her, and that was Sandra Bland.

My commitment still is to offer my appreciation to the law enforcement officers across America and, as we all do, respect law and order; but in the instance where there is a tragic result, the death of this young woman, 28, with two undergraduate degrees and a master's degree, her death was the result of malfeasance.

□ 1115

We must walk together in a respectful manner with law enforcement and civilians. We have done it before. We must do it again.

I believe that it is crucial for the Department of Justice to take over this investigation on a number of aspects, including patting down and other practices of law enforcement in Waller County and Hempstead, and certainly the question of this young lady's civil rights.

I ask that they look seriously, because even though there are alleged good intentions by the local authorities in establishing committees to review this, this is not regular order, this is not a procedure that works. No one understands the decision of a district attorney—unless he yields to an independent prosecutor, which this district attorney in Waller County is not—to have a committee of individuals with no authority whatsoever review this matter.

People and families are in pain. Certainly, we can do better as law enforcement and civilians working together.

I also want to recognize that this is the 50th year of the Voting Rights Act. I join the leadership of NANCY PELOSI, Mr. HOYER, and Mr. CLYBURN in celebrating and acknowledging this exciting time that opened the doors of voting for everyone. One vote, one person.

On August 6, I call upon my community in the 18th Congressional District in Houston to have a voting day—registering people to vote in a nonpartisan manner, bringing them out and celebrating the right to vote, when many countries do not have it.

Let's make the Voting Rights reauthorization the cause of this Congress. Let's have Americans celebrate voting rights.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me say this. While I was in Africa, one of the headlines was the killing of Cecil, a beautiful lion. The nations I visited were falling to their knees because they believe in wildlife preservation. We enjoy it here in our Nation's zoos. We haven't had that privilege of seeing these wonderful animals—giraffes, lions, tigers, and a whole array—in the wild.

It was an American who killed this beautiful lion. What a disgrace. That individual is a disgrace. This individual had the responsibility for knowing of his guides and of the procedures of doing this kill for sport. He lured the animal out of the park.

America must stand with Kenya, Ethiopia, and the other African nations in showing its outrage. Sadly, it was a citizen of the United States who was more interested in his personal privilege and pleasure than he was in understanding this iconic lion—the last male species of this kind, with a black mane and a giant of a personality—and helping to preserve this species. He couldn't find any other joy than killing Cecil. I am saddened by this, and America should be saddened as well.

SKIP WELLS, A HERO

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

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, sometimes the terrorism we witness in this day and age is a world away. Sometimes it occurs very close to home.

Two weeks ago, terror visited Chattanooga, Tennessee, and, in so doing, hit home for us in Georgia. One of the five servicemen murdered on July 16 in Chattanooga grew up in the Sixth District of Georgia. He graduated from Sprayberry High School in 2012. Skip Wells was a marine—a proud marine, a proud American, and a hero.

Last week, in Georgia, thousands gathered to honor the life of this patriot, Skip Wells, who lost his life in the terrorist attack in Chattanooga.

Nothing we say will replace the loss, the heartbreak, and the pain of his family and friends, those who knew him best. But we can say how much heroes enlighten us—and inspire us—and strengthen the faith of our Nation and our lives.

Skip Wells is a hero. It has been said that ''a hero is someone who has given his life to something bigger than oneself.'' That is precisely what Skip did.

His closest friends said that Skip Wells felt called to serve, to protect. When asked why Skip joined the Marines, a friend of Skip's told folks simply that ''Skip just loved his country.'' He knew that freedom isn't free. He knew that liberty requires sacrifice. What an inspiration his dedication and his heroism are for all of us.

Chesterton said that ''the true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.'' Skip Wells loved his family, his friends, the Marines—oh, how he loved the Marines—and he loved his country.

His death in the service of this great Nation places him in the ranks of those with the greatest of valor. On behalf of all who represent this Nation, we send our deepest and heartfelt thanks and sympathy to Skip's family and friends on their tragic loss. We all—every single American—mourn for those who make the ultimate sacrifice for this great land.

The Bible says: ''Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.'' In its broadest sense, this verse is so very, very true. In the book of John, we read: ''Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.''

To his mom, Cathy, to his friends and family, you may be very, very proud of Skip and his ultimate sacrifice to our country. May God's grace comfort you in this difficult time. Please know that a grateful Nation loves you and mourns with you.

May we never, ever, forget Skip Wells and the great men and women who stand in harm's way every single day and protect this, the greatest Nation on Earth. May God bless us all, and may he continue to bless the United States of America.

HURRICANE ANDREW ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to recognize the 24th of August as the 23rd anniversary of Hurricane Andrew. On this date in 1992, the category 5 storm made landfall on Elliott Key, and then Homestead, Florida, killing 26 immediately, with dozens more fatalities from injuries stemming from the storm's aftermath. We continue to mourn this loss of life.

The winds of Hurricane Andrew were calculated at 164 miles per hour and completely wiped out Homestead Air Force Base. Until Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Andrew was the costliest storm in U.S. history, totaling $43.7 billion when adjusted for inflation.

As officials assessed the damage, they noticed that much of the destruction was due to substandard construction methods. As a result, Florida now has the strongest building codes in the Nation. Furthermore, homes are now required to have storm shutters or impact-resistant glass.

While we will never be able to fully prevent damage from a serious storm, we can mitigate the damage caused and thus reduce the costs of rebuilding our neighborhoods.

The National Hurricane Center, located at Florida International University in my congressional district, provides important research on the effects these storms have on our coastlines and maintains a continuous watch on developing weather patterns that could become a tropical storm. I was able to tour this center earlier in the year, and I commend their efforts.

The memory of Andrew forces us to remain cautious and vigilant so our communities and homes are protected. In the midst of this hurricane season, I strongly encourage all those in the potential paths of these storms to have a plan already in place to secure property and protect loved ones. By taking the appropriate preventative measures, we can assure that our families and neighborhoods remain safe.

KEY WEST TERRORIST DETAINED

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my sincere gratitude to the brave law enforcement officials who prevented a terrorist plot from unfolding in Key West.

On July 28, it was announced that a Key West man was arrested and charged with attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction. Key West is the southernmost point of not only my congressional district, but the entire United States. Anyone who has visited the Keys knows how truly special this part of our country is, not just for its natural beauty, but for the welcoming and creative people who call the Keys home.

A terrorist attack occurring anywhere in the United States is a cause for serious alarm, and I am glad the efforts of one lone wolf were thwarted.

It is important to recognize the FBI, the U.S. Attorneys Office, the South Florida Joint Terrorism Task Force, the Key West Police Department, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, and other law enforcement agencies for working together to neutralize this threat to Key West and our country. Because of their efforts, an untold number of lives were saved.

Unfortunately, this incident reminds us that we continue to be targeted by those who wish to do us harm. We must remain vigilant against these ongoing threats and ensure our law enforcement agencies continue to have the necessary resources to execute their critical mission.

MIAMI DADE COLLEGE/JOB FAIR

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank all those who attended the job fair in my district office hosted last month for employers and workers in the Kendall area of south Florida. We were able to connect over 1,000 of our friends and neighbors who are looking for work with hundreds of businesses, agencies, and nonprofit organizations. The feedback was positive from countless participants who said they were able to collect resumes from well-qualified potential candidates for job opportunities.

One of my main priorities here in Congress is helping those who are most in need, and events like this job fair are an excellent way for our communities to come together and find opportunities for people with all sorts of different skill sets.

I would also like to give special thanks to Miami Dade College for hosting this terrific event. They provide excellent opportunities to south Florida residents who are looking to further their education and learn new skills to enhance their job credentials.

I am also very proud to note that Miami Dade College was recently named a ''great college to work for'' for the seventh consecutive year by the Chronicle of Higher Education.

South Florida is fortunate to have a strong network of business leaders who work closely with educational institutions to help people find work. Every job is an opportunity, and today we celebrate the constituents in my district who have found gainful new employment as a result of the job fair at Miami Dade College.

RECOGNIZING JENNA MCGIVNEY, LOC TEACHER INSTITUTE

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

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jenna McGivney of Southwood Junior-Senior High School for being selected to participate in the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources Summer Teacher Institute. Her dedication to providing the highest quality of education to young Hoosiers is nothing short of remarkable.

Educators attending the teacher institute participate in and develop primary source-based teaching strategies that they can take back to their school districts, apply in the classroom, and share with their colleagues. This is an opportunity reserved for only the finest teachers in the country and is a testament to Ms. McGivney's success as an educator.

It is the work of passionate teachers like her that make me so grateful to represent Indiana's Second Congressional District. The future of Indiana's children lies in the hands of our educators. Because of that, they deserve our support and recognition.

Today, I congratulate Ms. McGivney and thank her for her dedication to educating young Hoosiers.

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS ACT

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to cosponsor the Employee Rights Act, introduced by Chairman TOM PRICE, which establishes protections for American workers—to not join a union; to have a secret ballot; and, if they choose to join a union, to know how their dues are being spent. This legislation is critical to empowering American workers and shielding them from unfair treatment in the workplace.

South Carolina is a staunch defender of right-to-work protections, even when threatened by the National Labor Relations Board. For years, the NLRB has threatened to destroy jobs, particularly in the Charleston community. It has invaded employee privacy and encroached upon their rights.

I am grateful for Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, Senator TIM SCOTT, Governor Nikki Haley, and South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson for their leadership in protecting our State's right-to-work laws.

Right-to-work States like South Carolina have seen firsthand that job creation and economic growth come from expanded freedoms. We need to expand commonsense reforms like those in the Employee Rights Act to protect American workers and create jobs.

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

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 30 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

God of our ancestors, thank You for giving us another day.

We pray You, O God, to be with the Members of this House today and as they return to their home districts during the August recess. Give them sound judgment and make them as practical as the American people who sent them here as their Representatives.

Help them to withstand open criticism when they know what is right before You and conscience. Often, they are characterized by half-truths and attributed motives that are far beneath them. Uphold them at such times with personal integrity and compassion for those most in need.

Having called them to serve others to the best of their abilities, lift them even higher by Your grace and power to live and work for Your greater honor and glory, both this day and throughout the remainder of the summer.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. HIGGINS 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

RECOGNIZING PLYMOUTH FIRE CHIEF RICHARD KLINE

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Plymouth Fire Chief Richard Kline, who has announced that he will be retiring at the end of this year.

For over 20 years, Chief Kline has diligently served as the head of the Plymouth Fire Department during a period of tremendous growth and change.

Chief Kline has led the way when it comes to bringing firefighting into the 21st century by embracing new technology and equipment techniques not only locally, but also being involved at the national level through education and speaking engagements.

He also serves as chair of the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association Safety and Health Committee where his influence is felt throughout the State of Minnesota.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chief Kline for his service, for his dedication in leading our first responders, and keeping our community safe.

I know the Plymouth community will miss him, but Chief Kline's steadfast leadership leaves Plymouth on a firm foundation for the future.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday marked the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Since its enactment, the ADA has been a beacon of hope for millions of people with disabilities, both throughout the United States and around the world.

Many passionate advocates and champions fought for the rights and protections enshrined in this law. Thanks to their pioneering efforts, people with disabilities can participate in more aspects of society than ever before. Where barriers exist, so, too, do the opportunities to remove them, thanks to the protections and accommodations afforded under the ADA.

We have come far since the passage of the ADA, but we still have much more work ahead. As we commemorate the silver anniversary of the ADA, I hope everyone will join me in celebrating the strides we have made, while also committing our efforts to achieving the full equality and opportunity on which the ADA and our country were founded.

REMEMBERING TERRY STAMBAUGH

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

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to remember the life of Terry Stambaugh of Harrison, Arkansas.

Terry died this week when his car was struck head on by a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed, fleeing from police. It is heartbreaking to see the life of a community servant taken

at the age of 61—or for any age, for that matter—under these circumstances.

Terry Stambaugh was chairman of the board of the Harrison, Arkansas, regional chamber of commerce; president of the Harrison Rotary Club; board member of the 14th judicial district's court appointed special advocates program; past president of the Harrison District Board of Realtors; and had a long history working in the trucking industry. In addition, he was a deacon at the First Christian Church of Harrison.

Mr. Speaker, Terry was a man of tremendous faith. While I know the entire Harrison community will forever mourn his loss, we take comfort in the fact that God is real, as Terry stated in his final Facebook posting, and that Terry is now at his side.

I stand in this well today, Mr. Speaker, to honor Terry for his many years of service to his faith, his family, and his beloved city of Harrison and say a final thank you to this dedicated community leader.

My prayers are with his wife, Carey; his children, Angela Keys, Sarah Stambaugh, and Hannah Lutz; and his stepchildren, Blake and Logan Cook, during this very difficult time for the family.

EDWARD A. THOMAS BUILDING

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great excitement to congratulate the Houston City Council and our chief, Charles McClelland, for naming our beacon of law enforcement building after Edward Alfred Thomas, the longest serving and greatest patrol officer in the history of the Houston Police Department, so noted by fellow officers.

Edward Alfred Thomas was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1920. He played football for Southern University. As well, he was drafted in World War II, where he saw action with the United States Army in Normandy, in northern Africa, and during the Battle of the Bulge.

After the war, with his honorable discharge, Edward Thomas became one of the first African American police officers in the city of Houston—when he started, he could not vote without a poll tax—where he worked for 63 years until his retirement on July 23, 2011. He worked for more than six decades, way before the civil rights movement.

His work was not without challenges. Because of his work and because of his race, Officer Thomas was not allowed to drive a squad car or arrest White suspects without obtaining permission from his supervisor.

At one point in his career, he was disciplined for speaking to a White meter maid, who asked him to walk with her in order to avoid the unwanted attention and advances of nearby construction workers, just extending himself and doing his job.

I am excited about him having his name on the 26-story headquarters building, and I would offer to say that, to this great leader, I will be coming home to present you with a number of resolutions and honor.

I know that he wants the Voting Rights Act reauthorized because he couldn't vote then, but now, he stands as the longest serving police officer and one of great service.

I salute you, Edward Alfred Thomas.

RECOGNIZING MILITARY CHAPLAINS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to congratulate the Army Chaplain Corps on their 240th birthday.

Since their founding this day on July 29, 1775, by the Continental Congress, at the request of General George Washington, military chaplains have served with courage, honor, and selflessness.

I am grateful that Fort Jackson, located in the Midlands of South Carolina, serves as a training facility for this distinct group of individuals who do so much to fulfill the religious needs of our men and women in uniform.

It is home to the Chaplain Regimental Museum Association. This museum highlights those who have a shared desire to minister to soldiers and their families. I appreciate the president of the association, Chaplain Brigadier General Don Rutherford, and the board of directors for their dedicated service to our men and women in uniform.

I know firsthand of chaplains' extraordinary service to my and my son's National Guard duty. I appreciate Army Colonel Steve Shugart, who was my son Alan's roommate in Iraq. I am grateful to work with Air National Guard Chaplain Lieutenant Colonel Brian Bohlman, for his military family nonprofit foundation, Operation Thank You.

Congratulations to the Army Chaplain Corps on their 240th birthday. Chaplains make a difference helping servicemembers and military families have a more fulfilling life.

SUPPORT EACH WOMAN ACT

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, for the past 40 years, antichoice politicians have convinced Congress to maintain Hyde amendment language while pushing for restricting access even further.

For four decades, the Hyde amendment has denied too many women their constitutional right to choose by prohibiting the use of Federal funds to pay for abortion services. The fact that this restriction discriminates against women with limited resources at the very time in which they need the support the most is unconscionable.

We have had enough of letting the majority restrict access to abortion services when the majority of Americans support a woman's right to choose. It is time to change course.

The EACH Woman Act ensures health coverage of these services for every woman, no matter how much she earns, how she is insured, or where she lives.

I urge my colleagues to be bold, end Hyde, and support the EACH Woman Act.

RECOGNIZING UNITED STATES MARINE PRIVATE FIRST CLASS ATTILIO M. LUPACCHINI

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the life and service of United States Marine Private First Class Attilio M. Lupacchini, who was laid to rest with full military honors this morning.

Private Lupacchini—a native of Yardley, Bucks County, in my district in Pennsylvania—was just 2 years out of high school, when, on December 9, 1950, he made the ultimate sacrifice for his Nation in the mountains of North Korea while on a mission to rescue a group of fellow marines.

His platoon leader described Private Lupacchini as a true fighting marine who was small in stature but enormously courageous.

After more than 65 years, Private Lupacchini's spirit has returned home and now rests among our Nation's bravest at Arlington National Cemetery, forever providing a place of reflection and remembrance for generations of family members and grateful Americans.

From the bottom of my heart, I express my gratitude to Attilio Lupacchini for his membership in the internal ranks of those who sacrificed at freedom's altar.

BUFFALO, NEW YORK, RECLAIMED ITS FUTURE BY EMBRACING ITS PAST

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, visitors to the 1901 Pan-American Exposition, which was held in western New York, were so astounded with the electric light powered by Niagara Falls that Buffalo became known across the world as The City of Light.

Last week, The New York Times reported to the Nation Buffalo is back, due again to our investments in renewable energy.

In 2005, we won a Federal licensing settlement that directed $279 million from local hydropower proceeds to redevelop Buffalo's waterfront, a transformation that has attracted hundreds of millions of dollars in private investment.

Access to cheap, clean hydropower convinced Yahoo to locate its data and call center in Niagara County, again creating hundreds of jobs.

Meanwhile, the Steel Winds project has built 14 wind turbines along Lake Erie in Lackawanna, creating enough electricity to power 15,000 homes. Along the Buffalo River, the largest solar panel manufacturer in the Western Hemisphere is under construction, which will create 3,500 jobs in the solar industry.

At the turn of the 20th century, Buffalo led on energy innovation and thrived because of it. By embracing its past, Buffalo has reclaimed its future.

DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, a third Planned Parenthood video was released regarding the selling of aborted baby body parts and organs.

The fact that this is going on is just vile. Our Constitution protects the right to life, and it is unforgiveable for any organization to engage in this kind of trafficking.

To make matters worse, Planned Parenthood receives taxpayer dollars that ultimately help support these vile acts.

I fully support the House investigation into Planned Parenthood, and I am proud to support legislation that would stop all Federal funding for Planned Parenthood until these investigations are over.

That said, I believe Washington should follow Texas' lead and permanently defund Planned Parenthood.

All life is sacred, and I will continue to do all I can to protect the lives of the unborn.

□ 1215

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, July 30, marks the 50th anniversary of Lyndon Johnson's signing of the Social Security Act Amendments of 1965 into law and of creating Medicare and Medicaid in order to meet the healthcare needs of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and working families.

Today, 55 million Americans receive Medicare benefits, and 69 million Americans rely on the healthcare safety net that Medicaid provides. One in three American children receives his health insurance coverage through Medicaid. In Rhode Island's First District, which I am proud to represent, more than 92,000 individuals receive Medicare benefits, and almost 100,000 receive Medicaid coverage.

Mr. Speaker, health care is a necessity of life, and access to quality health care should be a right for everyone and never a privilege of the few. Over the last half century, Medicare and Medicaid have provided millions of Americans with access to quality, affordable health care. It is critical that we strengthen these essential programs, enhance benefits, and make sure that all Americans can live with healthcare security and dignity.

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, The Washington Post reports that the President knew of two secret side deals in the agreement with Iran but failed to inform Congress. More troubling, The Washington Post reports that, while the President and the Secretary of State know the agreements exist, neither has seen them.

These agreements, which are between Iran and the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, govern the inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities. In its article, The Washington Post quotes the Deputy Director of the U.N. agency as saying, ''No American is ever going to get to see them,'' in speaking of these side agreements.

Mr. Speaker, no one believes we can deal with Iran with a gentlemanly handshake, so the linchpin to any agreement is inspections. Why on Earth would the President make an agreement that includes secret deals between Iran and the U.N. agency which is doing the inspections that no American, including him, will ever see?

It is beyond my comprehension. Congress needs to reject this bad deal.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

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

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday marked the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This historic piece of legislation prohibits discrimination against those with disabilities, giving them greater access and protections; but the ADA does more than just open doors—it recognizes every individual's ability to succeed.

Yesterday, I met with Sarah Goldman, a young woman with cerebral palsy who is earning her master's degree at Florida State University. She visited my office to advocate on behalf of ADA protections. As Sarah said, we have made great progress in the last 25 years, but there is still so much more work to be done.

I urge the House to listen to Sarah's words and continue the fight to make sure all Americans are empowered to achieve their own American dreams.

FAREWELL TRIBUTE TO JOSH ZARKA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bid farewell and good luck to Josh Zarka, who for the past 4 years has been the Minister for Congressional Affairs at the Embassy of Israel here in Washington, D.C.

Since 1991, Josh has had a long and distinguished career with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing the Jewish State in Israel and, indeed, around the world.

During his time here in D.C., Josh has been a major influence in strengthening the U.S.-Israel relationship; and there is no doubt that his tireless work to promote and strengthen the ties between our two countries has contributed greatly to the safety and security of Israel, of its citizens, and of us here in the United States.

Josh can be proud of the work that he has done here; yet I know that what he values the most is his family—his wife, Esther, and their four children. I wish Josh and his family much success, especially as they prepare for his daughter, Adi's, upcoming wedding.

We will miss you, Josh. Stay in touch.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF VOTING RIGHTS ACT

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

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, hundreds of courageous, unarmed men and women marched from Selma to Montgomery to call for the right to vote. They were met with violence, prejudice, and hate; but these brave men and women continued their push for equality. Because of their sacrifice and determination, the historic Voting Rights Act was passed.

For over 40 years, the Voting Rights Act was one of our best tools to combat historic discrimination. It provided critical voter protections to ensure that Americans of all backgrounds had equal access to the ballot box; but with the Supreme Court's Shelby County decision 2 years ago, key provisions were gutted from this act that must be restored.

As we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, I urge my Republican colleagues to restore dignity to our electoral process and ensure that this is a democracy of

the people and by the people. Allow us to vote on meaningful legislation to restore the Voting Rights Act.

RECOGNIZING AN UNSUNG HERO

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize an everyday hero from southern Illinois today—U.S. mail carrier Don Fix, who has worked his route in Belleville, Illinois, for over 20 years.

In May, Don felt something was wrong when he noticed mail piled high at a home in Swansea. Don knew both residents were elderly and had difficulty getting around, so he checked around to the back door and called out their names. He heard Mr. David Nelson yell back that he and his wife had fallen. Don immediately called the paramedics, who arrived on the scene and took the couple to the hospital.

I honor Don Fix's quick and caring action as he is more than just a neighborhood mailman. Don delivers more than just the mail to the residents he cares about—he also delivers compassion.

BRING GUN SAFETY LEGISLATION TO HOUSE FLOOR FOR A VOTE

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

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, in Connecticut, we know all too well the devastation caused by gun violence. We will never stop mourning the lives of the 26 people who were ripped from us by the horrific shootings in Newtown, but just as tragic are the deaths that don't make national headlines.

Mr. Speaker, we have a serious problem with gun violence in this country from which no person, no community is protected. This year alone, in the capital city of Hartford, gun violence has claimed 19 lives. Yet, today, this House is scheduled to adjourn for the next 5 weeks, refusing to bring this urgent public health matter to the House floor, refusing to address gun violence, which is hurting America.

I have joined with colleagues from across the aisle to propose a bipartisan bill to expand background checks to all commercial gun sales—legislation that, if enacted, would have prevented several of the most recent mass shootings.

I urge the leadership of this House to spend August thinking about the 30,000 Americans we lose each year to gun violence and to bring this urgent matter to the full House for a vote when we reconvene in September.

IN SUPPORT OF THE SOLDIER ACT

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

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a simple solution to a straightforward problem.

Eleven years after retiring from the military, one of my constituents received a bill for $1,500 for an alleged overpayment by the Department of Defense. This is more than a decade later, and the first she is hearing about it is in a letter, demanding payment. Moreover, the servicemember is expected to track down and find whatever receipts or documents may be relevant from 11 years ago.

This isn't an isolated case. This is happening to veterans across this Nation. Often, these bills are the result of DOD accounting or system errors. Certainly, if there were an error, whether it be the fault of the servicemember or of the DOD, steps should be taken to remedy that; but the government should not wait a decade before sending the first letter.

I am introducing a bill today that would place a statute of limitations on DOD's authority to initiate the collection process. This does not prevent the DOD from collecting debts; it simply says it must do it in a timely fashion. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the SOLDIER Act.

BIPARTISAN SOLUTIONS TO GROW U.S. ECONOMY

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

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, when we return from our recess, we need to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank. Ex-Im has helped Nebraska businesses grow and export U.S.-made products overseas. In fact, last year, my district exported over $60 million of Nebraska manufactured goods all over the world. Growing U.S. exports mean growing jobs at home.

Secondly, we need to come together and pass a long-term transportation bill. According to a recent report, nearly a quarter of Nebraska's bridges are structurally unsound. Beyond safety, investments in infrastructure can create immediate jobs and long-term economic growth.

Lastly, we need to pass a responsible, comprehensive immigration reform bill. This would pull hard-working people out of the shadows, work to attract the best, talented people across the globe, and make our businesses more competitive in the world economy.

Upon our return, Mr. Speaker, let's commit ourselves to bipartisan solutions to these issues.

DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD

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

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, I stand here profoundly disappointed that the House will leave town today without taking a vote on my legislation to defund Planned Parenthood.

Over the past 2 weeks, we have all seen the gruesome videos showing the heartless depravity of this organization. We have issued statements; we have made passionate floor speeches; and we have pledged action. Now our constituents would like to know when we are going to follow through on that promise.

Today, I am reminded of the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: ''Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.''

Mr. Speaker, we have a moral obligation to defund Planned Parenthood, and we must do it now—not when politicians and pundits think it is most politically expedient.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965

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

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in recognition of the upcoming 50th anniversary of the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Our Nation took an important step forward 50 years ago when, on August 6, 1965, President Johnson signed into law this landmark legislation. It was a moment that brave men and women, like our colleague JOHN LEWIS, marched for and were willing to die for as they dared to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama.

Unfortunately, 2 years ago, the Supreme Court struck down section 4, and preclearance and Federal protections for vulnerable communities went away. When the Supreme Court struck down section 4, it did not say that protections were not needed. Rather, it issued a challenge to us here in this House to come up with a modern day formula. I see that as a challenge for all of us in this great House—to come up with a modern day formula to provide protections for vulnerable communities.

On this 50th anniversary of the landmark Voting Rights Act, let us answer this call to action. It is a call worthy of all of our attention. On this recess, let us remark about how wonderful it was that we all came together on March 7, 1965, in order to do what was right. I ask all of you to please consider restoring the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It is important for all Americans.

□ 1230

MOTORCYCLES MEAN FREEDOM

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the upcoming Sturgis motorcycle rally, which will be celebrating its 75th anniversary this year in Sturgis, South Dakota.

Since the rally's inception in 1938, Sturgis has grown from a single race to

a weeklong event attended by hundreds of thousands from across the United States and, indeed, around the globe.

Each year more and more riders are using their motorcycles to go to the store, go to work, or just go for a ride.

This growing popularity is good for our Nation. Motorcyclists ease road congestion, reduce overall fuel consumption, and decrease wear and tear on our Nation's infrastructure.

As a cochairman of the Congressional Motorcycle Caucus, I offer my best wishes to the attendees of this year's event. Here is to good weather and safe travels while celebrating the freedom to ride.

BANGLADESH

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss and raise the dire situation of religious minorities in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is a country in turmoil. There are many concerns about the stability of the country, particularly since flawed elections were held last year and the political violence that has ensued.

I am particularly concerned over issues of religious freedom and, specifically, attacks against the minority Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, and others in Bangladesh.

All too often perpetrators of crimes against minorities go unpunished. It is up to the Government of Bangladesh to take action to stop those who incite and commit violence and to protect the rights of these minorities.

I am introducing a resolution today calling on the Government of Bangladesh to protect human rights of all its citizens, particularly its vulnerable minorities, strengthen democratic institutions and rule of law, and prevent the growth of extremist groups.

I ask my colleagues to support this resolution to help protect the religious freedoms of all people in Bangladesh.

MILITARY CHAPLAINS

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

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as did my colleague, the gentleman from South Carolina, to note that today marks the 240th birthday of the military Chaplain Corps, which was originally founded by the Continental Congress.

I stand today to honor the men and women who serve the spiritual needs of those in uniform. The military chaplains who serve and have served bravely go with their fellow soldiers into combat theaters not to fight, but to fill the role of pastor, counselor, and listener for our armed services.

Military chaplains are held in especially high regard within my own office, with Arkansas National Guard Captain David Wittee serving as an Army chaplain in addition to serving as my military affairs liaison and a field representative in the Fourth District of Arkansas.

I want to thank Captain Wittee and all military chaplains, both current and past, for their service to their fellow soldiers and for their service to our Nation.

RESTORE THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this Confederate flag, which is a symbol of systemic oppression and racial subjugation, was recently lowered in the State of South Carolina.

But this same flag, which symbolizes so many inequities in our country, is still flying high in a figurative sense over our country.

When the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act, it signaled that African American voting rights would no longer be protected.

Pretending that the legacy of poll taxes, literacy tests, and blatant discrimination was no longer taking place, the Supreme Court symbolically raised this flag when it gutted the Voting Rights Act.

Now that this flag has come down from the halls of South Carolina, it is time that we lower this flag from its perch over the voting rights of African Americans by passing the legislation in the U.S. Congress to restore the Voting Rights Act.

MORE SECRETS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the IRS targeted, intimidated, and harassed many Americans because of their political philosophy. The people are still waiting for answers about why their government is engaged in this Soviet-style behavior.

First, 2 years of emails were lost. Now we learn that the IRS purposely used an internal messaging system—an office communication server—on the sly. They opted not to archive these messages and kept them secret from the eyes of the citizens and Congress. In one email Lois Lerner apparently was told the messaging system was not archived. Her response? ''Perfect.''

So we will never know what was in those messages that were intentionally scrubbed.

There is a pattern here.

The Secretary of State was conducting official business on her own untraceable secret email server, and the taxman used its own ''go dark system'' to evade transparency. It is just another day with the ''most transparent administration in history.''

Mr. Speaker, the public has a right to know and get answers to all these scandals. After years of stonewalling, it is painfully obvious that this administration will not investigate this administration.

And that is just the way it is.

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid.

When President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Medicare and Medicaid into law, he proclaimed that:

''No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy the savings that they have so carefully put away over a lifetime so that they might enjoy dignity in their later years. No longer will young families see their own incomes and their own hopes eaten away simply because they are carrying out their deep moral obligations to their parents.''

We need to continue to keep these promises by protecting and expanding Medicare and Medicaid. Together, these two programs provide health coverage for our Nation's seniors, people with disabilities, and moms and families. We must ensure that these programs are here for now and for future generations.

EXECUTIVE REGULATORY OVERREACH

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, before my time in Congress, if someone had told me that I would spend 90 percent of my time fighting executive regulatory overreach, nobody would have believed me, but it is the truth.

In the past 7 months, I have found out how out of control the overreach of this administration truly is. With rules such as the Waters of the United States and the Clean Power Plan from EPA, this administration continues to trample on the rights of our citizens and States while hurting our economy along the way.

That is why I was pleased to cosponsor and vote for the REINS Act. This important legislation requires Congress to have 70 legislative days to review any rules with an economic impact over $100 million and ensures Congress has oversight before any major rule goes to the President for a signature.

By allowing Congress to review these rules, we can restore accountability and the power of legislating to the legislative branch.

I thank my colleagues in the House for passing this important legislation and call on those in the Senate to take swift action to reduce regulatory overreach.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, on August 6, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Mr. Speaker, this landmark law codified protections to guarantee every American's right to vote. For the past five decades, the Voting Rights Act has broken down barriers that discouraged or outright prohibited citizens from voting.

The VRA led to a more inclusive electoral system that increasingly reflected the diversity of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, the right to vote is central to who we are as Americans and to our democracy.

But this cornerstone of American civil rights is unfortunately being threatened today. In too many places across the country, we have seen new measures that create barriers that make it harder to register or vote.

On this 50th anniversary, we must redouble our commitment to strengthening the Voting Rights Act. We can start by restoring the Voting Rights Act to ensure that the rights of all Americans that go to the ballot box and cast a ballot are protected.

HONORING ADOLPH KIEFER OF WADSWORTH

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the ''Father of Swimming,'' Adolph Kiefer, from Wadsworth, Illinois.

At age 17, Adolph became the 100-meter gold medal winner at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. In addition to earning 17 world records, Adolph was the first man in the world to swim the 100-yard backstroke in under a minute and invented a flip turn, still used today.

In 1947, Adolph founded his own company, inventing the first plastic kickboard and the first nylon swimsuit. Yet, he has considered teaching others his greatest success.

Upon joining the Navy, Adolph was shocked to learn many of his comrades couldn't swim. He designed a program to teach millions of recruits what he dubbed the victory backstroke.

As a youth fitness advocate, he served the Red Cross for 25 years, coordinating the learn-to-swim campaign for Chicago and overseeing lessons for thousands of children.

Mr. Kiefer just celebrated his 97th birthday and still swims every day.

I have submitted a letter of support for Mr. Kiefer for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. I urge our country to honor a great man from Illinois' 14th Congressional District.

UNFINISHED WORK

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I am upset that the House is heading to August recess today with so much unfinished work in front of us.

We could be working to find a transportation bill that both we and the Senate can agree on, a bill that would begin to fix our broken roads, bridges, and highways. My district, the Virgin Islands, has been hit by nearly 6 years of substantially reduced Federal highway funding.

We could be working on an appropriations bill to fund important work for this country. In my district, the Virgin Islands, the Interior Appropriations bill is vitally important.

This funding would go toward the children in our schools. Right now the schools are not structurally sound and are decaying. In fact, a new school hasn't been built in my home district on the island of St. Croix or St. Thomas in the last two decades.

It is shameful to leave town without working on a Voting Rights Act. The ability and ease of access to voting must be expanded, not restricted. It must also be further expanded to include the 4 million Americans who do not have the right to vote for their President simply because they live in a territory.

These men and women love their country, they fight for their country, but they are excluded from the most basic democratic function.

We could be working to fix these and a myriad of other things, but, instead, we are leaving with these matters unattended. This is an embarrassment to this body and must not happen again.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1994, VA ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3236, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND VETERANS HEALTH CARE CHOICE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 388 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 388

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1994) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3236) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided among and controlled by the respective chairs and ranking minority members of the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Ways and Means, and Veterans' Affairs; and (2) one motion to recommit.

□ 1245

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, we are here at the end of the work that we have done before our break home for the August recess, where we will have an opportunity to go back to the American people and talk with them as they are in our homes, our cities, our neighborhoods, our schools, our firehouses, and our places of worship; and we will have a chance to meet and talk with them about the great work that Republicans have achieved and done up here in Washington, D.C., during this first half of the year.

I am very pleased to know that today, as we are preparing to leave to go back home for our district work session, that we are going to be presenting several bills on the floor that are done to try and move forward not only thoughts and ideas that we have for the House of Representatives but, really, to work in the spirit of things with the other body, the United States Senate, so that we can make sure that the American people, their vision, their needs are before the American people. That is why I am here today.

Mr. Speaker, last year, the American people were shocked, once again, by the news that dozens of our Nation's veterans were left to die while they waited for medical care in the VA. The VA hospital, which is located in so many of our communities around this great Nation, has simply not performed well and, in several instances, has had shocking results. That is also why we are here today.

In response, Congress passed something called the Choice Act, which makes it easier to remove senior executives at the VA who had underperformed, who have not done their job properly on behalf of not just the taxpayers of this country, but on behalf of a grateful Nation who is serving the men and women who have given their very best years and lives to this country through their service to the United States military.

We believe that removing people who cannot make wise choices and decisions at the VA was the right thing to do. We were trying to put the President, his administration, the Secretary, and senior managers at the VA not only on notice that we would not tolerate bad behavior, poor decisions, and ineffective management, but that we were going to do something about it. By the way, we felt like they were underperforming to a deserving crowd, and that is our veterans.

Well, the President agreed with us, too. The bill was signed into law. We got that done last year, the Choice Act. It was a good decision by this body when we faced the times where we recognized in not only a public way, but in an outpouring of support from veterans who said this has to change. The Republican Congress did just that.

Our chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs from Florida (Mr. MILLER) very quickly and clearly went and did an investigation on a bipartisan basis, looked at the VA, and made these decisions. That was what we did a year ago.

Since then, only two VA employees have been fired for their role in what is now known as the waiting list scandal. What is this waiting list scandal? The waiting list scandal is a way by which the VA denied veterans an opportunity to come and get the health care that they needed by stringing them out and then deceiving others—including themselves in the VA—about what the waiting times were. They deceived not only these people who were given these long dates; they deceived the management. They also deceived the United States Congress.

Well, as happens many times, people find out. Well, we did find out. This meant that the deaths that were covered up, the veterans that were neglected, and the statistics that were provided to us and others were altered.

One year later, the waiting list grows longer and longer and longer for everyone. No doubt, we gave the administration the tools that they asked for that they agree with. Only two people have been fired.

Mr. Speaker, we were sincere about what we did by giving them the authority and the responsibility. We expected them to clean it up. I look to not only our chairman, JEFF MILLER, but we look to the VA also to stand up and say they disagreed with that. Not much has happened—certainly not enough.

We are back here again. Poor performances and bad actors still continue to undermine the VA. They continue to undermine not only the scheduling, they undermine the service; they undermine the quality that should be available to our veterans. As a result of this, the ability that we think we are providing to our veterans is diminished. The care for our veterans, wounded and sick veterans, continues to lag.

Republicans are back at the table. Our young chairman, JEFF MILLER, has stayed at the table. He has stayed working on this issue on a bipartisan basis with the members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs by knowing what is happening all across this country, learning more about not just the facts of the case, but the stories that come from the veterans themselves, the stories that may come from people who are inside the VA. They are important to us learning what is really happening.

Because the VA has a long and well-documented history of failing to hold employees accountable, we are back here today with another bill. That is right, another bill that we are going to handle on the floor by this Republican House with Democrats on a bipartisan basis, to make it easier to remove or demote employees who do not do their job and who need to be out of that organization.

We are going to give this organization exactly what they are asking for again. We are going to give the VA and their new Veterans Secretary the ability to clean up their mess. We are trying our best to hold them accountable yet, at the same time, expect them to do the right thing.

Yesterday, in testimony, we had our chairman say he has confidence in the Secretary; he has confidence that the Secretary can adjust and make these changes, but the law needs to be updated and changed.

That is why we are here today, to give the VA the tools that they need—just like when I was a manager in the private sector, I needed the tools to run my organization properly and effectively—the ability to move employees that were not doing their job—perhaps it is a bad fit—or to get rid of employees or even fire them if they are not only not performing their job, but deceptively trying to harm patients in the process.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would send a clear message to employees of the VA, and we intend to do that today. We are going to send a very clear message to them that they either perform properly or, if they are harming our effort to help our veterans, it is time for them to leave. If they are not up to doing the task very well, this Department will be given the opportunity, the law, and the leverage to do just that.

This bill would send another important signal also. If you choose to demonstrate the moral courage necessary to stand up for veterans and to blow the whistle on those who are not, we want to make sure that you are protected, that you can come forth inside your own organization of the VA to report and root out bad behavior. We must fix this.

Mr. Speaker, too many times, the testimony yesterday revealed that these VA facilities in location after location after location around this country are deathtraps for our veterans.

These elder gentlemen, veterans who go to seek help, they know it is a deathtrap; and that is why we need to also address this, for the safety of men and women who have protected this great Nation.

Congress needs to make it clear—and we can today—that supervisors at the VA cannot retaliate against whistleblowers.

If there is somebody in the organization who is willing to tell the truth and come forward, you cannot retaliate against them because they are going to tell the truth about the poor service and responsibility toward aiding our veterans. It will not be tolerated.

Every Member of this body will have an equal opportunity today to say that is the right thing to do because this is what the Secretary is asking for.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve to know that, when our veterans are treated poorly, this bill would help them; when our VA employees understand that somebody who was going to turn a blind eye before now, we will no longer do that.

We are going to give the VA the tools to root out the problems, to make this better, so that we can honestly look at our men and women and say: Thank you for your service; this grateful Nation does care about you.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for sweeping cultural changes at the VA. It is time to remove the bureaucrats who will make excuses, who will hide things, and who will make circumstances dangerous and worse for our veterans.

It is time to hold senior executives accountable when the VA underperforms, and that is why I am joining the American Legion, the VFW, and other veterans associations in supporting H.R. 1994. That is what the testimony revealed yesterday at the Committee on Rules when we heard from not only the chairman of the committee, but others about the importance of this bill.

This rule would also provide for debate for H.R. 3236, the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015. We have two specific purposes that we are here for: first, for the VA; and, second, to make sure that we authorize an extension for the Federal surface transportation program through October 29.

It is a well-known understanding that our young chairman, BILL SHUSTER, of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has been working and working and working. We indicated last year in November and, again, in December that we would allow an extension to this date from last year; and Chairman SHUSTER said he thought he could have a deal by now.

Well, as it turned out, the United States Senate is debating that this week. They are going through a weeklong process to determine what they would like their transportation bill to be like. The bottom line is a thousand-page bill that has not yet passed, that we do not know the substance of, and we are not going to agree with sight unseen.

Our young chairman, BILL SHUSTER, has asked that we offer a very polite and reasonable option, and that is give us an opportunity to review this. They have done the hard work, the United States Senate. We will do the same, and we will get that done by October 29.

□ 1300

It would also avoid a shortfall that would keep the VA from closing hospitals across this country.

Mr. Speaker, this is the substance of what this rule and the underlying legislation is all about.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bills, H.R. 3236, the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act, and H.R. 1994, the VA Accountability Act.

Yet again, we have a grab bag rule that covers multiple bills on wildly different subjects—in this case, transportation and veterans care—in one bill; and yet we have a closed rule that is pushing through a last-minute deal that kicks the can down the road yet again on highway reauthorization when there is reason to believe that, if we simply stayed in town and worked another week, we might be able to work with the Senate to get to an end point with regard to a long-term reauthorization.

The closed rule here limits the discussion of alternatives on the issue of transportation funding. Even worse, the bill has two entirely unrelated aspects. I have never heard of a crazier name than the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act.

This is part of the problem of this body over the last several years. Republican leadership has moved towards doing more and more omnibuses and minibuses. That means combining disparate bills—transportation, veterans—into one bill, which isn't healthy for the accountability of this body among the electorate.

If you vote against this bill, for instance, because you don't like the transportation provisions, does that mean you are against veterans? If you don't like the veterans provisions and you vote against this bill, does that mean you are against transportation? How easy it would be to simply have two votes on each of these bills so Members on both sides of the aisle can vote their conscience and our constituents can hold us accountable.

Of course, it is necessary to give the VA the authority to transfer $3.3 billion for healthcare services. There is strong agreement on both sides. We could run the bill through on suspension. We wouldn't even need to open it up for a rule. It would pass with more than a two-thirds vote. But there are problematic additions attached to that part of the bill. It is also combined with yet another temporary fix for our Nation's highway system, instead of trying to stay in town another week and work on a more permanent fix to help meet the needs of the transportation arteries of our country.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, 54 percent of our Nation's major roads and bridges are rated poor or mediocre. Forty-five percent of Americans don't have access to public transit. Congestion produced by our legislative failures here wastes valuable time and money and detracts from the growth of the American economy. It is estimated Americans will lose 8.4 billion hours and 4.45 billion gallons of gas over a decade. That means the average consumer is wasting $800 a year and 5 full days of their life away from their kids, away from their family, simply sitting in traffic. Mr. Speaker, that is unacceptable.

My constituents are no strangers to traffic. If you have been to Fort Collins, one of the largest cities in my district and home to one of our great universities, you will find that on highway 25 my constituents endure gridlocked traffic at rush hour, doubling or tripling their commuting times.

Expansion of highway 25 and high-speed rail along highway 70 and highway 36 have been given completion dates of decades from now—60 years, in some cases. Try to imagine being told your doctor wants to slowly break down blockages in your arteries over a period of 60 years. You won't make it that far.

Our communities need to do something about traffic now. Tourism and commerce are the lifeblood of Fort Collins, Boulder, and our mountain communities like Vail, Frisco, and Breckenridge. For these towns to survive and thrive, we need to tackle our transportation funding needs head-on.

From our other speakers, you will hear a lot about the Export-Import Bank, the one item that somehow, with this grab bag that includes veterans and transportation, there is a strong bipartisan majority for reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank. In fact, 67 Senators in the Republican-led Senate voted to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, and yet somehow that item didn't make the grab bag.

If Congress fails to act, one of the most important items is it will result concretely in the loss of tens of thousands of American jobs and make American companies less competitive for exports at a time when global competitiveness and the global economy is more important than ever, which was left out of this grab bag of bills.

I understand ideological issues with the Export-Import Bank. In a perfect world, I would agree with my colleagues who argue we shouldn't need to do this kind of effective subsidy for exporters; but if other countries are doing it and it is permissible under WTO and trade rules, we would truly be idiots to unilaterally disarm and not engage in a legal practice that facilitates the credit of American exporting businesses. Effectively, it would lead to the exporting of more jobs overseas and making American companies less competitive in selling their products.

So, by all means, let's have the discussion around multilateral adjustments to the type of credit facilities that countries can engage in with exporting countries, but let's not look at unilateral disarmament that makes America less competitive and destroys jobs.

You will hear a lot about how simple it would be, my colleagues would indicate, to simply get this done before we leave. Isn't it worth another week of our time to save tens of thousands of American jobs?

The second part of the rule, H.R. 1994, the VA Accountability Act, one of the main problems with it is it would create a culture of fear that would imperil the services our veterans need and deserve.

The tragedy in the Phoenix VA system is an example. It became known because of a few courageous whistleblowers. Had this legislation been in place, this tragedy could have been swept under the rug for many more years.

Without whistleblowers and strong whistleblower protections, the VA hospital debacle in my State of Colorado, in Aurora, could have even been a worse situation, if you can imagine that.

This legislation is not just bad for whistleblowers, it is also unconstitutional. Supreme Court case law has clearly outlined the due process that employees have before their jobs are taken away. This bill turns its back on due process and allows any VA employee to be fired on the spot for retribution.

The limited process provided in this legislation is far below the constitutional requirements, which is why the President has promised to veto this bill. All this bill is attempting to do is destroy the whistleblower and professional civil service system and, thus, the livelihood of thousands and the quality of service to our veterans.

The appropriate action is to get the VA to do their job through appropriate legislation which creates true accountability, which this bill fails to achieve, or discuss how we might reform the dollars we allocate to the VA to best serve our veterans, however possible.

We will debate an alternative today by my colleague, Mr. TAKANO of California, that would retain due process but allows the VA to immediately fire any employee who poses a health or safety risk to veterans. Additionally, it prevents employees from staying on paid administrative leave—even being bounced around the VA—by limiting the time to 2 weeks, a similarity to one of the positive aspects of the bill before us today.

Mr. TAKANO's legislation, for example, would have allowed the VA to immediately fire those responsible for the Phoenix scandal and kept in place the whistleblower protections that allowed us to find out about the Phoenix scandal.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, I oppose the rule and the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I admire the gentleman very much. We work very well together. But I think it is a misstatement to say that this bill would allow people to be fired on the spot at the VA. That is certainly, I don't believe, true at all. I believe it would have to be with cause, and the VA would have to have a reason.

There is nothing in this legislation where we would empower people to do things that would not follow proper Federal law nor established rules of procedure for the employee to have the proper amount of protection. But what is stated and understood is, where an employee has been underperforming, misperforming, or has violated their oath of office, where they have a diligence to people under their care or where they have done intentional deeds and then tried to cover it up, that would be cause, and that is what this is about.

This is not about firing someone on the spot. I think it would be a misstatement to try and characterize this important legislation that has been well thought through, as well as worked out with the VA, as being from that perspective.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to allow the House to vote on reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank, as proposed by Mr. FINCHER yesterday. It is the same exact language that passed the Senate by a vote of 67–29.

Mr. Speaker, the Export-Import Bank allows American businesses to compete in global markets and supports hundreds of thousands of jobs.

I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip, to discuss our proposal.

Mr. HOYER. I thank Mr. POLIS from Colorado for yielding.

I rise in opposition to this rule. This is our last day in session before we leave for 5 or 6 weeks. We then will have 13 days before the end of the fiscal year. We have a number of things that the American public expects us to do that enjoys almost universal support on this floor, one of which enjoys a significant majority of support on this floor.

Mr. Speaker, let me quote the Speaker of this House, JOHN BOEHNER. ''Above all else,'' he said as he assumed the Speakership, ''we will welcome the battle of ideas, encourage it, engage in it—openly, honestly, and respectfully.''

''As the Chamber,'' he went on to say, ''closest to the people, the House works best when it is allowed to work its will.'' He then said, ''I ask all Members of this body to join me in recognizing this common truth.'' Al Gore, the former Vice-President of the United States, would observe, however, that is an inconvenient truth.

It is an inconvenient truth because the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, representing the minority of this House, is opposed to the Export-Import Bank. He has been opposed to it since we adopted it in 2012, with an overwhelming majority of votes from both sides of the aisle—as a matter of fact, a unanimous vote from the Democratic side of the aisle and over 140 Members from the Republican side of the aisle—just 3 years ago.

This rule makes in order, as the gentleman noticed, two bills, one of which I vigorously oppose but won't spend a lot of time on. While the gentleman is probably correct that it is not immediate firing, it is a substantial undermining of the Civil Service Act adopted so that we would not have a patronage, politically ridden system, but a civil service system based on merit.

This bill then makes in order an extension of the highway bill, which certainly we ought to do. It is somewhat ironic that we say it is a 3-month extension. We passed a 5-month extension. I voted for the 5-month extension. Everybody ought to know that we fund it for 5 months, of course. We call it a 3-month extension. I hope that will satisfy Senator MCCONNELL so that he can then pass it.

We then provide for $3.3 billion so that we will make sure our veterans hospitals and medical care stays in operation. Both of those could have been passed on this House floor by unanimous consent.

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

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

We now leave for another month the Export-Import Bank, which is responsible for the creation and retaining of jobs in America.

We all talk about jobs in America, but the Speaker has said, again, that the failure to pass this bill is losing jobs right now. And yet my Republican friends, in tipping their hat to the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, say we are not going to consider that, as they did last month in July. I know we haven't gotten out of July yet, but we will go through August, and then we will go through September.

Mr. FINCHER tells me he thinks that bill will be brought to the floor in some form or another in September, but it will have cost us jobs and competitiveness overseas with the 60 countries that have an export-import bank that are making sure that the purchases of their goods made in their countries are cheaper than the goods sold in our country. That costs American jobs.

□ 1315

We ought to reject this rule, and we ought to do what the Speaker of the House said we ought to do; treat one another with respect, and let the House work its will.

There are 240-plus, maybe 250, maybe 260, maybe 270 votes. You only need 218 to pass the Export-Import Bank on this floor.

I will yield to anybody who says: No, Mr. HOYER, you are wrong; it doesn't have the majority vote.

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

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HOYER. I will yield to anybody on this floor who will say: Mr. HOYER, you are wrong.

Apparently, there is nobody on the floor who is going to suggest that the will of this House, as represented by a majority that would vote on this bill, would not be for extending the Export-Import Bank, saving American jobs, making sure that America is competitive in the international markets.

My colleagues, reject this rule. Exercise our responsibility to the American people and to American workers, and let's pass the Export-Import Bank today before we go home.

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

I want to thank the distinguished gentleman for not only his words and the spirit of what he said, but I want him to know that, several years ago, as he approached me as I became chairman of the Rules Committee, I assured the gentleman that I would do my very best, within my ability, and he has done also, as well as his team that also sits at the Rules Committee.

I want to thank the distinguished gentleman because part of what our job is, yes, to represent our Speaker and the things that are done, but also to make sure the spirit in which we do it is done properly, and I appreciate the gentleman. I think his spirit was good today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH), a member of the Oversight and Government Reform committee and a former member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, two of the things a proud and confident and responsible nation will do—no matter how challenging—are, one, to invest in its future and, two, to care for its veterans. This bill pretends to do both. Actually, it does neither.

Yes, it will keep the highway bill on life support for another short-term extension. It used to be 5 months. Now, it is going to be 3 months.

Yes, it will allow the VA to make internal fund transfers to keep our hospitals open through September, but once again, in another act of serial irresponsibility, Congress is ignoring its duty to do its job of passing a long-term transportation bill.

It leaves our communities and States in suspension. It recklessly adds unnecessary construction costs to our taxpayers and lets potholes get deeper and bridges more dangerous. We need a long-term transportation bill—6 years, not 3 months.

Regarding the VA, do we meet our obligations to provide for the health care of our veterans through internal fund transfers? Our veterans and our VA need a fully funded budget. It needs funds, not fund transfers.

Veteran healthcare demand shot up 10 percent, but the budget is only up 2.8 percent, shackled by mindless and destructive sequester caps. We should end them.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not written to address problems; it is designed to deny they exist.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not an example of Congress doing its job; it is yet another example of Congress evading its responsibilities.

I will vote ''no.''

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman from Colorado, and let me thank my good friend from Texas as well. Let me use a great philosopher's statement of a couple of decades ago: ''Can we all get along?''

As I stand here, on the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 that is now with the rule before us, it is obvious that we are trying to take a divergent pathway.

I was one of the first Members of Congress to go down in front of my veterans hospital to stand and to demand quality health care for our veterans, to ask that the system be fixed. I take no backseat, along with other Members, to ensuring that our veterans get what they need, and stand in line to make sure that they are not defaulted on by the American people.

H.R. 1994 eliminates the due process rights of whistleblowers who have been key to drawing attention to any manipulation or coverups taking place. They are bringing back to the floor this bill, calling it an accountability bill; but, in essence, it is to go after hard-working employees and fire them and eliminating their opportunity to explain or to have due process. That is not the American way.

This is not a bill that helps veterans. In fact, it takes away consistent, long-working employers who see something and say something, and so I am voting ''no'' on the bill and this rule.

Then the surface transportation had a wonderful opportunity to do a 6-year bill, to look for pay-fors that Members could bring together and support; yet my metro, the Houston metro, will be suffering. Our highways and other surface transportation entities, safety will be suffering. Employees will not be paid.

Here we go again with a short-term opportunity. I remember doing a 6-year transportation bill, where I opened up the hike and bike trails of my community in Houston.

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

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 10 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I would offer to say that a highway bill, 6 years, or a surface transportation bill for 6 years is a bipartisan American way to do things.

Why don't we do that for the American people and do it now? Vote ''no'' on the rule.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security, I rise to speak on H.R. 3236, Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015,'' which reauthorizes federal-aid highway and transit programs for three months—through October 29, 2015—by transferring $8.1 billion from other federal funds to the Highway Trust Fund to cover projected trust fund shortfalls over that time period.

The bill also allows the Veterans Affairs Department (VA) to use $3.4 billion provided last year for the Veterans Choice health care program to pay for care provided since May 1 to veteran patients by non-VA providers under VA Care in the Community programs.

The bill also is intended to give the VA the funding flexibility needed to prevent the possible closure of some VA hospitals in coming weeks.

Mr. Speaker, instead of this 90-day temporary extension, I would have strongly preferred that we were debating a comprehensive, fair, equitable, and long-term transportation reauthorization bill the nation desperately needs. We have had two years to do so.

Democrats want such a bill as does the President, but apparently our friends across the aisle do not since they have spent the last two years wasting time on advocating policies wanted by no one except for the right-wing extremists of the Tea Party.

But I reluctantly support this emergency but temporary measure because as the Department of Transportation has reported, if we do not act now highway trust fund balances by the beginning of August will reach dangerously low levels and result in a reduction of payments to states by an average of 28 percent.

Many states have already begun to cancel or delay planned construction projects, threatening 700,000 thousands of jobs, including 106,100 jobs in my home state of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, the Highway Trust Fund was created in 1956 during the Eisenhower Administration to help finance construction of the Interstate Highway System, which modernized the nation's transportation infrastructure and was instrumental in making the United States the world's dominant economic power for two generations.

Our national leaders then understood that investing in our roads and bridges strengthened our economy, created millions of good-paying jobs, and improved the quality of life for all Americans.

It is currently composed of two accounts that fund federal-aid highway and transit projects built by states. Federal funding from the trust fund accounts for a major portion of state transportation spending.

The Highway Trust Fund is financed by gasoline and diesel taxes, which until the last decade produced a steady increase in revenues sufficient to accommodate increased levels of spending on highway and transit projects.

However, those tax rates—18.4 cents/gallon federal tax on gasoline and a 24.4 cents/gallon tax on diesel fuel—have remained unchanged since 1993 and were not indexed to inflation so the value of those revenues has eroded over the years, and, combined with the fact that vehicles have been getting increasingly better mileage, the revenues deposited into the Highway Trust Fund beginning last decade have not kept pace with highway and transit spending from the trust fund.

Consequently, since 2008, Congress has periodically had to transfer at the 11th hour

general Treasury revenues into the trust fund to pay for authorized highway and transit spending levels and avoid a funding shortfall.

The total amount to date is more than $54 billion.

Obviously, this practice is economically inefficient and injects uncertainty in the highway construction plans, projects, and schedules of state and local transportation agencies, not to mention the anxiety it causes to workers and businesses whose economic livelihood is dependent on those projects.

Mr. Speaker, the last transportation authorized by Congress for 4 years or more, SAFETEA–LU, expired on September 30, 2009, at the end of FY 2009.

Because Congress and the Administration could not agree to a new reauthorization, it was necessary to resort to stop-gap temporary extensions on no less than eight occasions spanning a period of 910 days before Congress finally enacted the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act" (MAP–21 Act) on July 6, 2012, which reauthorized highway and transportation programs through Fiscal Year 2014, a little more than two years, or until September 30, 2014.

MAP–21 was intended as a short-term measure to give Congress and the Administration breathing room to reach agreement on a long-term reauthorization bill.

Yet, as Mr. LEVIN, the Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Committee, has often pointed out, since gaining the majority in 2010, our Republican colleagues have failed to take any action to sustain the Highway Trust Fund over the long-term and shore up vital infrastructure projects and has not held even a single hearing on financing options for the Highway Trust Fund.

Instead, House Republicans have wasted the nation's time voting to repeal the Affordable Care Act at least 59 times, waging a War on Women, pursuing partisan investigations into Benghazi, the IRS, and the trying to overturn President Obama's executive actions that make our immigration enforcement laws less inhumane.

Instead of doing their job, House Republicans big new idea is to attack the President for doing his job.

Mr. Speaker, it is long past time for this Congress, and especially the House majority, to focus on the real problems and challenges facing the American people.

And one of the biggest of those challenges is ensuring that America has a transportation policy and the infrastructure needed to compete and win in the global economy of the 21st Century.

To do that we have to extend the reauthorization of current transportation programs and to authorize the transfer of the funds to the Highway Trust Fund needed to fund authorized construction projects and keep 700,000 workers, including 106,100 in Texas on the job.

But that is only a start and just a part of our job.

The real work that needs to be done in the remaining days of this Congress is to reach an agreement on a long-term highway and transportation bill that is fair, equitable, fiscally responsible, creates jobs and leads to sustained economic growth.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1¾ minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), the ranking member of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, 64 Senators voted to renew the Export-Import Bank's charter, which expired on June 30. More than 240 Members are on record supporting the Bank, and according to The Wall Street Journal, there are many more.

As I quote, ''some Republicans estimated that as many as 300 of the 434 current House Members'' would support a measure similar to the one that passed the Senate; yet despite this overwhelming support, we have been denied a vote on the House of Representatives to renew the Export-Import Bank.

Last year, Ex-Im helped underwrite over $27 billion in U.S. exports. It supported thousands of small businesses and about 164,000 jobs across our country. Since 2009, the Bank has supported over 1.3 million jobs. The Bank does all of this at no cost—no cost—to the American taxpayer. In fact, the Ex-Im Bank sent over $675 million to the Treasury last year—actual dollars—to help pay down the deficit.

According to a letter sent by CBO just last week, using accounting standards, reauthorizing the Ex-Im would save taxpayers $2.3 billion over the next 5 years; yet American companies have been disadvantaged. They have been unilaterally disadvantaged of having the export assistance that over 60 different nations are providing their export-import banks.

Only 1 of the top 10 exporting countries in the world does not have an export credit agency now that can finance export deals—just one—and that is the United States of America. That is because this Congress failed to do what every other Congress has done since FDR, and that is to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

It creates jobs, creates money for the Treasury. It helps small businesses.

Vote ''no'' on the previous question, ''no'' on the rule. Let's bring it to the floor today for a vote.

[From the Wall Street Journal, July 28, 2015]

SMALL BUSINESSES BEAR BURDEN OF EX-IM BANK SHUTDOWN

(By Nick Timiraos and Kristina Peterson)

WASHINGTON.—Political opponents have managed to shut the U.S. Export-Import Bank for the most of the summer by arguing it rewards politically connected corporate giants.

But the bank and its supporters say the burden of the agency's shutdown for now will hit small businesses that lack the resources of industrial titans such as Boeing Co. and General Electric Co.

''Small businesses are the ones that are going to be hurt first and the most,'' said Rep. Denny Heck (D., Wash.), a proponent of reauthorizing the bank's charter.

The Ex-Im Bank, a federal agency that finances exports, stopped accepting new loans at the beginning of July after Congress allowed its charter to expire. While a majority of lawmakers in Congress support reauthorizing the 81-year-old agency in some form, conservative Republicans who control key leadership positions have so far prevented a vote in the House of Representatives.

Supporters had pinned their hopes on reopening the bank as part of a bill extending highway funding that expires Friday. But House and Senate leaders have had trouble agreeing on that transportation measure before their annual August recess that begins this week, which means they are likely to leave Washington without addressing the Ex-Im Bank.

The bank's backers have sought to rally support in recent weeks by highlighting the potential for lost sales at small businesses, a group that is both politically sympathetic and close to lawmakers in almost every congressional district.

President Barack Obama has called on Congress to reauthorize the agency, and most of the bank's supporters expect lawmakers to follow suit later this year. On Monday, 64 senators voted for an amendment to reopen the bank, and some Republicans estimated that at least 300 of the 434 current House lawmakers would vote similarly, given the chance.

''At some point we'll miss out on a business opportunity that will be of such magnitude that it will catch the attention of the public, and we'll respond,'' said Rep. Frank Lucas (R., Okla.), who supports the bank's reauthorization.

Additional opportunities to resuscitate the agency will arrive when Congress passes a spending measure needed to avoid a partial government shutdown by Oct. 1 or if the House and Senate negotiate a long-term highway bill in the fall.

Still, some lawmakers said the way in which the bank has missed multiple opportunities to stay open exposes the political challenges ahead. ''I wouldn't hold my breath that it's going to get funded in September,'' said Rep. Matt Salmon, an Arizona Republican who supports the bank.

Big businesses say closing the bank for good will leave them at enough of a disadvantage against European and Asian competitors, which benefit from export-credit agencies at home, that they will move production abroad. For now, they say they are getting along fine.

''This is not something that creates near-term financial risk for Boeing,'' said Dennis Muilenburg, the company's chief executive, on a conference call with reporters last week.

Indeed, one risk for the bank is that its absence hasn't had any immediate shock. ''The Export-Import Bank expired,'' said Sen. Ted Cruz (R., Texas), one of the bank's loudest critics, at a recent rally on Capitol Hill. ''You notice the sky hasn't fallen?''

Critics of the bank say Washington shouldn't be picking winners and losers, and that any hardship for businesses is part of a necessary recalibration.

The bank says that view is short-sighted. ''When our charter lapses, you won't read about massive layoffs in the paper. Small businesses don't put out press releases when they lose out on a sale,'' Fred Hochberg, chairman of the Ex-Im Bank who in the 1990s worked closely with entrepreneurs as an official at the Small Business Administration, said before the bank closed last month.

Around 90% of loans backed by Ex-Im Bank last year went to small businesses, the highest level in more than a decade. Small businesses represent a much smaller share of loans by dollar volume, around 25%, because Ex-Im backs expensive loans for aircraft and other industrial equipment makers.

Some businesses and their workers say that count overlooks firms that don't export directly but feed into supply chains. Yanke Machine Shop Inc. in Boise, Idaho, was one of 22 different U.S. companies that fulfilled an order for 150 pieces of construction equipment worth $37 million for a 2013 engineering project in Cameroon.

''What a lapse does is it kills opportunity. You've got to have opportunity before you have work on the floor,'' said Dirk Christison, who works in customer support for the heavy-steel fabrication company.

At risk could be deals like one that Ray Garcia Jr., the principal of an energy consulting firm that arranges investment for infrastructure projects in Latin America, has put together to export American equipment for a $300 million gas-to-liquid plant in Paraguay.

He said the project is one of three in South and Central America that is now in limbo. ''We have spent two years developing these projects just to have the rug pulled out from under us for political reasons,'' said Mr. Garcia, a self-described conservative Republican from Houston.

Mr. Garcia said that without Ex-Im, the deal would go to a foreign company or large multinational, leaving his U.S. manufacturers without contracts. ''Small businesses that do not have $1 billion in capital to facilitate projects like these do benefit and can compete on a global platform armed with Ex-Im Bank,'' he said.

Ex-Im's Bank limbo state stands in contrast to those of a similar agency. When the Small Business Administration last week stopped accepting new loans under its flagship program, which reached its borrowing limit on Thursday, the House and Senate quickly passed an extension.

Because existing loans aren't imperiled by the Ex-Im Bank's shutdown, the lapse created a ''soft landing'' for most customers, said Gary Mendell, president of Meridian Finance Group in Santa Monica, Calif., which arranges financing for exporters. ''We've been telling customers to see if you can stand tough until the end of July,'' he said.

As the prospect of Ex-Im Bank's reauthorization grows more distant, Mr. Mendell said more firms will run into difficulty as their working-capital loans or credit insurance expires. An overlooked casualty, he added, is that small businesses that have never exported have virtually no financing options right now.

''If the private sector were interested in doing this, they would be doing it by now,'' said Mr. Mendell.

Even the bank's critics have taken note of the potential plight of small firms. On the eve of the agency's shutdown last month, Sen. David Vitter (R., La.), expressed alarm that financing for thousands of small businesses might be at stake and said the agency should come up with a way for those companies to secure financing from the SBA.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1¾ minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK), a member of the Financial Services Committee and a leader in the effort to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the Chamber to reject the rule so that we might, indeed, offer an amendment to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank for three reasons.

One, it is the will of the United States Congress; two, it does good; three, if we don't do it, great harm will be visited upon the American economy.

It has already been, I think, very clearly demonstrated it is the will of this body, both in the Senate and here.

I do want to remind you that, for 81 years, 16 times, Democrats and Republicans, no matter how conservative or how liberal, the United States has reauthorized the Export-Import Bank. It does good. That is why they do it.

In fact, I would respectfully suggest that the votes were there in Rules Committee yesterday to allow this amendment. The good gentleman from Texas who chairs—and he is a gentleman; he is a good gentleman—opened up his comments by saying 9,000 jobs in and around his district in the State of Texas, attributable to the Export-Import Bank, they hang in the balance.

It does good—last year, 164,000 jobs supported by the Export-Import Bank, $675 million transferred to the Treasury. It reduces the deficit. It creates jobs. Why don't we want more of this? Call me crazy, I guess.

If we don't do it, harm will come to us. Read this morning's Wall Street Journal. Small businesses already—not prospectively—are already suffering job loss in States throughout this great country.

The fact of the matter is not reauthorizing does constitute unilateral disarmament. About 3 weeks ago, two academics, one from Canada, one from New York, concluded the big winner if we fail to reauthorize. It is China. They are rubbing their hands. They are rubbing their hands.

Listen, this isn't about software or apples or film.

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

Mr. POLIS. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. HECK of Washington. It is about our manufacturing base. Who says we don't need more good manufacturing jobs? We need more good manufacturing jobs.

Let me conclude on this note. Ominously, and without drama, hear me, from my heart to your ears. In the very near future, major manufacturers will announce that they are offshoring certain manufacturing capacity because they have to, to compete in a global economy. The global economy has increased fivefold since 1980.

Get in the game, people. Reauthorize the Export-Import Bank. Defeat the rule.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for his kind words, not only of truth, but also I want to thank him for coming up and being with several other Members who sat through hours' worth of debate and discussion.

Mr. HECK served honorably well yesterday, and he does again today, and I thank him very much.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I say to my colleague from Texas, we have so many speakers on our side of the aisle—in fact, both sides of the aisle—folks like Mr. FINCHER and others who want to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

If he has additional time, I know that our Members would also appreciate the opportunity to talk about it, as our time is running short.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1¾ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE), a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

I urge a ''no'' vote on this rule so that we can bring up, as my colleagues have said, something that ought to be done in a bipartisan fashion, with little significant opposition, and that is the reauthorization of an entity that helps drive the American economy, put Americans to work, and helps us to compete in an increasingly competitive global environment, and that is the Export-Import Bank.

□ 1330

In 2012, Ex-Im was passed with 330 votes in the House, 78 in the Senate, 60 percent of Republicans in both bodies supporting the Export-Import Bank, joining Democrats in doing so.

There is so much partisanship that invades and infects this place. But when it comes to American jobs, supporting American manufacturers, putting hard-working Americans to work in jobs that have higher wages, we have great discussions here about the growing inequality in wages.

We don't all agree on the solutions. But one solution we ought to agree on is the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank because we know export jobs pay higher wages. This ought to be a no-brainer.

There are 59,000 jobs in my own State of Michigan as a result of the Export-Import Bank and the work that they do. In the last 6 years, there have been $200 billion in exports.

We can have big disagreements on how we ought to deal with income inequality in this country, but we ought not have any disagreement when we see the Export-Import Bank, which delivers money to the Federal Treasury, helps us deal with that problem, puts Americans to work, and makes us more competitive. We ought to do this in a bipartisan fashion, and we ought to do it now.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy, and I appreciate the way he framed this rule debate.

Mr. Speaker, we have sort of a hodgepodge here of items that really deserve careful, sustained attention. There is no reason to lump this together. These are important items. And, sadly, the way it has been structured shuts down debate.

There is no room under this rule for the Ex-Im Bank. I appreciate person after person coming to the floor, acknowledging that there is broad bipartisan interest in the reauthorization of the Ex-Im Bank and no rational reason to reject it. It is going to have serious consequences, as my friend from Washington pointed out.

But there is another area that we are discussing here today that could also make a huge difference for our economy because we are dodging again our responsibilities to deal with a country that is falling apart as it is falling behind.

My friend from Texas was too polite. The reason we don't have a 6-year reauthorization is because the House has not met its responsibility to outline how we pay for it. We are still trying to pay for 2015 infrastructure with 1993 dollars.

Now we have got legislation that actually mirrors what Ronald Reagan did in 1982, when he called upon Congress to come back, raise the user fee 125 percent, and be able to put hundreds of thousands of Americans to work, and maintain our roads and bridges and transit. We are not doing that.

We have legislation in Ways and Means that has the broadest support of any major piece of legislation in Congress—organized labor, business, contractors, truckers, AAA, engineers—all committed to raising the user fee. They say: Charge us more so that we are going to be able to thrive.

My friend from Colorado pointed out that the American public is paying now in congestion, in damage to their cars.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Work next week. Fund the transportation bill. Let the committee know what parameters they have and be able to revitalize and rebuild this country. It is time for us to step up.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, our colleagues are making really, really good points about what we need to do.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania, BILL SHUSTER, and the Republican majority is committed to doing exactly what they have talked about: getting our work done.

In fairness, it has taken the United States Senate until this week, and they have a 1,000-page transportation bill that we are not simply going to say: Let's just agree to that.

It is going to come over to us after they have done their work. With great respect, we are trying to make sure that we are continuing the funding. We are using mechanisms that would be available.

The right thing to do is to measure three times and saw once. We are not going to accept, by unanimous consent or another agreement, a 1,000-page bill.

On the Republican side, we read bills before we pass them.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK), a leader in the bipartisan efforts to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank and a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that the first, most immediate damage as a result of our failure to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank will be visited upon small businesses.

It occurs to me that a little bit of color in that regard would serve us well, giving the benefit of the doubt to those who are opposing our opposition to the rule so that we can reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

Let me give you the data. The Export-Import Bank has approximately 90 percent of its transactions going to small businesses, about 90 percent.

Most of us tend to think about those as all direct loans, but they aren't. The fact of the matter is the bulk of them are what we would call accounts receivable insurance.

But there are also revolving lines of credit. There are also loan guarantees, not actual direct loans. And these, again, are small businesses.

These are businesses like Manhasset Specialty Company in Yakima, Washington, which makes music stands and has a global market. Thirty-five percent of its sales are exports, and a good portion of them are assisted by the Export-Import Bank.

In my district, Pexco in Fife, Washington, makes traffic control equipment. They are growing their export business with the assistance of the Export-Import Bank. So it is the small businesses that first will feel the damage.

But for those of you who say, yes, but the biggest share of the dollars go to big businesses, let's go back to Economics 101.

A lot of people point to Boeing. Ladies and gentlemen, Boeing does not manufacture airplanes. If that surprises you, please pay attention to what I am about to say.

Boeing does not manufacture airplanes. They design them. They assemble them with the assistance of 15,000 businesses in their supply chain, about half of whom are small businesses.

In the tiny town of Puyallup, relatively speaking, in my district, there are 17 businesses within the city limits whose principal customer is Boeing.

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

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Small businesses will be hurt first. Over the long term, big businesses will be hurt.

I did not say earlier lightly. I did not say earlier in hyperbole that we will have major announcements causing grievous damage to the manufacturing base of America. We cannot allow that to happen.

We simply must, for the sake of small businesses and for the sake of our manufacturing base, reauthorize the Export-Import Bank. It reduces the deficit. It creates jobs.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of my time.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question so we can bring forward the bipartisan effort to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

Now, again, I have a great deal of sympathy and respect for my colleagues who believe that these kinds of back-door subsidies have no place in a global trade regime. That is a reasonable and defensible viewpoint.

The proper avenue to advocate for that is multilaterally. There are a lot of ways that companies have and will and governments have and do try to give themselves a nationalistic advantage in international trade.

In the competition between Airbus and Boeing alone, books could be written about the efforts of both sides—whether it is our side through military contracts; whether it is their side, Europe—to give back-door allowable subsidies that put their own companies at an advantage.

If we unilaterally fail to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, we are putting American exporters at a disadvantage because the dozens of other countries that engage in these allowable kinds of credit facilities will still do so to the detriment of American jobs and American businesses.

We recently had a debate in these very Chambers about trade promotion authority. Soon there will be discussions about TPP and T-TIP.

Where was that discussion around TPA in the instructions to the President about credit facilities and Export-Import Bank and what would and wouldn't be allowable?

These kinds of discussions need to be had multilaterally. To unilaterally disarm makes no sense.

Even if one ideologically believes that we should not be engaging in these efforts, surely what is more important and what trumps that is to make sure that this is not a part of the global trade regime.

So long as it is, for America not to engage in this allowable practice of credit facilities extended through the Export-Import Bank puts American jobs at a disadvantage, will lead to further outsourcing of American jobs and hurt American businesses.

Mr. Speaker, this rule covers two significant, but wholly unrelated, bills.

We have heard arguments here in this limited time, this limited debate, about Federal highway funding, about veterans' care and VA workers, about the Export-Import Bank.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that many viewers are confused as to what we are even talking about or how is it even possible that, in 1 hour, we are covering the transportation needs of our country, the VA system, and a program allowable under trade rules that helps make American companies more competitive.

Unfortunately, rather than continuing our work next week, the majority has put several pieces of disparate legislation into a grab bag in a smoky backroom manner that, unfortunately, will continue to fail to address the most important transportation concerns or the already expiration of the Export-Import Bank before this body goes home for a month.

It is unfortunate that, under this rule, this institution is not even allowed to bring forward an amendment we know would pass to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

It is a shame that veterans' issues have somehow been combined with a highway issue and a minibus that detracts from transparency.

That is why I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question. Vote ''no'' on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I want to thank not only the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), but also our colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle who I thought most generously fought this battle today.

The bottom line is that they know and we know, Mr. Speaker, that we are addressing two vitally important issues that Congress must step up to the plate on.

One is a request that comes directly from the VA, for us to fund a gap of $3.4 billion that is necessary to fund hospitals of the VA to make sure that they are able to provide services to our veterans. It is critical. To vote against that I think is a mistake.

I think to vote for a chance where Republicans are trying to balance the needs through not only the appropriators—HAL ROGERS, our chairman, JEFF MILLER, our Veterans Committee chairman, are trying to come together, Mr. Speaker, to put together the money and the need to run the business based upon a reality discussion with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs of their need to run the business, to have the money, but also to have the managerial abilities to move their employees that are not performing satisfactorily, employees who do have an oath as healthcare providers to do their very best and to be honest about the scheduling and the proper procedures necessary to our veterans.

□ 1345

What this rule is about and the underlying legislation is vital—vital—to our Nation's veterans. That is why we are here today.

Now, secondly, we are here because Republicans want to make sure that we are faithful. We understand that, in each of our congressional districts, that we are active and involved to try and ensure that the roads and bridges and railways and ports and all these activities that deal with infrastructure and transportation are continuing down a pathway without us getting frustrated, without us throwing up our hands and giving up, but actually to work with the existing chairman, who is doing an awesome job, BILL SHUSTER, to make sure that we are putting forth the money—PAUL RYAN, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee—trying to find the money necessary, lots of hard work, hours of discussion, moving towards a correct target.

In this process, we have our colleagues on the other side of this wall—who are literally there now as they are working in the Rotunda—to move legislation; we are allowing them that time because they are moving a transportation bill as we speak, but it is a 1,000-page bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am not in favor and I think my colleagues in here are not in favor and BILL SHUSTER is not, which is really what matters, as the chairman, to say give me a shot at looking at the bill when they finish it.

Speaker BOEHNER is saying let's make sure we deal with the things that must be dealt with before we go on our work time back home for the month, where we go back home and deal with the American people, because we plan to do this. That is what we are doing.

This is not unusual; it is perfectly normal, but I think we are doing a heck of a job and the right thing to address the issues—veterans, straight up, money, the ability to run their business right, so that we know we have done what we can do; and, secondly, to move transportation.

I think every single Member of this body, Democrat and Republican, should support these because they are worthy ideas about moving us forward, our country. We can look at the American people straight on and say we have addressed two of the issues that were on our plate.

I urge adoption of the rule. I know that our colleagues want to get moving today, so I am going to look forward to debate that will follow. I urge support of the underlying legislation in the bills.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose this rule and support the gentleman's motion to defeat the previous question—in order to allow for a vote on the Export-Import Bank reauthorization.

Re-authorizing the Export-Import Bank is an economic imperative and letting it lapse before Congress goes on Recess is completely irresponsible and inexcusable.

The bank is an unbridled, market-driven success story which has broad bipartisan support in both Houses of this Congress as well as support from the majority of Americans.

The bank supports hundreds of thousands of good paying jobs in this country. If we fail to act, we will shut off a lifeline for many of our small businesses and exporters.

In my District alone, the Bank has supported thousands of small business and manufacturing jobs. These are good jobs in a very high-need area that would not have been possible without the Bank, and which now are in danger.

Mr. Speaker, we should let the will of the people work its way and allow a vote on the Reauthorization of the Ex-Im Bank.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 388 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

Strike section 2 of the resolution and insert:

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution, it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3236) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided among and controlled by the respective chairs and ranking minority members of the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Ways and Means, and Veterans' Affairs; (2) the amendment specified in section 3 of this resolution, which shall be considered as pending following the conclusion of such debate, shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Financial Services or their respective designees, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for a division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. The amendment referred to in section 2 of this resolution is as follows:

Page 3, after the table of contents, insert the following:

TITLE V—EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Sec. 5001. Short title.

Subtitle A—Taxpayer Protection Provisions and Increased Accountability

Sec. 5101. Reduction in authorized amount of outstanding loans, guarantees, and insurance.
Sec. 5102. Increase in loss reserves.
Sec. 5103. Review of fraud controls.
Sec. 5104. Office of Ethics.
Sec. 5105. Chief Risk Officer.
Sec. 5106. Risk Management Committee.
Sec. 5107. Independent audit of bank portfolio.
Sec. 5108. Pilot program for reinsurance.

Subtitle B—Promotion of Small Business Exports

Sec. 5201. Increase in small business lending requirements.
Sec. 5202. Report on programs for small and medium-sized businesses.

Subtitle C—Modernization of Operations

Sec. 5301. Electronic payments and documents.
Sec. 5302. Reauthorization of information technology updating.

Subtitle D—General Provisions
Sec. 5401. Extension of authority.
Sec. 5402. Certain updated loan terms and amounts.
Subtitle E—Other Matters
Sec. 5501. Prohibition on discrimination based on industry.
Sec. 5502. Negotiations to end export credit financing.
Sec. 5503. Study of financing for information and communications technology systems.

At the end of the bill, add the following:

TITLE V—EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

SECTION 5001. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015''.

Subtitle A—Taxpayer Protection Provisions and Increased Accountability

SEC. 5101. REDUCTION IN AUTHORIZED AMOUNT OF OUTSTANDING LOANS, GUARANTEES, AND INSURANCE.

Section 6(a) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635e(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) APPLICABLE AMOUNT DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'applicable amount', for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019, means $135,000,000,000.

''(3) FREEZING OF LENDING CAP IF DEFAULTRATE IS 2 PERCENT OR MORE.—If the rate calculated under section 8(g)(1) is 2 percent or more for a quarter, the Bank may not exceed the amount of loans, guarantees, and insurance outstanding on the last day of that quarter until the rate calculated under section 8(g)(1) is less than 2 percent.''.

SEC. 5102. INCREASE IN LOSS RESERVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635e) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b) RESERVE REQUIREMENT.—The Bank shall build to and hold in reserve, to protect against future losses, an amount that is not less than 5 percent of the aggregate amount of disbursed and outstanding loans, guarantees, and insurance of the Bank.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5103. REVIEW OF FRAUD CONTROLS.

Section 17(b) of the Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2012 (12 U.S.C. 635a–6(b)) is amended to read as follows:

''(b) REVIEW OF FRAUD CONTROLS.—Not later than 4 years after the date of the enactment of the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015, and every 4 years thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

''(1) review the adequacy of the design and effectiveness of the controls used by the Export-Import Bank of the United States to prevent, detect, and investigate fraudulent applications for loans and guarantees and the compliance by the Bank with the controls, including by auditing a sample of Bank transactions; and

''(2) submit a written report regarding the findings of the review and providing such recommendations with respect to the controls described in paragraph (1) as the Comptroller General deems appropriate to—

''(A) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

''(B) the Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.''.

SEC. 5104. OFFICE OF ETHICS.

Section 3 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(k) OFFICE OF ETHICS.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an Office of Ethics within the Bank, which shall oversee all ethics issues within the Bank.

''(2) HEAD OF OFFICE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The head of the Office of Ethics shall be the Chief Ethics Officer, who shall report to the Board of Directors.

''(B) APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015, the Chief Ethics Officer shall be—

''(i) appointed by the President of the Bank from among persons—

''(I) with a background in law who have experience in the fields of law and ethics; and

''(II) who are not serving in a position requiring appointment by the President of the United States before being appointed to be Chief Ethics Officer; and

''(ii) approved by the Board.

''(C) DESIGNATED AGENCY ETHICS OFFICIAL.—The Chief Ethics Officer shall serve as the designated agency ethics official for the Bank pursuant to the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App. 101 et seq.).

''(3) DUTIES.—The Office of Ethics has jurisdiction over all employees of, and ethics matters relating to, the Bank. With respect to employees of the Bank, the Office of Ethics shall—

''(A) recommend administrative actions to establish or enforce standards of official conduct;

''(B) refer to the Office of the Inspector General of the Bank alleged violations of—

''(i) the standards of ethical conduct applicable to employees of the Bank under parts 2635 and 6201 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations;

''(ii) the standards of ethical conduct established by the Chief Ethics Officer; and

''(iii) any other laws, rules, or regulations governing the performance of official duties or the discharge of official responsibilities that are applicable to employees of the Bank;

''(C) report to appropriate Federal or State authorities substantial evidence of a violation of any law applicable to the performance of official duties that may have been disclosed to the Office of Ethics; and

''(D) render advisory opinions regarding the propriety of any current or proposed conduct of an employee or contractor of the Bank, and issue general guidance on such matters as necessary.''.

SEC. 5105. CHIEF RISK OFFICER.

Section 3 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635a), as amended by section 5104, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) CHIEF RISK OFFICER.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be a Chief Risk Officer of the Bank, who shall—

''(A) oversee all issues relating to risk within the Bank; and

''(B) report to the President of the Bank.

''(2) APPOINTMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015, the Chief Risk Officer shall be—

''(A) appointed by the President of the Bank from among persons—

''(i) with a demonstrated ability in the general management of, and knowledge of and extensive practical experience in, financial risk evaluation practices in large governmental or business entities; and

''(ii) who are not serving in a position requiring appointment by the President of the United States before being appointed to be Chief Risk Officer; and

''(B) approved by the Board.

''(3) DUTIES.—The duties of the Chief Risk Officer are—

''(A) to be responsible for all matters related to managing and mitigating all risk to which the Bank is exposed, including the programs and operations of the Bank;

''(B) to establish policies and processes for risk oversight, the monitoring of management compliance with risk limits, and the management of risk exposures and risk controls across the Bank;

''(C) to be responsible for the planning and execution of all Bank risk management activities, including policies, reporting, and systems to achieve strategic risk objectives;

''(D) to develop an integrated risk management program that includes identifying, prioritizing, measuring, monitoring, and managing internal control and operating risks and other identified risks;

''(E) to ensure that the process for risk assessment and underwriting for individual transactions considers how each such transaction considers the effect of the transaction on the concentration of exposure in the overall portfolio of the Bank, taking into account fees, collateralization, and historic default rates; and

''(F) to review the adequacy of the use by the Bank of qualitative metrics to assess the risk of default under various scenarios.''.

SEC. 5106. RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635a), as amended by sections 5104 and 5105, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(m) RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT—There is established a management committee to be known as the 'Risk Management Committee'.

''(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The membership of the Risk Management Committee shall be the members of the Board of Directors, with the President and First Vice President of the Bank serving as ex officio members.

''(3) DUTIES.—The duties of the Risk Management Committee shall be—

''(A) to oversee, in conjunction with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer of the Bank—

''(i) periodic stress testing on the entire Bank portfolio, reflecting different market, industry, and macroeconomic scenarios, and consistent with common practices of commercial and multilateral development banks; and

''(ii) the monitoring of industry, geographic, and obligor exposure levels; and

''(B) to review all required reports on the default rate of the Bank before submission to Congress under section 8(g).''.

(b) TERMINATION OF AUDIT COMMITTEE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States shall revise the bylaws of the Bank to terminate the Audit Committee established by section 7 of the bylaws.

SEC. 5107. INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF BANK PORTFOLIO.

(a) AUDIT.—The Inspector General of the Export-Import Bank of the United States shall conduct an audit or evaluation of the portfolio risk management procedures of the Bank, including a review of the implementation by the Bank of the duties assigned to the Chief Risk Officer under section 3(1) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended by section 5105.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and

not less frequently than every 3 years thereafter, the Inspector General shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a written report containing all findings and determinations made in car rying out subsection (a).

SEC. 5108. PILOT PROGRAM FOR REINSURANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635 et seq.), the Export-Import Bank of the United States (in this section referred to as the ''Bank'') may establish a pilot program under which the Bank may enter into contracts and other arrangements to share risks associated with the provision of guarantees, insurance, or credit, or the participation in the extension of credit, by the Bank under that Act.

(b) LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT OF RISK-SHARING.—

(1) PER CONTRACT OR OTHER ARRANGEMENT.—The aggregate amount of liability the Bank may transfer through risk-sharing pursuant to a contract or other arrangement entered into under subsection (a) may not exceed $1,000,000,000.

(2) PER YEAR.—The aggregate amount of liability the Bank may transfer through risk-sharing during a fiscal year pursuant to contracts or other arrangements entered into under subsection (a) during that fiscal year may not exceed $10,000,000,000.

(c) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2019, the Bank shall submit to Congress a written report that contains a detailed analysis of the use of the pilot program carried out under subsection (a) during the year preceding the submission of the report.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect, impede, or revoke any authority of the Bank.

(e) TERMINATION.—The pilot program carried out under subsection (a) shall terminate on September 30, 2019.

Subtitle B—Promotion of Small Business Exports

SEC. 5201. INCREASE IN SMALL BUSINESS LENDING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2(b)(1)(E)(v) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635(b)(1)(E)(v)) is amended by striking ''20 percent'' and inserting ''25 percent''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to fiscal year 2016 and each fiscal year thereafter.

SEC. 5202. REPORT ON PROGRAMS FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635g) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(k) REPORT ON PROGRAMS FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES.—The Bank shall include in its annual report to Congress under subsection (a) a report on the programs of the Bank for United States businesses with less than $250,000,000 in annual sales.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to the report of the Export-Import Bank of the United States submitted to Congress under section 8 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635g) for the first year that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle C—Modernization of Operations

SEC. 5301. ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS AND DOCUMENTS.

Section 2(b)(1) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635(b)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(M) Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015, the Bank shall implement policies—

''(i) to accept electronic documents with respect to transactions whenever possible, including copies of bills of lading, certifications, and compliance documents, in such manner so as not to undermine any potential civil or criminal enforcement related to the transactions; and

''(ii) to accept electronic payments in all of its programs.''.

SEC. 5302. REAUTHORIZATION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPDATING.

Section 3(j) of the Export-Import Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635a(j)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''2012, 2013, and 2014'' and inserting ''2015 through 2019'';

(2) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking ''(I) the funds'' and inserting ''(i) the funds''; and (3) in paragraph (3), by striking ''2012, 2013, and 2014'' and inserting ''2015 through 2019''.

Subtitle D—General Provisions

SEC. 5401. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635f) is amended by striking ''2014'' and inserting ''2019''.

(b) DUAL-USE EXPORTS.—Section 1(c) of Public Law 103–428 (12 U.S.C. 635 note) is amended by striking ''September 30, 2014'' and inserting ''the date on which the authority of the Export-Import Bank of the United States expires under section of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635f)''.

(c) SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—Section 2(b)(9)(B)(iii) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635(b)(9)(B)(iii)) is amended by striking ''September 30, 2014'' and inserting ''the date on which the authority of the Bank expires under section 7''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the earlier of the date of the enactment of this Act or June 30, 2015.

SEC. 5402. CERTAIN UPDATED LOAN TERMS AND AMOUNTS.

(a) LOAN TERMS FOR MEDIUM-TERM FINANCING.—

Section 2(a)(2)(A) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635(a)(2)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(iii) with principal amounts of not more than $25,000,000; and''.

(b) COMPETITIVE OPPORTUNITIES RELATING TO INSURANCE.—Section 2(d)(2) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635(d)(2)) is amended by striking ''$10,000,000'' and inserting ''$25,000,000''.

(c) EXPORT AMOUNTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS LOANS.—Section 3(g)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635a(g)(3)) is amended by striking ''$10,000,000'' and inserting ''$25,000,000''.

(d) CONSIDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS.—Section (a)(1)(A) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (12 U.S.C. 635i–5(a)(1)(A)) is amended by striking ''$10,000,000 or more'' and inserting the following: ''$25,000,000 (or, if less than $25,000,000, the threshold established pursuant to international agreements, including the Common Approaches for Officially Supported Export Credits and Environmental and Social Due Diligence, as adopted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Council on June 28, 2012, and the risk-management framework adopted by financial institutions for determining, assessing, and managing environmental and social risk in projects (commonly referred to as the 'Equator Principles')) or more''.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to fiscal year 2016 and each fiscal year thereafter.

Subtitle E—Other Matters

SEC. 5501. PROHIBITION ON DISCRIMINATION BASED ON INDUSTRY.

Section 2 of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 (6 U.S.C. 635 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(k) PROHIBITION ON DISCRIMINATION BASED ON INDUSTRY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in this Act, the Bank may not—

''(A) deny an application for financing based solely on the industry, sector, or business that the application concerns; or

''(B) promulgate or implement policies that discriminate against an application based solely on the industry, sector, or business that the application concerns.

''(2) APPLICABILITY.—The prohibitions under paragraph (1) apply only to applications for financing by the Bank for projects concerning the exploration, development, production, or export of energy sources and the generation or transmission of electrical power, or combined heat and power, regardless of the energy source involved.''.

SEC. 5502. NEGOTIATIONS TO END EXPORT CREDIT FINANCING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 11 of the Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2012 (12 U.S.C. 635a–5) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking ''Secretary of the Treasury (in this section referred to as the 'Secretary')'' and inserting ''President''; and

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking ''(OECD)'' and inserting ''(in this section referred to as the 'OECD')''; and

(ii) by striking ''ultimate goal of eliminating'' and inserting ''possible goal of eliminating, before the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015,'';

(2) in subsection (b), by striking ''Secretary'' each place it appears and inserting ''President''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(c) REPORT ON STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015, the President shall submit to Congress a proposal, and a strategy for achieving the proposal, that the United States Government will pursue with other major exporting countries, including OECD members and non-OECD members, to eliminate over a period of not more than 10 years subsidized export-fmancing programs, tied aid, export credits, and all other forms of government-supported export subsidies.

''(d) NEGOTIATIONS WITH NON-OECD MEMBERS.—The President shall initiate and pursue negotiations with countries that are not OECD members to bring those countries into a multilateral agreement establishing rules 3 and limitations on officially supported export credits.

''(e) ANNUAL REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015, and annually thereafter through calendar year 2019, the President shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report on the progress of any negotiations described in subsection (d).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection

(a) shall apply with respect to reports required to be submitted under section 11(b) of the Export-Import Bank Reauthorization Act of 2012 (12 U.S.C. 635a–5(b)) after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5503. STUDY OF FINANCING FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS.

(a) ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY USE OF BANK PRODUCTS.—The Export-Import Bank of the United States (in this section referred to as the ''Bank'') shall conduct a study of the extent to which the products offered by the Bank are available and used by companies that export information and communications technology services and related goods.

(b) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the study required by subsection (a), the Bank shall examine the following:

(1) The number of jobs in the United States that are supported by the export of information and communications technology services and related goods, and the degree to which access to financing will increase exports of such services and related goods.

(2) The reduction in the financing by the Bank of exports of information and communications technology services from 2003 through 2014.

(3) The activities of foreign export credit agencies to facilitate the export of information and communications technology services and related goods.

(4) Specific proposals for how the Bank could provide additional financing for the exportation of information and communications technology services and related goods through risk-sharing with other export credit agencies and other third parties.

(5) Proposals for new products the Bank could offer to provide financing for exports of information and communications technology services and related goods, including—

(A) the extent to which the Bank is authorized to offer new products;

(B) the extent to which the Bank would need additional authority to offer new products to meet the needs of the information and communications technology industry;

(C) specific proposals for changes in law that would enable the Bank to provide increased financing for exports of information and communications technology services and related goods in compliance with the credit and risk standards of the Bank;

(D) specific proposals that would enable the Bank to provide increased outreach to the information and communications technology industry about the products the Bank offers; and

(E) specific proposals for changes in law that would enable the Bank to provide the financing to build information and communications technology infrastructure, in compliance with the credit and risk standards of the Bank, to allow for market access opportunities for United States information and communications technology companies to provide services on the infrastructure being financed by the Bank.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Bank shall submit to Congress a report that contains the results of the study required by subsection (a).

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting the resolution, if ordered; and suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1300.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 242, nays 180, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 483]

YEAS—242

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

NAYS—180

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

NOT VOTING—11

Carney
Carter (TX)
Clawson (FL)
Costa
Engel
Eshoo
Levin
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Pelosi
Price, Tom
Wilson (FL)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1416

Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. KELLY of Illinois changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during rollcall vote No. 483. I would like to reflect that on rollcall vote No. 483 I would have voted "no."

(By unanimous consent, Mr. DENT was allowed to speak out of order.)

WASHINGTON KASTLES CHARITY CLASSIC

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I am gathered here today with some of my colleagues because we participated in the Washington Kastles Charity Classic. We had a wonderful time for charity.

I just wanted to mention this. The Washington Kastles, who were founded in 2008 and is the tennis team for the city of Washington, have made more than $1 million in charitable donations.

The Charity Classic is an extension of those efforts, with 100 percent of the ticket proceeds benefiting Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, or TAPS, the DC Public Education Fund, and Food & Friends.

Fans can choose which organization they support. It is a great cause.

We had a tennis match, Stars v. Stripes. I am sorry to report that the Stars defeated the Stripes, having been in the Stripes the last 3 years. They finally won one, but we are very excited for them. It is nice to be talking about something other than golf on the House floor.

I also wanted to acknowledge one person with us here today, Martina Hingis, who is in the audience. She is up there in the gallery. She just won Wimbledon Doubles Championship, women's and mixed doubles. She won both the women's doubles title and the mixed doubles title. She is on the Washington Kastles.

We just wanted to acknowledge all the folks who played: Representatives SCOTT, DOLD, YODER, BUSTOS and BEATTY. Where is JARED HUFFMAN with the big serve? He is back there.

We had a wonderful time. Senator FLAKE, Senator MERKLEY, and the rest of the Kastles could not be with us today. They are traveling. But we just wanted to thank them all for this wonderful effort. We need more tennis.

At this time we would like to present this trophy, this cup, from the Stripes to the Stars, who defeated us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 243, noes 183, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 484]

AYES—243

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

NOES—183

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Grayson

Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takai
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—7

Carney
Carter (TX)
Clawson (FL)
Engel
Levin
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Price, Tom

□ 1427

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FIRST RESPONDER ANTHRAX PREPAREDNESS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1300) to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 424, nays 0, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 485]

YEAS—424

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

NOT VOTING—9

Carney
Carter (TX)
Clawson (FL)
Engel
Foster
Jones
Levin
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Price, Tom

□ 1435

Mr. SANFORD changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

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

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous material in the RECORD on H.R. 1994, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 388 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1994.

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

□ 1538

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1994) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or

misconduct, and for other purposes, with Mr. FORTENBERRY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, my bill would provide the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs with yet another tool to instill accountability, much-needed accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs, by allowing him or her to remove or demote any employee for poor performance or misconduct.

The bill also contains language to protect—and let me say that again to the Members here on the floor, to protect—whistleblowers by stipulating that an employee may not be removed under this new authority if they have an open claim at the Office of Special Counsel until that claim is closed.

Now, to add even more protections for those who blow the whistle at VA, my bill would also set up a new process to be used in addition to any other process that is currently allowed by law, which would protect whistleblowers from retaliation by removal while they bring issues to light up through their chain of command.

My bill also makes changes to the Senior Executive Service performance evaluation system. It also allows the Secretary to recoup a portion of an SES employee's retirement benefits if they are convicted of a felony related to their work performance and limits paid administrative leave to 14 days within a 1-year timeframe for any VA employee. H.R. 1994, as amended, would also extend to 18 months the probationary period for all new VA employees to ensure a complete evaluation before offering permanent status.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, my bill requires that GAO do a study on time and space that is spent on union activities. I agree with all of my colleagues that a great majority of VA's employees are hard-working public servants who are dedicated to providing the quality health care and benefits that our veterans have earned, and I am sure that the majority of these employees who are dedicated to the mission of the Department are just as frustrated as most of us are that problem employees continue to be moved to new positions or placed in a corner as opposed to removing them from the payroll.

We have seen how the presence of poor performers and misconduct ranging from unethical practices to outright criminal behavior can spread like a cancer throughout the workforce. When the Secretary comes across this presence of poor performance or misconduct, as we have seen time and time again across our country, such as Phoenix, Denver, central Alabama, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, in my home State of Florida, and in many other places across our Nation, it is nearly impossible to remove that cancer in a reasonable amount of time due to current civil service rules.

This is not just my view. A recent GAO study found that it can take 6 months to a year, or sometimes significantly longer, Mr. Chairman, to fire poor performing government employees. More telling, last month, VA's Deputy Secretary Gibson sat before our Committee on Veterans' Affairs and admitted that it was too difficult to fire a substandard employee. We should all agree that it defies common sense for it to take many months or even years to fire a poor performing employee at VA.

We, as Members of Congress, and the American citizens appreciate the sacrifices that our veterans have made and always argue that they deserve nothing but the highest quality care and treatment, but in my view, bad employees mean bad customer service and an impediment to the quality services that our veterans have earned. If we truly want for our veterans to have the very best, then the status quo simply is no longer acceptable.

I know there are concerns that this bill will hurt the Department's ability to recruit and retain good employees and hurt employee morale, but I think nothing could be further from the truth. The best way to improve morale is to get rid of the causes of the dysfunction that we currently see at the VA. Nobody enjoys working for an organization that fails to hold poor performance accountable, and the only employees the VA should want to recruit are those who want to work in an environment where they know everyone is respected and can be held accountable for their actions.

Some have also said that this bill is not needed because VA fires employees all the time, but the raw numbers, Mr. Chairman, just don't tell that story. Following a year in which we witnessed the biggest scandal in VA history, only three—let me repeat, three—employees of a workforce of over 340,000 people have been successfully fired for wait time manipulation. These numbers, or lack thereof, make it clear that more work needs to be done to turn the tide at VA and change the culture within the Department.

□ 1445

That is why this legislation is not punitive but is necessary if we truly want the Secretary to make the changes this Congress, the American people, and, most importantly, our veterans expect to see made.

I know that the unions oppose this and continue to compare my bill to current law in an attempt to illustrate what they think my bill is lacking, in their opinion; but comparing my bill to current law ignores the far too often egregious effects of current civil service laws which have contributed to the scandals at VA.

Yes, the bill before us today is different from current law, because the current law needs to be changed, and that is what I and many of my colleagues are trying to accomplish with this legislation. Despite our attempts to reach a measure of common ground with the unions, they have made it clear from the beginning that pretty much anything but the status quo will not garner their support.

Well, we have proven that the status quo is not working. It is failing the mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and it is failing the veterans the VA is supposed to serve. Mr. Chairman, it is time for a change. The Secretary needs the ability to make real reforms, and he needs to be able to do it quicker than the current average timeline of 6 to 12 months to remove a single employee.

It has also come to my attention that the administration has recently come out saying that they strongly oppose the bill and could potentially veto it if it arrives at the President's desk; but this removal authority for all VA employees is modeled after the same authority provided in the Choice Act that was passed by the House and the Senate and signed by the President last summer, the same authority that, at the bill signing almost exactly this time last year, the President said: ''If you engage in an unethical practice, if you cover up a serious problem, you should be fired . . . It shouldn't be that difficult.''

Mr. Chair, I am not sure why the President has changed his position almost exactly a year later.

The voice of the unions should not be heard over the voice of our veterans. We need to continue to push for the same change we pushed for last year. Now is not the time to change our belief in the need for greater accountability within VA.

Our veterans still expect us to continue to advocate for them as more and more of VA's missteps are brought to light every single day, whether they are on the front page of the paper or not. We cannot continue to put the needs of employees whose performance or misconduct would not be tolerated in the private sector ahead of our Nation's veterans because we are scared of change or because we don't want to upset the unions.

Ladies and gentlemen, if we do not at least try to give the Secretary the tools he or she needs to hold VA employees accountable, then we as a Congress are just as culpable for any future VA failures as the antiquated civil service laws that foster those failures now.

There is not a doubt in my mind that all of my colleagues here today care for our Nation's veterans; but today, we can decide to stand with our veterans or we can decide to stand with the status quo, which I believe has failed them and the American public for far too long.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, July 27, 2015.

Hon. JEFF MILLER,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write concerning H.R. 1994, the VA Accountability Act of 2015, as amended by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs. As you know, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs received an original referral and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform a secondary referral when the bill was introduced on April 23, 2015. I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House of Representatives in an expeditious manner, and accordingly, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will forego action on the bill, as amended.

The Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1994, as amended, at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. Further, I request your support for the appointment of conferees from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform during any House-Senate conference convened on this or related legislation.

Finally, I would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Sincerely,

JASON CHAFFETZ.
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, July 27, 2015.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CHAFFETZ: In reference to your letter on July 27, 2015, I write to confirm our mutual understanding regarding H.R. 1994, as amended, the ''VA Accountability Act of 2015.''

I appreciate the house Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's waiver of consideration of provisions under its jurisdiction and its subject matter as specified in your letter. I acknowledge that the waiver was granted only to expedite floor consideration of H.R. 1994, as amended, and does not in any way waive or diminish the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's jurisdictional interests over this legislation or similar legislation. I will support a request from the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform for appointment to any House-Senate conference on H.R. 1994, as amended. Finally, I will also support your request to include a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter in the Congressional Record during floor consideration.

Again, thank you for your assistance with these matters.

With warm personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF MILLER,
Chairman.

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

I rise in opposition to H.R. 1994. We are all frustrated that the VA is not moving fast enough to hold bad employees accountable, but I do not believe H.R. 1994 would lead to real, long-term accountability at the VA. In fact, I believe it would have the opposite effect by possibly shielding poor-performing VA employees from ever being removed.

This bill violates longstanding Supreme Court precedent regarding our Constitution's promise of due process rights. Our Constitution guarantees that we cannot be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. Our veterans were willing to lay down their lives to defend this basic promise.

The Supreme Court of the United States has determined that our Constitution gives Federal employees the right to due process, meaning fair notice and a chance to respond, before losing their jobs. As lawmakers, we do not have the power to revoke this constitutional principle of fairness and due process for a select group of people, no matter how outraged we may feel. I believe it is wrong to assume that VA employees are guilty until proven innocent.

If H.R. 1994 were enacted, I believe courts could very well overturn any removals as a violation of those employees' due process rights. They could then reinstate and give backpay to those who were removed. Bad employees would become permanent fixtures at the VA.

We all agree that VA needs to use the current tools it has more vigorously to remove poor-performing employees, but we should not throw out important constitutional protections to arbitrary actions simply because some claim it is too difficult to follow the law or be faithful to our basic principles of fairness.

H.R. 1994 would provide a new tool to VA managers, but perhaps not the tool imagined by its supporters. Bad managers and political appointees would have the ability to threaten the livelihoods of honest VA workers trying to follow VA regulations and policy, thus reinforcing the culture of fear and reluctance to speak out against poor management or malfeasance at the VA. If these employees were fired, they would have very little opportunity to tell their side of the story.

H.R. 1994 would make VA the only at-will workplace within the Federal Government. Veterans desperately need our Nation's top doctors, nurses, and counselors to choose to work at the VA, and it is already hard enough to recruit them away from the private sector.

An article last week in USA Today found that VA has 41,500 unfilled medical jobs, ''forcing vets into costly private care.'' Removing basic civil service protections—and basic fairness—would make VA an even less desirable place to work and add to these recruiting woes.

Keep in mind that over 30 percent of VA employees are veterans themselves. They deserve better than to find themselves in a workplace that strips them of basic constitutional protections—again, protections that they fought to defend.

This bill is nothing more than an attempt to destroy the civil service using the VA as a test case. It would empower the very individuals who have often perpetuated the worst VA scandals—VA managers—to threaten the livelihood of hard-working, frontline VA employees and silence the voices of the whistleblowers we rely on to tell us when something is wrong.

For all of our frustration with the VA, the continued existence of a nonpartisan civil service is vital if we are to fix the mess at the VA and provide our veterans with the benefits and services that we have promised them and that they have earned.

As the Merit Systems Protection Board has stated in a report from May: ''Due process is available for the whistleblower, the employee who belongs to the 'wrong' political party, the reservist whose periods of military service are inconvenient to the boss, the scapegoat, and the person who has been misjudged based on faulty information. Due process is a constitutional requirement and a small price to pay to ensure the American people receive a merit-based civil service rather than a corrupt spoils system.''

We should not, under the guise of ''accountability,'' destroy one of the best tools we have to provide the benefits and services we have promised our veterans. That tool is a nonpartisan and nonpolitical VA workforce.

We need to take steps to protect the vast majority of the high-performing VA workforce from being fired at the whim of capricious or retaliatory managers or political appointees, not to make it even easier.

I believe H.R. 1994 violates our Constitution. The administration has issued a veto threat, and if enacted, H.R. 1994 would not stand up in a court of law. Ultimately, veterans would be harmed the most when courts overturn this policy and then reinstate bad employees at the VA.

Instead of scapegoating the vast majority of hard-working VA employees, Congress should look for real opportunities to reform our civil service in a manner that is constitutional, while providing adequate resources and better policies to provide outcomes at the VA.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, it is amazing that every single Democrat in the Congress last year voted in favor of the very same rules and regulations.

I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN), from the Fifth Congressional District.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1994, and I thank Chairman MILLER for bringing this critical issue to light.

Like the chairman, I am on the side of veterans, and we in this Nation have a sacred trust to take care of the men and women who have defended our freedom. Without accountability in the VA, we cannot properly care for our

veterans. While I believe the great majority of VA employees are dedicated and hard-working Americans doing the right thing for our veterans, there are those in the VA who have not acted in the best interest of our veterans, and these individuals must be terminated.

The fact that only three employees were successfully fired due to wait time manipulations is a disgrace. The current system is broken. Poor and mediocre performance that endangers our veterans should not be tolerated.

H.R. 1994 will help remove bad actors more easily from the VA system, enabling the remaining dedicated employees to better serve our veterans. The bill will protect whistleblowers.

Accountability in the VA needs to happen now, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1994.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman has 23 minutes remaining.

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

Just in quick response to my good friend, Chairman MILLER, bringing up the issue of the SES provision, yes, most of us did vote for the Choice Act, the provision that dealt with the SES reform to make it easier to fire those employees. That number of employees is a very small number. It is about 400. We are talking about addressing the entire 300,000-strong employees.

Let me just say that at the time I wish we had spent more time reviewing the constitutionality. I do believe the constitutionality of that action is also in question.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TAKANO. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I thank my good friend for yielding, but I would also say that the Constitution of the United States protects even a single individual. So to say that it is only a small group should not be anything in this discussion.

I would assure you that the President of the United States would have had ample time to be able to go through and review it before he signed it into law.

Mr. TAKANO. Reclaiming my time, let me just say that I believe the Constitution applies to the Senior Executive Service as well as all of the 300,000 employees of the Veterans Administration.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Chairman, as a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1994, the so-called VA Accountability Act of 2015.

We all agree on the importance of accountability for those who care for our Nation's heroes, but this is the wrong way to go about it. We are indeed throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

My colleagues have outlined a number of reasons to oppose this legislation, including questionable constitutionality, the elimination of longstanding and important due process procedures for employees, and the damage it would do to whistleblower protections; but I would like to focus on the big picture, on the impact this will have on VA employees, many of whom are veterans themselves, and on our efforts to recruit the best employees possible to serve our veterans.

□ 1500

This legislation takes VA employees, from janitors who clean the facilities and guards who protect the hospital, to the nurses caring for our Nation's heroes and the doctors providing critical care for our veterans, and moves them into second-class status.

If H.R. 1994 passes, we will create a two-tiered Federal system, with VA employees less respected, less rewarded, and less protected than others. The VA already struggles to attract the best and brightest to serve our Nation's heroes. If this legislation passes, we will make it even harder to recruit and retain the most qualified and best trained workforce at the VA.

I know this because, in Las Vegas, we face challenges to fully staff our brand-new state-of-the-art hospital, and if the bill passes, we will lose an important recruitment tool, and our veterans will be the ones who are hurt.

Let's not fool ourselves here. This is just another piece of the Republican agenda to demonize public employees and privatize government services. Today, it is the VA. Tomorrow, it will be another agency that they don't like—who knows, the EPA, the TSA, the FAA, the USDA.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation. Don't ''Scott Walkerize'' the Federal Government.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), vice chairman of the full committee and my colleague from the Second Congressional District of Florida.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the VA Accountability Act. The brave women and men who return from serving our country should be able to receive timely access to quality care. Our veterans have earned our respect and admiration.

In general, I believe that most employees at the VA are dedicated to our Nation's heroes. However, a culture of mediocrity has permeated the VA. Too many employees who perform terribly are not fired.

This bill before us today will allow the VA Secretary to fire employees more easily, but the heart of this issue is about the quality of care for veterans. If bad actors stay at the VA, that hurts veterans.

Opponents speak in hypotheticals, but hypotheticals mean nothing in the face of overwhelming evidence. We know about the real negligence that goes on unpunished. This is a disservice to those who have borne the battle.

The Washington Post reported on a VA employee who took a veteran seeking treatment for drug abuse to a crackhouse in a government vehicle and left the veteran there overnight. Sadly, it took over a year to fire that employee. That is inexcusable.

According to the VA data given to the committee, only three VA employees have been fired since the Arizona wait time scandal, specifically for data manipulation. That is unreasonable.

This bill is needed because our Nation's heroes deserve better. That is the bottom line. We must protect our veterans. Support this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Chairman, I want to start by saying I am in opposition to this accountability bill, but I want to commend the chairman and the ranking member and the rest of the members of the Veterans' Affairs Committee. I think you have done a good job—and I don't come up here and say that too often—because you have made it bipartisan.

Now, what possessed you to bring this bill to the floor and use the word ''accountability,'' I am trying to figure that out because we want accountability. I am a veteran, and I have fought.

I have got a record for 18 years, in the forefront, running point on veterans issues, from waiting for so darn long to get an appointment, to the latest problems we have had in the VA concerning addressing our TBI patients and our post-traumatic stress disorder patients. No one is more disappointed than me in what transpired in the VA last year.

As a vet, I was proud to support the bipartisan VA reform legislation that became law in response, but this bill isn't about making the VA better or ensuring better care and treatment for our veterans.

This bill is about trying to score some political points, an underhanded attempt to strip VA employees, and I don't think you really want to do that, but that is the result.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PASCRELL. I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Did you vote for the Veterans Access Choice and Accountability Act last year?

Mr. PASCRELL. Yes, I did.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. This language is the same language that was in there. It does not take away the rights that you say are being taken away. You voted for the same thing last year.

Mr. PASCRELL. Reclaiming my time, in the context of what we did a year ago and the context of what is now under the guise of accountability is very different to me. I read both bills, the one we voted on last year and this bill.

There is important workplace protections that do not exist in this bill, and that is my position. We cannot start off by blaming unions, blaming the VA.

We have been through this before. There are some bad actors there. We are trying to get rid of them, and I want to get rid of them faster than you want to get rid of them, but I don't want to take down the whole group.

We paint with a very wide brush. We have done this with other Federal agencies. The reality is that the civil service protections available to these employees and all other Federal employees actually protect whistleblowers—that is in the law already—and allow them to come forward when they see wrongdoing, without fearing some retaliation.

Whistleblowers were how we discovered the problems, Mr. Chairman, in the first place. That is how we found out about what was going on in Phoenix and in some other places. Correct me if I am wrong; I think you will agree with me.

I agree that poorly performing employees have no place at the VA—or any other Federal agency for that matter. We agree on both sides of the aisle. We can't—as some have said, you guys are in favor of the vets, and we are not in favor of the vets.

Come on. We are away from that. We did that 15 years ago. That didn't work.

I agree that poorly performing employees have no place at the VA—or any other Federal agency, not just this one. This demonization of government employees that my colleagues are spearheading does not encourage productive work and, frankly, is just plain wrong.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation. We are not going to make these folks any more accountable by demonizing the work.

By the way, just as you can't have community policing without police, you have got to understand, you cannot have service with thousands and thousands of positions being vacant because you don't want to spend the money.

That is at one of the cores; it may not be the most fundamental reason. That is one of the reasons at least why we can't provide service.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. BYRNE). The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. WALORSKI) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

The Committee resumed its sitting.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I don't believe I have mentioned the unions one time, but I now think I understand why the disparity in the vote. The senior executive level that we passed the accountability for last year is nonunionized, and the people that we are talking about today are unionized.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the First District of Tennessee (Mr. ROE).

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to join my colleagues on the House floor today to speak in support of H.R. 1994, the VA Accountability Act, as amended.

I would like to begin by noting that most of the VA's 300,000-plus employees are honest, hard-working folks who get up every day and go to work with the sole intention of helping our veterans, just as they do at Mountain Home VA Medical Center in my hometown of Johnson City, Tennessee.

With the scandals at the VA medical centers and reports of whistleblower retribution, it has become evident that there are more bad apples than we would like to believe.

The VA Accountability Act would provide the flexibility necessary for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to remove these bad actors and send a message about the type of performance that we expect for our veterans.

Additionally, this bill would provide frontline employees with increased whistleblower protections from retribution from superiors and colleagues through the office of special counsel.

As a member of the Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and as a veteran myself, I understand how crucial it is for whistleblowers to continue coming forward with allegations of mismanagement, misconduct, and outright negligence. If whistleblowers don't feel safe stepping forward, we will never, never be able to fix the problems at the VA.

I think it is important to note that nothing in this bill compels the Secretary to remove anyone. Let me say that again. Nothing in this bill requires the Secretary to remove anyone. It simply gives the Secretary the tools necessary to remove bad employees, which would be a welcomed authority, I would think.

Mr. Chairman, we must change the culture at the VA. As the second largest employing Department in the U.S. Government, second only to the Department of Defense, there are far too many bureaucratic hurdles in place to reasonably and responsibly manage it.

Just one thing about spending at the VA, Mr. Chairman, I have been on the Veterans' Affairs Committee since I have been in Congress, 6½ years. The budget is up 74 percent. We are spending the money. We need to spend it more wisely.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation for our Nation's veterans.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I am glad that my colleagues on the other side believe that we need to protect whistleblowers. It is precisely the at-will nature, making all of the 200,000 employees of the VA at-will employees, which makes them more vulnerable to the caprices of managers and makes them less likely to want to come forward as whistleblowers.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose H.R. 1994, which seeks to transform 300,000 VA personnel to what we call at-will employees, capable of being fired based on anything, including their beliefs and not their merit necessarily. It effectively destroys the civil service as it is and as we know it at the VA.

Now, some jaded colleagues of mine would look at this bill and say it is just a clever attempt to drive a wedge between our Nation's veterans—all of whom we ardently support on both sides of the aisle—between those veterans and the civil servants who serve them at the VA and the unions that represent them.

This bill strips due process rights away from every nonmanagement VA employee, including over 100,000 veterans. That is the key, is that there are 100,000 veterans themselves affected by this bill; and they will lose rights as a result if this bill passes.

Now, H.R. 1994 will have a chilling effect on those willing to speak out, and that has been addressed amply heretofore, but I am here to say it goes beyond whistleblowers. Whistleblowers in this country have a lot of protections.

This goes beyond whistleblowers because, remember, a lot of the bad actors at the VA that have led to the Phoenix situation and the others that we have seen are management people.

Think of it. If we take away the due process rights of employees, not only who would serve as whistleblowers to blow the whistle on bad management conduct, but we take away their rights to due process before they lose their jobs; what we are doing to them is that we are perpetuating this culture of tacit compliance with bad actor managers at VA.

For example, if an employee simply doesn't want to go along with an improper and an unethical practice that a manager is asking him or her to do, that employee right now can say: No, I am not going to do it.

If we pass this bill and they refuse to do it, they can be fired for not doing it. This is not the way to serve our Nation's veterans.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK), chairman of the Health Subcommittee.

□ 1515

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, today I rise in support of H.R. 1994, legislation to allow the VA Secretary to fire employees because of poor performance or misconduct. I want to thank Chairman MILLER for his strong leadership on this bill.

The VA Committee has been relentless in our pursuit of answers and accountability for our veterans since the

wait time scandal first surfaced. And, yet, the VA has only held three individuals responsible for these unacceptable failings.

I am the father of a veteran, and I served our returning heroes as a doctor at the Iron Mountain VA hospital for 20 years. I know exactly the quality of our veterans, and they deserve so much better.

In northern Michigan, we all know that, if you don't do your job, you get fired. It is that simple.

The VA needs to remember that it is not there to serve the VA, it is there to serve our veterans. Until we refocus the VA on this fundamental and sacred mission, we will continue to have the issues of mismanagement and incompetence that have plagued the Department.

This bill takes an important step in that direction. I am pleased to support it. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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

I just want to address again the fact that most of us did, in fact, vote for the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act SES provision.

I want to reiterate that the courts—not Congress, not the President—determine whether a law we pass comports with the Constitution.

In hindsight, we should have given that SES provision closer scrutiny. We might have reacted a bit too hastily to the Phoenix scandal. We were all, I think, unified in our outrage.

However, that SES provision is now working its way through the court system and is very well possibly going to be overturned.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the First District of Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

Mr. HUELSKAMP. I thank the chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of our legislation.

Mr. Chairman, we do know in the last year there has been a lot of talk about accountability at the VA. Unfortunately, though, there has not been enough action or change by the VA under this administration.

This bill provides much-needed tools to ensure the VA Secretary has the authority and the responsibility to remove corrupt or incompetent employees.

As a Member of Congress, I am simply tired of hearing stories about employees placed on indefinite administrative leave or getting early retirement with full benefits for offenses that should get them fired, if we really cared about the veterans.

Ultimately, here is the purpose of this bill: ending the culture of nonaccountability at the VA. My bill, the Whistleblower Testimony Travel Act, is also included.

It provides much-needed protections for courageous whistleblowers who testify before Congress about the shortfalls of this agency.

It might be hard to believe, Mr. Chairman, but, currently, if a VA whistleblower is invited to testify before Congress, they are required to use their personal vacation time and personally cover all their own travel expenses.

This bill would ensure that brave employees who report to Congress and the public on what is broken within the VA can do so on official time and be compensated by the VA for their travel costs.

Ultimately, this legislation is about protecting our veterans. It is about making sure our veterans are treated with dignity and respect. It is about making certain that our brave veterans have a VA that works for them, not the other way around.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to the time remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I just want to state for the record that, as of last year, under the current due process regime in effect at the VA, 872 permanent employees were removed, 487 more resigned in lieu of being fired, and 958 probationary employees were terminated.

So it is indeed very possible under the current due process regime for employees to be disciplined and dismissed. We need to work more closely with the VA to make sure that we empower managers to utilize the current processes in place.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS).

Ms. EDWARDS. I thank the gentleman from California.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1994, the so-called VA Accountability Act.

I am the daughter of a career servicemember and a veteran. I, too, was outraged last year at the findings that wait time records were falsified at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

But I have to tell you—and it has been said on the other side—my father actually received really good care and services in VA, as hundreds of thousands of veterans do all across this country, by the hundreds of thousands of veteran employees and workers at the VA.

I recall that, in my State of Maryland, 10 percent of our population are veterans, and we are a small State. We all care about veterans and the care that they receive.

Just before adjourning for our August district work period last year, Congress passed and I voted for and the President signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act.

That law gave the VA Secretary expanded authority to fire or demote Senior Executive Service employees, capped the amount of bonuses the VA could pay each year, and it required the VA to establish penalties for employees who knowingly submit false wait time data.

Well, enough already. Almost 1 year later House Republicans are not only here skipping town early with a whole bunch of unfinished business, but they are spending the last day of the session on an ideological bill that is aimed to disparage Federal employees.

All employees, including Federal employees, must be held to the highest standards for their quality of work and their behavior. There are mechanisms that are in place to enforce those standards for all Federal employees, including those at the Veterans Affairs.

The main provision of the bill would single out nonmanagement VA employees, including over 100,000 veterans in the workforce to be fired or demoted without due process.

We work really closely with our employees at the Baltimore regional office and the Washington, D.C., Medical Center. These people, many veterans themselves, are dedicated. They care deeply about the patients they serve and the mission of the administration.

This legislation is nothing more than a last-minute attempt by House Republicans to terminate, demoralize, and unfairly blame Federal employees and shrink the government so it can't do anything for the American people.

I will work with like-minded Members of Congress who want to do the right thing and provide the right kind of oversight. But this is not the answer, and it would destroy VA's merit-based civil service system.

Let me just say this is not about accountability. It is not about whistleblowers. It is not about improving services for our Nation's veterans.

This bill is nothing more than union-busting. Let's just call it what it is. It is union-busting, and it needs to be stopped.

The House Republicans should be ashamed of trying to use VA employees and Federal employees for their own political gain.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I would remind the gentlewoman that she voted at the last minute before the August work recess for the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act. The same language is in there now. The only difference is it did not cover union employees. This one does.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the Sixth District of Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN).

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1994, the VA Accountability Act.

You don't have to look any further than my hometown of Aurora, Colorado, to see that the VA is in desperate need of fundamental reforms.

What happens when the VA bursts its budget on a single construction project by over $1 billion? Nobody gets fired. Nobody gets disciplined. Nobody is at fault.

Of course, that is not technically true. The VA was willing to fire one person involved, a whistleblower attempting to warn VA leaders early on of the growing problems with the project.

To make matters worse, the VA didn't just fail to discipline the people in charge of the Aurora project, but they awarded the VA's construction chief over $600,000 in bonuses and let him retire with a full pension.

There is a culture of bureaucratic incompetence and corruption within the VA which is hurting our Nation's veterans and wasting billions of taxpayer dollars.

The VA Accountability Act is an important step in the right direction, and I urge its full support.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN), the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, let me just say, first of all, that I have been on this committee for the entire time I have been in Congress, 23 years.

What I have always enjoyed about this committee is the bipartisan nature of this committee. But let me just tell you this bill, H.R. 1994, I do not support.

The gentleman from Florida, Chairman MILLER, has said repeatedly that we voted for this provision in the Choice Act. And the only reason we did it was because these were union people or not union people.

I went to every single meeting, every single conference, and this provision that you are talking about—the devil is always in the details.

Maybe we need to make sure we read every bill closely because I was not—yes, the Secretary has the authority to fire people. But we want to make sure that they have due process.

We are voting to give the VA the additional resources they need to do away with the backlog.

Would the gentleman from Florida respond to that. Because none of us were voting for H.R. 1994. It was a bad year for Congress, a bad year for the American people.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I would say to the gentlewoman from Florida that, if she would ask a question, I will be more than happy to answer her question.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, Chairman MILLER has said repeatedly that this provision that you have was in the base bill of the Choice program and that we all knew that we were voting to give the Secretary additional authority to fire people.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. That is correct.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. TAKANO. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Yesterday in the committee I heard someone say that the goal is to close all of the VA facilities and privatize it.

Now, let me be clear that that is not the goal of the Members on the Democratic side.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I would also say that H.R. 4031 last year was a stand-alone bill that dealt specifically with firing senior executive-level individuals, the same language that is in here now for the rest of the VA.

The Democrats unanimously supported that language in the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from the State of Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the VA Accountability Act. I also want to thank Chairman MILLER for sponsoring this bill and for his work to reform the Department of Veterans Affairs.

It wasn't long ago that news reports of VA mismanagement made headlines across this country. Reports surfaced of veterans dying due to mismanaged wait times and senior executives receiving bonuses instead of receiving punishment for knowingly allowing this negligence to occur.

Over the past year, the Veterans' Affairs Committee has continued to uncover instances of mismanagement or misconduct by VA employees.

We discovered the VA often does not hold employees accountable for their actions. When the VA attempts to take disciplinary action against an employee, the process is so complicated and lengthy that such action rarely occurs.

In May, VA Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson admitted that it was very difficult to fire bad employees. For too long, taxpayers have been footing the bill to pay poor-performing employees to provide substandard care to our veterans.

Only in government are special protections put in place that protect those who cannot appropriately do their job.

However, I also recognize there are individuals in the VA who do a great job for our veterans, and they should be commended for that.

This legislation simply builds on last year's law that gave the VA Secretary the authority to remove employees for poor performance or misconduct.

The VA Accountability Act of 2015 expands that power further to the entire VA workforce, giving the Secretary increased authority to remove employees who are not meeting the standards of service that veterans deserve and taxpayers expect.

In addition, the legislation protects whistleblowers and would shorten the appeal period and end what many veterans believe is a never-ending process to remove employees who may be damaging the Department's reputation and, even worse, putting veterans at risk.

□ 1530

This bill takes those steps to ensure our Nation's servicemen and -women receive the care they rightfully deserve.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill because our veterans deserve nothing but the best.

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

I just want to point out we keep getting back to this point about everybody voted for the SES provision that is only now being extended to all employees now, but I want to remind my colleagues that that provision was part of a large, large conference report that included the $10 billion to address the problems we had in Phoenix. There were 1,500 graduate medical education slots. It was a huge, huge, huge bill.

There were a number of people who did have concerns about the provision that affected the SES employees, but given the enormity of the situation we were trying to address, I believe that many folks just believe that it was the best thing to do to come together on a bipartisan basis and pass a bill that addressed the situation in Phoenix.

I also want to address another issue. H.R. 1994 does not protect whistleblowers to the extent that whistleblowers are protected now under the current regime. In fact, it creates extra hurdles for whistleblowers, and I bring this point up because we would not know about the terrible egregious situation in Phoenix without whistleblowers coming forward.

What do I mean by that? This bill does nothing to protect the firing of a whistleblower who has not yet filed an official complaint before they even have the opportunity to report danger to patient safety, wrongdoing, malfeasance, or discrimination.

This bill will encourage bad employees to file for whistleblower status to prevent themselves from being fired, and these bad employees will overburden the office of special counsel with frivolous complaints.

Now, if you are an at-will employee and you are under threat of immediate dismissal, an immediate threat to your livelihood, that is even more of an intimidating situation for that employee not to want to come forward as a whistleblower.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this bill actually worsens the situation for whistleblowers and does not protect them more; it protects them less. It gives them extra burdens.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would say that the statutory definition in chapter 5 of a whistleblower ''means a complaint by an employee of the Department disclosing, or assisting another employee to disclose, a potential violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or gross mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority, or substantial and specific danger to public health and safety.''

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. Abraham, an able-bodied member of our committee.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for bringing up this very strong bill which, in my opinion, will be lifesaving for some of our Nation's heroes.

I rise today in support of the VA Accountability Act of 2015. I am a proud original cosponsor of the bill, and I believe the legislation is vital to rooting out the pervasive bureaucracy that plagues the Federal Government.

As a direct result of this broken system, we have seen instances where a VA employee actually took a patient to a crackhouse to get a ''fix.'' It took an entire year for that employee to be fired—an entire year.

As a direct result of this broken system, we have seen senior employees caught participating in retaliation against whistleblowers, only to remain on the job.

As a direct result of this broken system, we have seen employees who were caught manipulating veterans' disability claims.

Do you know what happened to those employees? They were promoted. They received bonuses. This is unacceptable on so many levels, and it is time for it to stop. We have to make the VA work for the veteran. The current law protects those who have forgotten that they work for the veteran, not the other way around.

Even the Veterans Affairs Department's own Deputy Secretary, Sloan Gibson, as you heard before, recently admitted at a congressional hearing that ''it is too hard to fire someone at the VA.'' There is no excuse for those who fail to do their job and then get promoted, none.

H.R. 1994 is a giant step forward in ensuring that good employees are protected, ensuring whistleblowers are protected, and, most importantly, that our Nation's heroes are protected.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for the veterans who have to stand up for us by supporting the VA Accountability Act of 2015.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO), from the Sixth District.

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, should the Secretary of the VA be allowed to remove or demote an employee of the Department for poor performance or misconduct? That is the question, as I see it.

Common sense to me dictates that, if an employee is poorly performing or has demonstrated incompetence or dishonesty, as we have seen at VAs in Philadelphia and across the country, we need to be able to get rid of them—common sense.

I hear those who are speaking about due process violations implicit or explicit in this legislation, and I simply just don't see it. For one, there was a law passed last Congress; I wasn't here then, but it was part of a larger, broader bill that brought more money to the VA, and with more money, there should be more accountability. I think that is common sense.

Here is the example: Poorly performing employee, employee who misbehaves, demoted or terminated? Under this bill, that employee, within 7 days, gets to file an expedited appeal with the Merit Systems Protection Board, and then the MSPB would have to make a final decision within 45 days. If you get fired, if you get demoted, if you think that that was wrong, there is a process that is in place to address that.

This comes on the heels of a lot of problems in the VA. We need more accountability, and we need more transparency, and we hear that all the time. This bill addresses that.

This bill also provides more protections to whistleblowers. It is the courageous whistleblowers, through their tenacity, that have brought a lot of the problems forward. This bill seeks to protect them.

I want to thank the chairman for his leadership.

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

I wish to address this issue of the appeals process that takes place post facto. The Supreme Court decisions and case law make very clear that Federal employees are entitled to due process on the front end and that this bill clearly does not meet that upfront, front-loaded due process moment.

Clearly, 45 days, the Board that makes these decisions, if they don't make a decision, the decision for the firing stands, so they do not have to make a firm decision, and there is no appeal. There is no appeal. That decision is final.

I want to remind my colleagues that the Secretary of the VA hopefully is always appointed by the President with a sense of merit, but I remind you that these are political appointees confirmed by the Senate, as are the top appointees in any Federal department.

You do away with due process rights, you do away with the very cornerstone of a merit-based civil service system. You subject it long term to becoming a spoils system to be dismissed, rehired at the whim of any incoming administration.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My bill provides all employees an appeal to the MSPB. Post-depravation is not an issue; and regarding pre-depravation due process, my bill provides the same protections as the Choice Act, which the MSPB has held does not, on its face, violate the due process clause.

I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN), a new member of our committee.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman MILLER for introducing this important legislation that will increase accountability in the VA.

For too long, our veterans, including the large number I represent in American Samoa, have been subjected to improper treatment, long wait times, and other serious matters that have yet to be addressed.

This commonsense legislation, of which I am proud to be a cosponsor, will enable the VA to hold those who do not perform their duties accountable, which will surely lead to better services for our veterans. No longer should our veterans come second to lifelong bureaucrats who have gamed the system while our veterans have suffered.

I want to be clear that I believe the vast majority of those VA employees who serve our veterans do so honorably and are dedicated to making sure that those they serve are awarded the services and benefits they have so rightfully earned. However, it is clear that there are some bad apples in the VA, and we must not let them continue to ruin the bunch.

Mr. Chairman, I want to, once again, thank Chairman MILLER for his work on this bill, and I look forward to seeing it signed into law.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida has 2½ minutes. The gentleman from California has 2 minutes.

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

I just want to remind my colleagues that the front-end provisions that were accorded to the SES employees, we stripped them completely of the front-end due process.

Only with a regulatory move by the VA itself, instituted a 5-day procedure of due process because they, too, believed that case law required at least some front end, and that was over the objections of many of my colleagues. That rule was over the objections of many of my colleagues.

H.R. 1994 strips away front-end due process for all 348,728 employees, of whom 114,740 are veterans. Before we paint them as faceless bureaucrats, one of every three VA employees is a veteran who has laid their life on the line for our country. I think we need to talk about our VA employees with respect.

Even my good friend, the chairman of the VA committee, has said the vast majority of the employees are good, hard-working, competent, good-intentioned people. They deserve to be treated fairly; they deserve to be treated with respect.

Certainly, our frontline employees, our frontline employees, we need to protect them from a capricious, politically motivated manager who will fire them at will and intimidate them into not being a whistleblower.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the VA Accountability Act.

In his recent remarks at the VFW national convention in Pittsburgh,

Barack Obama discussed the outbreak of Legionnaire's disease at the Pittsburgh VA that killed six veterans and sickened many more.

The Office of the Inspector General concluded that systemic failures and mismanagement at the VA were to blame for the outbreak, and the President stated unequivocally: ''Whenever there are any missteps, there is no excuse.''

Mr. Chairman, that is the essence of the VA Accountability Act. With the enactment of this important legislation, there is no longer any excuse for chronic dysfunction at the VA. There is no excuse for the VA keeping bad employees, placing them on indefinite paid leave, or rewarding them with lavish bonuses. There is no excuse for the VA looking the other way when there is retaliation against courageous whistleblowers.

Simply put, this legislation ensures that there is no excuse for the VA failing our veterans and their families anymore.

I thank the committee for its hard work on this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

□ 1545

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, there has been a lot said today about a lack of due process. I do want to remind my colleagues that, in the Cleveland Board of Education v. Loudermill of 1985, it basically states that, if post-deprivation due process includes a full hearing, on appeal, the Supreme Court has long held that pre-deprivation due process need only be minimal, to only include notice of charges, an explanation of the evidence, and an opportunity to present their side of the story.

In fact, in the Merit Systems Protection Board ruling, the administrative law judge in the Hellman case basically said he did not find the response period was so short—it was 5 days—as to constitute on its face a due process violation, i.e., lack of meaningful opportunity to respond to the charges.

There has been a lot said so far, and I am sure there will be more that will be said on the floor as amendments are brought; but I encourage all of my colleagues to support H.R. 1994, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1994, the VA Accountability Act of 2015. While no member of this body will deny that there is a need for fundamental and transparent reform at the Department of Veterans Affairs this bill does nothing to address the systematic issues that have plagued the VA.

Currently, VA Management has many different routes to hold their employees accountable through existing law. H.R. 1994 would allow the VA to immediately fire employees for poor performance, violating a worker's right to due process. I'm concerned that the bill would effectively make the VA the only "at-will" federal agency and this would further deplete the talent and retention of the public servants who serve our veterans.

I fully support Mr. TAKANO's amendment in nature of a substitute which would allow the VA to immediately suspend without pay any employee who's suspected misconducted threatened health or safety then allow the employee to tell their side of the story, preventing cases of political patronage and an increase in false whistleblower cases.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1994, the so-called "VA Accountability Act of 2015." There is nothing more important than providing for the men and women who have made so many sacrifices for our country. However, today's legislation is a fake solution and provides no real fix to the fundamental problems at the VA.

This legislation turns hundreds of thousands of VA employees—including many who served in the armed services and are veteran's themselves—into at-will employees. As a result, this would open the door for political abuse and witch-hunts, effectively creating a mechanism where career federal employees could be removed because of their views or political affiliation. In addition, turning individuals into at-will employees would likely discourage whistleblowers from coming forward out of fear of being terminated. Moreover, if this legislation passes, the Department of Veterans Affairs would be the only federal agency with at-will employment, making it harder to recruit and retain the best and brightest employees who are needed to serve our veterans.

I was disappointed that a substitute amendment offered by Congressman TAKANO was not adopted. Rep. TAKANO's amendment would immediately suspend without pay any employee that is found to put a veteran's health and safety in jeopardy. However, it also ensures that all employees—included whistleblowers—are granted their constitutional right to due process. On the other hand, H.R. 1994 would dismantle civil service protections that have been in place for decades. It would strip away important protections for federal workers and would deny a VA employee the opportunity to appeal a decision to the full Merit Systems Protection Board.

Unfortunately, nothing in this bill addresses the systemic problems that continue to plague the VA health care system. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HULTGREN). All time for general debate has expired.

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

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

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

H.R. 1994

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 ''VA Accountability Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REMOVAL OR DEMOTION OF EMPLOYEES BASED ON PERFORMANCE OR MISCONDUCT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 715. Employees: removal or demotion based on performance or misconduct

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may remove or demote an individual who is an employee of the Department if the Secretary determines the performance or misconduct of the individual warrants such removal or demotion. If the Secretary so removes or demotes such an individual, the Secretary may—

''(1) remove the individual from the civil service (as defined in section 2101 of title 5); or

''(2) demote the individual by means of—

''(A) a reduction in grade for which the individual is qualified and that the Secretary determines is appropriate; or

''(B) a reduction in annual rate of pay that the Secretary determines is appropriate.

''(b) PAY OF CERTAIN DEMOTED INDIVIDUALS.—(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any individual subject to a demotion under subsection (a)(2)(A) shall, beginning on the date of such demotion, receive the annual rate of pay applicable to such grade.

''(2) An individual so demoted may not be placed on administrative leave or any other category of paid leave during the period during which an appeal (if any) under this section is ongoing, and may only receive pay if the individual reports for duty. If an individual so demoted does not report for duty, such individual shall not receive pay or other benefits pursuant to subsection (e)(5).

''(c) NOTICE TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days after removing or demoting an individual under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives notice in writing of such removal or demotion and the reason for such removal or demotion.

''(d) PROCEDURE.—(1) The procedures under section 7513(b) of title 5 and chapter 43 of such title shall not apply to a removal or demotion under this section.

''(2)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B) and subsection (e), any removal or demotion under subsection (a) may be appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board under section 7701 of title 5.

''(B) An appeal under subparagraph (A) of a removal or demotion may only be made if such appeal is made not later than seven days after the date of such removal or demotion.

''(e) EXPEDITED REVIEW BY ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE.—(1) Upon receipt of an appeal under subsection (d)(2)(A), the Merit Systems Protection Board shall refer such appeal to an administrative judge pursuant to section 7701(b)(1) of title 5. The administrative judge shall expedite any such appeal under such section and, in any such case, shall issue a decision not later than 45 days after the date of the appeal.

''(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including section 7703 of title 5, the decision of an administrative judge under paragraph (1) shall be final and shall not be subject to any further appeal.

''(3) In any case in which the administrative judge cannot issue a decision in accordance with the 45-day requirement under paragraph (1), the removal or demotion is final. In such a case, the Merit Systems Protection Board shall, within 14 days after the date that such removal or demotion is final, submit to Congress and the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report that explains the reasons why a decision was not issued in accordance with such requirement.

''(4) The Merit Systems Protection Board or administrative judge may not stay any removal or demotion under this section.

''(5) During the period beginning on the date on which an individual appeals a removal from the civil service under subsection (d) and ending on the date that the administrative judge issues a final decision on such appeal, such individual may not receive any pay, awards, bonuses, incentives, allowances, differentials, student loan repayments, special payments, or benefits.

''(6) To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall provide to the Merit Systems Protection Board, and to any administrative judge to whom an appeal under this section is referred, such information and assistance as may be necessary to ensure an appeal under this subsection is expedited.

''(f) WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION.—(1) In the case of an individual seeking corrective action (or on behalf of whom corrective action is sought) from the Office of Special Counsel based on an alleged prohibited personnel practice described in section 2302(b) of title 5, the Secretary may not remove or demote such individual under subsection (a) without the approval of the Special Counsel under section 1214(f) of title 5.

''(2) In the case of an individual who has filed a whistleblower complaint, as such term is defined in section 731 of this title, the Secretary may not remove or demote such individual under subsection (a) until the central whistleblower office under section 732(h) of this title has made a final decision with respect to the whistleblower complaint.

''(g) TERMINATION OF INVESTIGATIONS BY OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Special Counsel (established by section 1211 of title 5) may terminate an investigation of a prohibited personnel practice alleged by an employee or former employee of the Department after the Special Counsel provides to the employee or former employee a written statement of the reasons for the termination of the investigation. Such statement may not be admissible as evidence in any judicial or administrative proceeding without the consent of such employee or former employee.

''(h) RELATION TO TITLE 5.—The authority provided by this section is in addition to the authority provided by subchapter V of chapter 75 of title 5 and chapter 43 of such title.

''(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'individual' means an individual occupying a position at the Department but does not include—

''(A) an individual, as that term is defined in section 713(g)(1); or

''(B) a political appointee.

''(2) The term 'grade' has the meaning given such term in section 7511(a) of title 5.

''(3) The term 'misconduct' includes neglect of duty, malfeasance, or failure to accept a directed reassignment or to accompany a position in a transfer of function.

''(4) The term 'political appointee' means an individual who is—

''(A) employed in a position described under sections 5312 through 5316 of title 5 (relating to the Executive Schedule);

''(B) a limited term appointee, limited emergency appointee, or noncareer appointee in the Senior Executive Service, as defined under paragraphs (5), (6), and (7), respectively, of section 3132(a) of title 5; or

''(C) employed in a position of a confidential or policy-determining character under schedule C of subpart C of part 213 of title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations.''.

(b) CLERICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CLERICAL.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''715. Employees: removal or demotion based on performance or misconduct.''.

(2) CONFORMING.—Section 4303(f) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking ''or'' at the end of paragraph (2);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (3) and inserting '', or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) any removal or demotion under section 715 of title 38.''.

SEC. 3. REQUIRED PROBATIONARY PERIOD FOR NEW EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PROBATIONARY PERIOD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 2, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 717. Probationary period for employees

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding sections 3321 and 3393(d) of title 5, the appointment of a covered employee shall become final only after such employee has served a probationary period of 18 months. The Secretary may extend a probationary period under this subsection at the discretion of the Secretary.

''(b) COVERED EMPLOYEE.—In this section, the term 'covered employee'—

''(1) means any individual—

''(A) appointed to a permanent position within the competitive service at the Department; or

''(B) appointed as a career appointee (as that term is defined in section 3132(a)(4) of title 5) within the Senior Executive Service at the Department; and

''(2) does not include any individual with a probationary period prescribed by section 7403 of this title.

''(c) PERMANENT HIRES.—Upon the expiration of a covered employee's probationary period under subsection (a), the supervisor of the employee shall determine whether the appointment becomes final based on regulations prescribed for such purpose by the Secretary.''.

(2) CLERICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) CLERICAL.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter, as amended by section 2, is further amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''717. Probationary period for employees.''.

(B) CONFORMING.—Title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(i) in section 3321(c)—

(I) by striking ''Service or'' and inserting ''Service,''; and

(II) by inserting at the end before the period the following: '', or any individual covered by section 717 of title 38''; and

(ii) in section 3393(d), by adding at the end after the period the following: ''The preceding sentence shall not apply to any individual covered by section 717 of title 38.''.

(b) APPLICATION.—Section 717 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1), shall apply to any covered employee (as that term is defined in subsection (b) of such section 717, as so added) appointed after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. TREATMENT OF WHISTLEBLOWER COMPLAINTS IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subchapter:

''SUBCHAPTER II—WHISTLEBLOWER COMPLAINTS

''§ 731. Whistleblower complaint defined

''In this subchapter, the term 'whistleblower complaint' means a complaint by an employee of the Department disclosing, or assisting another employee to disclose, a potential violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or gross mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority, or substantial and specific danger to public health and safety.

''§ 732. Treatment of whistleblower complaints

''(a) FILING.—(1) In addition to any other method established by law in which an employee may file a whistleblower complaint, an employee of the Department may file a whistleblower complaint in accordance with subsection (g) with a supervisor of the employee.

''(2) Except as provided by subsection (d)(1), in making a whistleblower complaint under paragraph (1), an employee shall file the initial complaint with the immediate supervisor of the employee.

''(b) NOTIFICATION.—(1) Not later than four business days after the date on which a supervisor receives a whistleblower complaint by an employee under this section, the supervisor shall notify, in writing, the employee of whether the supervisor determines that there is a reasonable likelihood that the complaint discloses a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or gross mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority, or substantial and specific danger to public health and safety. The supervisor shall retain written documentation regarding the whistleblower complaint and shall submit to the next-level supervisor and the central whistleblower office described in subsection (h) a written report on the complaint.

''(2) On a monthly basis, the supervisor shall submit to the appropriate director or other official who is superior to the supervisor a written report that includes the number of whistleblower complaints received by the supervisor under this section during the month covered by the report, the disposition of such complaints, and any actions taken because of such complaints pursuant to subsection (c). In the case in which such a director or official carries out this paragraph, the director or official shall submit such monthly report to the supervisor of the director or official and to the central whistleblower office described in subsection (h).

''(c) POSITIVE DETERMINATION.—If a supervisor makes a positive determination under subsection (b)(1) regarding a whistleblower complaint of an employee, the supervisor shall include in the notification to the employee under such subsection the specific actions that the supervisor will take to address the complaint.

''(d) FILING COMPLAINT WITH NEXT-LEVEL SUPERVISORS.—(1) If any circumstance described in paragraph (3) is met, an employee may file a whistleblower complaint in accordance with subsection (g) with the next-level supervisor who shall treat such complaint in accordance with this section.

''(2) An employee may file a whistleblower complaint with the Secretary if the employee has filed the whistleblower complaint to each level of supervisors between the employee and the Secretary in accordance with paragraph (1).

''(3) A circumstance described in this paragraph are any of the following circumstances:

''(A) A supervisor does not make a timely determination under subsection (b)(1) regarding a whistleblower complaint.

''(B) The employee who made a whistleblower complaint determines that the supervisor did not adequately address the complaint pursuant to subsection (c).

''(C) The immediate supervisor of the employee is the basis of the whistleblower complaint.

''(e) TRANSFER OF EMPLOYEE WHO FILES WHISTLEBLOWER COMPLAINT.—If a supervisor makes a positive determination under subsection (b)(1) regarding a whistleblower complaint filed by an employee, the Secretary shall—

''(1) inform the employee of the ability to volunteer for a transfer in accordance with section 3352 of title 5; and

''(2) give preference to the employee for such a transfer in accordance with such section.

''(f) PROHIBITION ON EXEMPTION.—The Secretary may not exempt any employee of the Department from being covered by this section.

''(g) WHISTLEBLOWER COMPLAINT FORM.—(1) A whistleblower complaint filed by an employee under subsection (a) or (d) shall consist of the form described in paragraph (2) and any supporting materials or documentation the employee determines necessary.

''(2) The form described in this paragraph is a form developed by the Secretary, in consultation with the Special Counsel, that includes the following:

''(A) An explanation of the purpose of the whistleblower complaint form.

''(B) Instructions for filing a whistleblower complaint as described in this section.

''(C) An explanation that filing a whistleblower complaint under this section does not preclude the employee from any other method established by law in which an employee may file a whistleblower complaint.

''(D) A statement directing the employee to information accessible on the Internet website of the Department as described in section 735(c).

''(E) Fields for the employee to provide—

''(i) the date that the form is submitted;

''(ii) the name of the employee;

''(iii) the contact information of the employee;

''(iv) a summary of the whistleblower complaint (including the option to append supporting documents pursuant to paragraph (1)); and

''(v) proposed solutions to complaint.

''(F) Any other information or fields that the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(3) The Secretary, in consultation with the Special Counsel, shall develop the form described in paragraph (2) by not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this section.

''(h) CENTRAL WHISTLEBLOWER OFFICE.—(1) The Secretary shall ensure that the central whistleblower office—

''(A) is not an element of the Office of the General Counsel;

''(B) is not headed by an official who reports to the General Counsel;

''(C) does not provide, or receive from, the General Counsel any information regarding a whistleblower complaint except pursuant to an action regarding the complaint before an administrative body or court; and

''(D) does not provide advice to the General Counsel.

''(2) The central whistleblower office shall be responsible for investigating all whistleblower complaints of the Department, regardless of whether such complaints are made by or against an employee who is not a member of the Senior Executive Service.

''(3) The Secretary shall ensure that the central whistleblower office maintains a toll-free hotline to anonymously receive whistleblower complaints.

''(4) In this subsection, the term 'central whistleblower office' means the Office of Accountability Review or a successor office that is established or designated by the Secretary to investigate whistleblower complaints filed under this section or any other method established by law.

''§ 733. Adverse actions against supervisory employees who commit prohibited personnel actions relating to whistleblower complaints

''(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) In accordance with paragraph (2), the Secretary shall carry out the following adverse actions against supervisory employees whom the Secretary, an administrative judge, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Special Counsel, an adjudicating body provided under a union contract, a Federal judge, or the Inspector General of the Department determines committed a prohibited personnel action described in subsection (c):

''(A) With respect to the first offense, an adverse action that is not less than a 14-day suspension and not more than removal.

''(B) With respect to the second offense, removal.

''(2)(A) Except as provided by subparagraph (B), and notwithstanding subsections (b) and (c) of section 7513 and section 7543 of title 5, the provisions of subsections (d) and (e) of section 713 of this title shall apply with respect to an adverse action carried out under paragraph (1).

''(B) An employee who is notified of being the subject of a proposed adverse action under paragraph (1) may not be given more than five days following such notification to provide evidence to dispute such proposed adverse action. If the employee does not provide any such evidence, or if the Secretary determines that such evidence is not sufficient to reverse the determination to propose the adverse action, the Secretary shall carry out the adverse action following such five-day period.

''(b) LIMITATION ON OTHER ADVERSE ACTIONS.—With respect to a prohibited personnel action described in subsection (c), if the Secretary carries out an adverse action against a supervisory employee, the Secretary may carry out an additional adverse action under this section based on the same prohibited personnel action if the total severity of the adverse actions do not exceed the level specified in subsection (a).

''(c) PROHIBITED PERSONNEL ACTION DESCRIBED.—A prohibited personnel action described in this subsection is any of the following actions:

''(1) Taking or failing to take a personnel action in violation of section 2302 of title 5 against an employee relating to the employee—

''(A) filing a whistleblower complaint in accordance with section 732 of this title;

''(B) filing a whistleblower complaint with the Inspector General of the Department, the Special Counsel, or Congress;

''(C) providing information or participating as a witness in an investigation of a whistleblower complaint in accordance with section 732 or with the Inspector General of the Department, the Special Counsel, or Congress;

''(D) participating in an audit or investigation by the Comptroller General of the United States;

''(E) refusing to perform an action that is unlawful or prohibited by the Department; or

''(F) engaging in communications that are related to the duties of the position or are otherwise protected.

''(2) Preventing or restricting an employee from making an action described in any of subparagraphs (A) through (F) of paragraph (1).

''(3) Conducting a peer review or opening a retaliatory investigation relating to an activity of an employee that is protected by section 2302 of title 5.

''(4) Requesting a contractor to carry out an action that is prohibited by section 4705(b) or section 4712(a)(1) of title 41, as the case may be.

''§ 734. Evaluation criteria of supervisors and treatment of bonuses

''(a) EVALUATION CRITERIA.—(1) In evaluating the performance of supervisors of the Department, the Secretary shall include the criteria described in paragraph (2).

''(2) The criteria described in this subsection are the following:

''(A) Whether the supervisor treats whistleblower complaints in accordance with section 732.

''(B) Whether the appropriate deciding official, performance review board, or performance review committee determines that the supervisor was found to have committed a prohibited personnel action described in section 733(b) by an administrative judge, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of Special Counsel, an adjudicating body provided under a union contract, a Federal judge, or, in the case of a settlement of a whistleblower complaint (regardless of whether any fault was assigned under such settlement), the Secretary.

''(b) BONUSES.—(1) The Secretary may not pay to a supervisor described in subsection (a)(2)(B) an award or bonus under this title or title 5, including under chapter 45 or 53 of such title, during the one-year period beginning on the date on which the determination was made under such subsection.

''(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall issue an order directing a supervisor described in subsection (a)(2)(B) to repay the amount of any award or bonus paid under this title or title 5, including under chapter 45 or 53 of such title, if—

''(A) such award or bonus was paid for performance during a period in which the supervisor committed a prohibited personnel action as determined pursuant to such subsection (a)(2)(B);

''(B) the Secretary determines such repayment appropriate pursuant to regulations prescribed by the Secretary to carry out this section; and

''(C) the supervisor is afforded notice and an opportunity for a hearing before making such repayment.

''§ 735. Training regarding whistleblower complaints

''(a) TRAINING.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Whistleblower Protection Ombudsman designated under section 3(d)(1)(C) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), shall annually provide to each employee of the Department training regarding whistleblower complaints, including—

''(1) an explanation of each method established by law in which an employee may file a whistleblower complaint;

''(2) an explanation of prohibited personnel actions described by section 733(c) of this title;

''(3) with respect to supervisors, how to treat whistleblower complaints in accordance with section 732 of this title;

''(4) the right of the employee to petition Congress regarding a whistleblower complaint in accordance with section 7211 of title 5;

''(5) an explanation that the employee may not be prosecuted or reprised against for disclosing information to Congress in instances where such disclosure is permitted by law, including under sections 5701, 5705, and 7732 of this title, under section 552a of title 5 (commonly referred to as the Privacy Act), under chapter 93 of title 18, and pursuant to regulations promulgated under section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–191);

''(6) an explanation of the language that is required to be included in all nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements pursuant to section 115(a)(1) of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012 (5 U.S.C. 2302 note); and

''(7) the right of contractors to be protected from reprisal for the disclosure of certain information under section 4705 or 4712 of title 41.

''(b) CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall annually provide training on merit system protection in a manner that the Special Counsel certifies as being satisfactory.

''(c) PUBLICATION.—(1) The Secretary shall publish on the Internet website of the Department, and display prominently at each facility of the Department, the rights of an employee to file a whistleblower complaint, including the information described in paragraphs (1) through (7) of subsection (a).

''(2) The Secretary shall publish on the Internet website of the Department, the whistleblower complaint form described in section 732(g)(2).

''§ 736. Reports to Congress

''(a) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary shall annually submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that includes—

''(1) with respect to whistleblower complaints filed under section 732 during the year covered by the report—

''(A) the number of such complaints filed;

''(B) the disposition of such complaints; and

''(C) the ways in which the Secretary addressed such complaints in which a positive determination was made by a supervisor under subsection (b)(1) of such section;

''(2) the number of whistleblower complaints filed during the year covered by the report that are not included under paragraph (1), including—

''(A) the method in which such complaints were filed;

''(B) the disposition of such complaints; and

''(C) the ways in which the Secretary addressed such complaints; and

''(3) with respect to disclosures made by a contractor under section 4705 or 4712 of title 41—

''(A) the number of complaints relating to such disclosures that were investigated by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs during the year covered by the report;

''(B) the disposition of such complaints; and

''(C) the ways in which the Secretary addressed such complaints.

''(b) NOTICE OF OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL DETERMINATIONS.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary receives from the Special Counsel information relating to a whistleblower complaint pursuant to section 1213 of title 5, the Secretary shall notify the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate of such information, including the determination made by the Special Counsel.''.

(b) CONFORMING AND CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Such chapter is further amended by inserting before section 701 the following:

''SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL EMPLOYEE MATTERS''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended—

(A) by inserting before the item relating to section 701 the following new item:

''SUBCHAPTER I—GENERAL EMPLOYEE MATTERS''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new items:

''SUBCHAPTER II—WHISTLEBLOWER COMPLAINTS

''731. Whistleblower complaint defined.
''732. Treatment of whistleblower complaints.
''733. Adverse actions against supervisory employees who commit prohibited personnel actions relating to whistleblower complaints.
''734. Evaluation criteria of supervisors and treatment of bonuses.
''735. Training regarding whistleblower complaints.
''736. Reports to Congress.''.

SEC. 5. REFORM OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM FOR SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after section 717, as added by section 3, the following new section:

''§ 719. Senior executives: performance appraisal

''(a) PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM.—(1) The performance appraisal system for individuals employed in senior executive positions in the Department required by section 4312 of title 5 shall provide, in addition to the requirements of such section, for five annual summary ratings of levels of performance as follows:

''(A) One outstanding level.

''(B) One exceeds fully successful level.

''(C) One fully successful level.

''(D) One minimally satisfactory level.

''(E) One unsatisfactory level.

''(2) The following limitations apply to the rating of the performance of such individuals:

''(A) For any year, not more than 10 percent of such individuals who receive a performance rating during that year may receive the outstanding level under paragraph (1)(A).

''(B) For any year, not more than 20 percent of such individuals who receive a performance rating during that year may receive the exceeds fully successful level under paragraph (1)(B).

''(3) In evaluating the performance of an individual under the performance appraisal system, the Secretary shall take into consideration—

''(A) any complaint or report (including any pending or published report) submitted by the Inspector General of the Department, the Comptroller General of the United States, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or any other appropriate person or entity, related to any facility or program managed by the individual, as determined by the Secretary;

''(B) efforts made by the individual to maintain high levels of satisfaction and commitment among the employees supervised by the individual; and

''(C) the criteria described in section 734(a)(2) of this title.

''(b) CHANGE OF POSITION.—(1) At least once every five years, the Secretary shall reassign each individual employed in a senior executive position to a position at a different location that does not include the supervision of the same personnel or programs. The Secretary shall make such reassignments on a rolling basis based on the date on which an individual was originally assigned to a position.

''(2) The Secretary may waive the requirement under paragraph (1) for any such individual, if the Secretary submits to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives notice of the waiver and an explanation of the reasons for the waiver.

''(c) REPORT.—Not later than March 1 of each year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committees on Veterans' Affairs and Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report on the performance appraisal system of the Department under subsection (a). Each such report shall include, for the year preceding the year during which the report is submitted, each of the following:

''(1) All documentation concerning each of the following for each individual employed in a senior executive position in the Department:

''(A) The initial performance appraisal.

''(B) The higher level review, if requested.

''(C) The recommendations of the performance review board.

''(D) The final summary review.

''(E) The number of initial performance ratings raised as a result of the recommendations of the performance review board.

''(F) The number of initial performance ratings lowered as a result of the recommendations of the performance review board.

''(G) Any adverse action taken against any such individual who receives a performance rating of less than fully successful.

''(2) The review of the Inspector General of the Department of the information described in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of paragraph (1).

''(3) A summary of the documentation provided under paragraph (1).

''(d) DEFINITION OF SENIOR EXECUTIVE POSITION.—In this section, the term 'senior executive position' has the meaning given that term in section 713(g)(3) of this title.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter, as amended by section 3, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 717 the following new item:

''719. Senior executives: performance appraisal.''.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 4312(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

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

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) that, in the case of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the performance appraisal system meets the requirements of section 719 of title 38.''.

(b) REVIEW OF SES MANAGEMENT TRAINING.—

(1) REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract with a nongovernmental entity to review the management training program for individuals employed in senior executive positions (as such term is defined in section 713(g)(3) of title 38, United States Code) of the Department of Veterans Affairs that is being provided as of the date of the enactment of this Act. Such review shall include a comparison of the training provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to the management training provided for senior executives of other Federal departments and agencies and to the management training provided to senior executives in the private sector. The contract shall provide that the nongovernmental entity must complete and submit to the Secretary a report containing the findings and conclusions of the review by not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary and the nongovernmental entity enter into the contract.

(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which the Secretary receives the report under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives the report together with a plan for carrying out the recommendations contained in the report.

SEC. 6. REDUCTION OF BENEFITS FOR MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONVICTED OF CERTAIN CRIMES.

(a) REDUCTION OF BENEFITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after section 719, as added by section 5, the following new section:

''§ 721. Senior executives: reduction of benefits of individuals convicted of certain crimes

''(a) REDUCTION OF ANNUITY FOR REMOVED EMPLOYEE.—The Secretary shall order that the covered service of an individual removed from a senior executive position under section 713 of this title shall not be taken into account for purposes of calculating an annuity with respect to such individual under chapter 83 or chapter 84 of title 5, if—

''(1) the individual is convicted of a felony that influenced the individual's performance while employed in the senior executive position; and

''(2) before such order is made, the individual is afforded notice and an opportunity for a hearing conducted by another department or agency of the Federal Government.

''(b) REDUCTION OF ANNUITY FOR RETIRED EMPLOYEE.—(1) The Secretary may order that the covered service of an individual who is subject to a removal or transfer action under section 713 of this title but who leaves employment at the Department prior to the issuance of a final decision with respect to such action shall not be taken into account for purposes of calculating an annuity with respect to such individual under chapter 83 or chapter 84 of title 5, if—

''(A) the individual is convicted of a felony that influenced the individual's performance while employed in the senior executive position; and

''(B) before such order is made, the individual is afforded notice and an opportunity for a hearing conducted by another department or agency of the Federal Government.

''(2) The Secretary shall make such an order not later than seven days after the date of the conclusion of a hearing referred to in paragraph (1)(B) that determines that such order is lawful.

''(c) ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS.—(1) Not later than 30 days after the Secretary issues an order under subsection (a) or (b), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall recalculate the annuity of the individual.

''(2) A decision regarding whether the covered service of an individual shall be taken into account for purposes of calculating an annuity under subsection (a) or (b) is final and may not be reviewed by any department or agency or any court.

''(d) LUMP-SUM ANNUITY CREDIT.—Any individual with respect to whom an annuity is reduced under subsection (a) or (b) shall be entitled to be paid so much of such individual's lump-sum credit as is attributable to the period of covered service.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'covered service' means, with respect to an individual subject to a removal or transfer action under section 713 of this title, the period of service beginning on the date that the Secretary determines under such section that such individual engaged in activity that gave rise to such action and ending on the date that such individual is removed from the civil service or leaves employment at the Department prior to the issuance of a final decision with respect to such action, as the case may be.

''(2) The term 'lump-sum credit' has the meaning given such term in section 8331(8) or section 8401(19) of title 5, as the case may be.

''(3) The term 'senior executive position' has the meaning given such term in section 713(g)(3) of this title.

''(4) The term 'service' has the meaning given such term in section 8331(12) or section 8401(26) of title 5, as the case may be.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 7 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 719, as added by section 5, the following new item:

''721. Senior executives: reduction of benefits of individuals convicted of certain crimes.''.

(b) APPLICATION.—Section 721 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1), shall apply to any action of removal or transfer under section 713 of title 38, United States Code, commencing on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 7. LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE FOR EMPLOYEES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) LIMITATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after section 721, as added by section 6, the following new section:

''§ 723. Limitation on administrative leave

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary may not place any covered individual on administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for more than a total of 14 days during any 365-day period.

''(b) WAIVER.—The Secretary may waive the limitation under subsection (a) and extend the administrative leave or other paid non-duty status without charge to leave of a covered individual placed on such leave or status under subsection (a) if the Secretary submits to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a detailed explanation of the reasons the individual was placed on administrative leave or other paid non-duty status without charge to leave and the reasons for the extension of such leave or status. Such explanation shall include the name of the covered individual, the location where the individual is employed, and the individual's job title.

''(c) COVERED INDIVIDUAL.—In this subsection, the term 'covered individual' means an employee of the Department—

''(1) who is subject to an investigation for purposes of determining whether such individual should be subject to any disciplinary action under this title or title 5; or

''(2) against whom any disciplinary action is proposed or initiated under this title or title 5.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter, as amended by section 6, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 721 the following new item:

''723. Limitation on administrative leave.''.

(b) APPLICATION.—Section 723 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(1), shall apply with respect to any 365-day period beginning on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 8. TREATMENT OF CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES AS OFFICIAL DUTY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after section 723, as added by section 7, the following new section:

''§ 725. Congressional testimony by employees: treatment as official duty

''(a) CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY.—An employee of the Department is performing official duty during the period with respect to which the employee is testifying in an official capacity in front of either House of Congress, a committee of either House of Congress, or a joint or select committee of Congress.

''(b) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The Secretary shall provide travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with applicable provisions under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, to any employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs performing official duty described under subsection (a).''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 723, as added by section 7, the following new item:

''725. Congressional testimony by employees: treatment as official duty.''.

SEC. 9. LIMITATION ON AWARDS AND BONUSES PAID TO EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 705 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 703 note) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 705. LIMITATION ON AWARDS AND BONUSES PAID TO EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

''The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that the aggregate amount of awards and bonuses paid by the Secretary in a fiscal year under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, or any other awards or bonuses authorized under such title or title 38, United States Code, does not exceed the following amounts:

''(1) With respect to each of fiscal years 2015 through 2018, $300,000,000.

''(2) With respect to each of fiscal years 2019 through 2024, $360,000,000.''.

SEC. 10. COMPTROLLER GENERAL STUDY OF DEPARTMENT TIME AND SPACE USED FOR LABOR ORGANIZATION ACTIVITY.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the amount of time spent by Department of Veterans Affairs employees carrying out organizing activities relating to labor organizations and the amount of space in Department facilities used for such activities. The study shall include a cost-benefit analysis of the use of such time and space for such activities.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after the completion of the study required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report on the results of the study.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114–234. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. BENISHEK

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114–234.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk made in order under the rule.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following new section:

SEC. 11. ACCOUNTABILITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, as amended by section 8, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''§ 727. Accountability of Secretary to Inspector General

''(a) SUBMISSION OF REPORTS.—(1) At the same time as the Inspector General of the Department submits to the Secretary a covered report, the Inspector General shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a copy of such covered report.

''(2) The Inspector General shall include in each covered report submitted under paragraph (1)—

''(A) an explanation of any changes to the covered report recommended by the Secretary during the period in which the Inspector General was preparing the covered report; and

''(B) a list of the names of each responsible manager.

''(3) The Inspector General may not make public the names of responsible managers submitted under paragraph (2)(B).

''(b) PERFORMANCE OF RESPONSIBLE MANAGERS.—(1) The Secretary shall—

''(A) promptly notify each responsible manager of a covered issue by not later than seven days after the date on which the Inspector General submits a covered report to the Secretary;

''(B) direct such manager to resolve such issue; and

''(C) provide such manager with appropriate counseling and a mitigation plan with respect to resolving such issue.

''(2) The Secretary shall ensure that any performance review of a responsible manager includes an evaluation of whether the manager took appropriate actions during the period covered by the review to respond to a covered issue.

''(3) The Secretary may not pay to a responsible manager any bonus or award under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5 or any other bonus or award authorized under such title or this title if a covered issue is unresolved.

''(c) ROLE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.—Any authority of the Inspector General provided under this section is in addition to any responsibility or authority provided to the Inspector General in the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'covered issue' means, with respect to a responsible manager, an issue described in a covered report for which the manager is or was responsible.

''(2) The term 'covered report' means a report by the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs that recommends actions to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (or other official or employee of the Department) to address an issue in the Department with respect to public health or safety relating to misconduct, or alleged misconduct, by an employee of the Department.

''(3) The term 'responsible manager' means an individual who—

''(A) is an employee of the Department;

''(B) is or was responsible for an issue included in a covered report; and

''(C) in being so responsible, is or was employed in a management position, regardless of whether the employee is in the competitive civil service, Senior Executive Service, or other type of civil service.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter, as amended by section 8, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 725 the following new item:

''727. Accountability of Secretary to Inspector General.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 388, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

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

We have a real opportunity here to inject accountability into the VA's culture of mismanagement. The Benishek-Sinema amendment would help ensure that, when a VA inspector general identifies a problem and offers recommendations to fix it, the changes are made, and the job gets done.

Today, the IG regularly issues reports on problems at the Department, and most of the time, the VA agrees with many of the recommendations and promises to change. The problem is no manager is actually named as being responsible for making those changes. When no one is in charge, nothing gets done, and there is no one to hold responsible. This amendment makes key changes that will give the IG's reports teeth, that will bring to the VA the solutions our veterans deserve.

It increases transparency, and it allows the public to see the IG's report related to alleged employee misconduct. It requires the release of any modifications that the VA has asked the IG to make.

It also requires the IG to identify specific managers who are responsible for fixing the problems identified in the reports. Their names will not be released, but this will allow Congress and the VA to know who is responsible for fixing the problem. Those individuals will not be able to receive a bonus or any performance award until the IG certifies that the problem is resolved.

Finally, it reduces the burden on a supervisor when it is necessary to fire a bad employee. A supervisor cannot effectively manage if his hands are tied.

This amendment has a history of bipartisan support, passing as a standalone bill by voice vote in the last Congress. It has also garnered the support of veterans' service organizations, including the American Legion, the VFW, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

I thank my colleague and friend, Congresswoman SINEMA, for her leadership and for joining me on the issue. I am grateful for Chairman MILLER's support and for that of the entire Veterans' Affairs Committee. Chairman MILLER has been an incredible voice and advocate for our veterans.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAKANO. I thank the gentleman from Michigan, my good friend, for offering his amendment. Reluctantly, I rise in opposition to the amendment offered by the gentleman and Representative SINEMA.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment would require the IG to identify problem employees at the VA, and it would prohibit the VA from giving performance pay to these identified employees.

I believe this amendment could compromise the integrity of the VA inspector general and the ability of the VA IG to investigate whistleblower complaints and bring to light problems at the VA.

The amendment would force the IG to concentrate its efforts on identifying bad managers by name rather than focusing on recommending solutions to problems and conducting thorough and complete investigations.

Requiring the IG to forward anything submitted to the VA would interject Congress into the very manner in which the IG drafts and finalizes reports. This change would call into question the integrity of the investigations that Congress relies on to shape policy and to find solutions.

Finally, I believe that this amendment is vaguely drafted and that it raises more questions than it seeks to answer. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER), the chairman of the committee.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, once again, Members who saw this go through regular order last year through the committee and then pass the full House are now in opposition.

I rise in support of Dr. BENISHEK's amendment. He has been the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health since the 113th Congress. It is a position that I offered him based on his dedication to our Nation's veterans. Dr. BENISHEK's amendment to the VA Accountability Act of 2015 contains the text of his bill, the Demanding Accountability for Veterans Act.

The Demanding Accountability for Veterans Act is a bipartisan piece of legislation that is supported by many veterans' service organizations. His amendment would require the inspector general to be transparent with Congress about the reports that are written about VA facilities and programs and the changes that are being made to those reports at the VA's behest.

The amendment would also require the VA to provide the name of the VA employee who is responsible for implementing recommendations issued by the IG, to direct that employee to take action, and to prohibit the VA from paying a bonus or a performance award to that employee if appropriate action is not taken. In the most recent semiannual report to Congress, the VA inspector general reported that 1,150 recommendations were left open by the Department of Veterans Affairs. That is not acceptable.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA).

Ms. SINEMA. I thank Mr. TAKANO, Chairman MILLER, and Chairman BENISHEK for their efforts to improve the quality of care and services delivered to our veterans.

Mr. Chairman, the Benishek-Sinema amendment is a commonsense amendment that will bring accountability to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The amendment, based on a bill that Dr. BENISHEK and I introduced, the Demanding Accountability for Veterans Act, requires the VA to address problems identified by the VA Office of Inspector General, and it ensures that individual managers are held accountable if issues remain unresolved.

Our amendment requires that, in each covered VA inspector general report, the Secretary of the VA assign specific managers who will be responsible for fixing specific problems identified within the IG's report. The Secretary must give the responsible managers appropriate counseling and plans of action to resolve each covered issue. Bonuses cannot be paid if a covered issue remains unresolved, and how a manager responds to the challenge will be included in that individual's performance evaluation.

It is unacceptable that issues raised by the VA inspector general over and over, from wait times to medical staffing, remain unresolved by the VA. This amendment will hold the VA Secretary and senior management accountable for ensuring these warnings are not ignored again.

We have a long way to go to change the system and culture of the VA, and I will continue working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that veterans come first.

Again, I thank Chairman MILLER, Chairman BENISHEK, and Mr. TAKANO for their leadership and for their work on veterans' issues. I especially thank

Chairman BENISHEK for his thoughtful, bipartisan approach to this amendment.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining on both sides?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Michigan has 2 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 2¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, this measure has significant applicability to the ''right here, right now'' problems associated with the VA. Specifically, I am going to cite the oversight efforts involving the Philadelphia VA Regional Office.

It has been nearly a year since the Philadelphia VA problems were first reported. We have an IG report; we have an AIB report; and we have egregious allegations that have been proven true. Yet, as a Member of Congress who represents tens of thousands of veterans who rely on the Philadelphia VA for benefits and services, I still don't have answers. I still don't know who is responsible or know of all of the specific misconduct and behaviors or know of the repercussions for the employees who are responsible.

Our tools for providing oversight over the VA need updating to reflect that there must be transparency when investigating and disciplining bad employees. This amendment and this bill move us in the right direction towards accountability and transparency.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in full support of this amendment.

For far too long, the VA has condoned an apathetic culture that encourages its employees to ignore their duties and to cover up serious problems.

Last year, the staff of VISN 16, which includes my home State of Louisiana, admitted to inappropriately denying hundreds of veterans' medical care claims. When my office asked how many veterans' claims were being inappropriately denied, we were met with excuses and obfuscation. That is completely unacceptable.

One important provision of this amendment would prevent bonuses and performance awards for VA employees who fail to fix these problems. This provision is similar to an amendment I offered to the VA appropriations measure this past April. No small business in Louisiana would survive by allowing employees with such poor success rates to earn bonuses. I believe this is one of the most effective ways we can force accountability on this overly bureaucratic agency.

I thank Chairman MILLER and Chairman BENISHEK for their efforts in this cause.

I urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment and hold the VA accountable for their inadequate and unacceptable performance.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114–234.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment in the nature of a substitute at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fair VA Accountability Act''.

SEC. 2. SUSPENSION AND REMOVAL OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES FOR PERFORMANCE OR MISCONDUCT THAT IS A THREAT TO PUBLIC HEALTH OR SAFETY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding after section 713 the following new section:

''§ 715. Employees: suspension and removal for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health or safety

''(a) SUSPENSION AND REMOVAL.—Subject to subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary may—

''(1) suspend without pay an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs if the Secretary determines the performance or misconduct of the employee is a clear and direct threat to public health or safety; and

''(2) remove an employee suspended under paragraph (1) when, after such investigation and review as the Secretary considers necessary, the Secretary determines that removal is necessary in the interests of public health or safety.

''(b) PROCEDURE.—An employee suspended under subsection (a)(1) is entitled, after suspension and before removal, to—

''(1) within 30 days after suspension, a written statement of the specific charges against the employee, which may be amended within 30 days thereafter;

''(2) an opportunity within 30 days thereafter, plus an additional 30 days if the charges are amended, to answer the charges and submit affidavits;

''(3) a hearing, at the request of the employee, by a Department authority duly constituted for this purpose;

''(4) a review of the case by the Secretary, before a decision adverse to the employee is made final; and

''(5) written statement of the decision of the Secretary.

''(c) RELATION TO OTHER DISCIPLINARY RULES.—The authority provided under this section shall be in addition to the authority provided under section 713 and title 5 with respect to disciplinary actions for performance or misconduct.

''(d) BACK PAY FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS.—If any employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs is subject to a suspension or removal under this section and such suspension or removal is determined by an appropriate authority under applicable law, rule, regulation, or collective bargaining agreement to be a prohibited personnel practice described under section 2302(b)(8) or (9) of title 5, such employee shall receive back pay equal to the total amount of basic pay that such employee would have received during the period that the suspension and removal (as the case may be) was in effect, less any amounts earned by the employee through other employment during that period.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the term 'employee' means any individual occupying a position within the Department of Veterans Affairs under a permanent or indefinite appointment and who is not serving a probationary or trial period.''.

(b) CLERICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CLERICAL.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding after the item relating to section 713 the following new item:

''715. Employees: suspension and removal for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health or safety.''.

(2) CONFORMING.—Section 4303(f) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking ''or'' at the end of paragraph (2);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (3) and inserting '', or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(4) any suspension or removal under section 715 of title 38.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE OF BACK PAY PROVISION.—Subsection (d) of section 715 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on October 1, 2015.

(d) REPORT ON SUSPENSIONS AND REMOVALS.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on suspensions and removals of employees of the Department made under section 715 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a). Such report shall include, with respect to the period covered by the report, the following:

(1) The number of employees who were suspended under such section.

(2) The number of employees who were removed under such section.

(3) A description of the threats to public health or safety that caused such suspensions and removals.

(4) The number of such suspensions or removals, or proposed suspensions or removals, that were of employees who filed a complaint regarding—

(A) an alleged prohibited personnel practice committed by an officer or employee of the Department and described in section 2302(b)(8) or 2302(b)(9)(A)(i), (B), (C), or (D) of title 5, United States Code; or

(B) the safety of a patient at a medical facility of the Department.

(5) Of the number of suspensions and removals listed under paragraph (4), the number that the Inspector General considers to be retaliation for whistleblowing.

(6) The number of such suspensions or removals that were of an employee who was the subject of a complaint made to the Department regarding the health or safety of a patient at a medical facility of the Department.

(7) Any recommendations by the Inspector General, based on the information described in paragraphs (1) through (6), to improve the authority to make such suspensions and removals.

SEC. 3. LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE FOR EMPLOYEES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 38, United States Code, is further amended by

adding after section 715, as added by section 2, the following new section:

"§ 717. Administrative leave limitation and report

''(a) LIMITATION APPLICABLE TO EMPLOYEES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—(1) The Secretary may not place any covered individual on administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status without charge to leave, for more than a total of 14 days during any 365-day period.

''(2) The Secretary may waive the limitation under paragraph (1) and extend the administrative leave or other paid non-duty status without charge to leave of a covered individual placed on such leave or status under paragraph (1) if the Secretary submits to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a detailed explanation of the reasons the individual was placed on administrative leave or other paid non-duty status without charge to leave and the reasons for the extension of such leave or status. Such explanation shall include the name of the covered individual, the location where the individual is employed, and the individual's job title.

''(3) In this subsection, the term 'covered individual' means an employee of the Department—

''(A) who is subject to an investigation for purposes of determining whether such individual should be subject to any disciplinary action under this title or title 5; or

''(B) against whom any disciplinary action is proposed or initiated under this title or title 5.

''(b) REPORT ON ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE.—(1) Not later than 30 days after the end of each quarter of any calendar year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report listing the name of any employee of the Department (if any) who has been placed on administrative leave, or any other type of paid non-duty status, for a period longer than 7 days during such quarter.

''(2) Any report submitted under subsection (a) shall include, with respect to any employee listed in such report, the position occupied by the employee, the number of days of such leave, and the reason that such employee was placed on such leave.''.

(b) APPLICATION.—

(1) ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE LIMITATION.—Section 717(a) of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), shall apply to any action of removal or transfer under section 713 of such title or title 5, United States Code, commencing on or after the date of enactment of this section.

(2) REPORT.—The report under section 717(b) of such title (as added by subsection (a)) shall begin to apply in the quarter that ends after the date that is 6 months after the date of enactment of this section.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter 7 is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''717. Administrative leave limitation and report.''.

Amend the title so as to read: ''A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to suspend and remove employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health or safety.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 388, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, in Congress, we can all agree that greater accountability is sorely needed within the Department of Veterans Affairs. We are all outraged that VA employees whose misconduct has harmed veterans have remained in their jobs. Last summer, we were all horrified that the VA medical centers in Phoenix and elsewhere manipulated patient wait times. This spring, in Denver, we were frustrated by the huge cost overruns with no real accountability.

I agree with my Republican colleagues that the VA must do a better job of using its existing authorities to hold bad employees, such as these, accountable. Unfortunately, this lack of accountability has overshadowed the excellent work of the vast majority of VA employees—over a third of them veterans themselves, whose genuine caring and tireless efforts honor veterans' service to our Nation. I believe it is wrong to assume VA employees are guilty until proven innocent, and I believe that H.R. 1994 is the wrong way to achieve greater accountability at the VA.

This afternoon, I am offering an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1994. The text of my amendment is based on my bill, H.R. 2999, the Fair VA Accountability Act. I urge all of my colleagues to support it today.

□ 1600

My substitute would provide real accountability at the VA in a manner that preserves the important due process rights of VA employees and protects our veterans, and my substitute would improve the status quo by giving VA an additional accountability mechanism.

It would allow VA to immediately fire, without pay, any VA employee whose misconduct presents a clear and present danger to public health and safety while providing adequate due process on the back end for such employees.

This standard comes from Supreme Court precedent regarding constitutional due process for Federal employees and mirrors a similar Department of Defense provision.

My substitute would mean that, if a VA employee's behavior threatened veterans' health or safety, VA could immediately fire that employee. Current law only allows VA to ask such an employee to leave work while still receiving pay.

My substitute would also cap paid administrative leave at 14 days so VA employees would not sit at home and collect a paycheck while fighting a disciplinary action.

My substitute would shield our bold VA whistleblowers by protecting existing laws and requiring the VA to backpay any whistleblower unjustly fired for reporting wrongdoing.

In sum, my substitute would provide the VA with the tools it needs to remove dangerous employees immediately and protect the health and safety of veterans and others, and my bill does so in a way which preserves important concepts of due process for VA employees.

These employees live in our communities and States. They are our friends and neighbors and sometimes our family members. Ensuring basic American notions of fairness is what my amendment in the nature of a substitute provides and, frankly, what H.R. 1994 does not.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chair, I thank the gentleman for his amendment in the nature of a substitute, but at this time I have to oppose it.

I appreciate that Mr. TAKANO does believe that we need to provide real accountability at the Department of Veterans Affairs. But as I said at our committee markup when he offered an almost identical amendment, this substitute fails to achieve true accountability.

I am supportive of section 3 of his amendment, which would limit administrative leave for all employees to 14 days, and I agree with this commonsense policy. But I would note that this limitation language is already included in my bill, H.R. 1994.

My main concern with the substitute lies within section 2, which would dramatically change the standard and the process set up in my bill of removing VA employees.

The substitute would only give the Secretary the authority to remove an employee if they represent a ''clear and direct threat to public health or safety,'' which is almost an unobtainable, if not immeasurable, bar to reach.

This undefined standard would make it almost impossible for the Secretary to remove any employee under this new authority, thereby ensuring that the current stalemate that exists with the civil service rules would continue.

Unfortunately, as I said moments ago, maintaining the status quo is not acceptable. I would submit that the standard of a clear and direct threat to public health and safety would not apply to those employees involved with many of today's ongoing scandals at the VA, including the cost overruns of the Denver hospital; the budget shortfall that we are going to vote to fix later today, a $3 billion budget fix; the manipulation of data at the Philadelphia regional office; the allegations of inappropriate use of government purchase cards to the tune of $6 billion; the allegations of employees at the Los Angeles regional office once again inappropriately shredding veterans' claim information; and the many other egregious actions that continue to come to light at VA almost every single day.

Members, these are the very type of employees that our constituents and

our veterans expect to be held accountable, but the standard proposed in this substitute would not give the Secretary the authority to provide the accountability we all know that VA desperately needs.

I also have some concerns with the procedures that are laid out in the substitute to actually remove these employees.

I believe that, unlike the procedures that I have laid out in my bill, which set definitive timelines to remove someone while maintaining the due process and maintaining appeal rights, the procedures laid out in this substitute could allow an employee to be on indefinite suspension for months, if not years, awaiting a hearing for the Secretary's final decision.

It has been mentioned several times by my colleagues on the other side that passage of H.R. 1994 would return to a spoils or an at-will employment system. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Let me compare a spoils or an at-will system to the protections offered in 1994.

First, a spoils system would allow the party in power to hire anyone, usually partisan supporters, that they want to reward for their political support with a Federal job. In contrast, H.R. 1994 has no effect on the current hiring process.

Second, a spoils or a patronage system makes all employees at will and subject to firing for any or even no reason. Again, that is hardly the case in my bill. H.R. 1994 requires proof in the form of poor performance or misconduct.

Additionally, my bill requires the Secretary to report the reasons for any such removals to Congress within 30 days.

Third, in a spoils system, a fired employee has no right of appeal. In contrast, under H.R. 1994, fired employees still have due process rights, including 45 days to appeal their firing to the Merit Systems Protection Board.

Fourth, in a spoils system, there is no such thing as paid administrative leave. You are fired, gone with no pay.

Under civil service rules, a poor-performing employee can be placed on administrative leave for essentially an unlimited time, as we have seen with several miscreants identified during our investigations.

H.R. 1994, on the other hand, would limit the Secretary's authority to put someone on paid administrative leave to 14 days, at which time the Secretary must bring that person back to Active Duty.

Fifth, in a spoils system, there are no protections for whistleblowers. In an at-will system, employees may or may not be covered by whistleblower protection, employee discrimination, et cetera, type laws, depending on the type of employer.

However, under H.R. 1994, employees are protected by both of these types of laws, plus the procedures and additional protections created under section 4 of my bill.

Employees cannot be removed without OSC approval if an open case exists, and employees cannot be removed or demoted if they have an open case under the new process that is laid out in section 4 until the Office of Accountability review makes a final determination.

So, ultimately, not only does this amendment set a standard for removal that is not relevant to a majority of the issues that we see at the Department, it keeps intact the long and arduous timeline before a final approval is complete. This is not fair to veterans, to the Department, or to the employee in question.

To reemphasize, I also have issues with the whistleblower protections that are laid out in this substitute or the lack of protections in this substitute.

The only mention of whistleblower protections made in this amendment says that a whistleblower may receive backpay if the Merit Systems Protection Board ultimately decides they were removed for blowing the whistle.

Not only does this not provide any protections on the front end, but it would also strip out all of the whistleblower protections I have included in section 4 of my bill.

We all know that the Secretary has a tall task to restore trust and to rebuild the VA. We have to give him every tool possible to complete that mission. This amendment does not come close to giving him the tool that he needs today.

So, once again, I urge Members to support change and stand with veterans, not the bureaucrats and the special interest groups and the status quo. I urge Members to oppose the Takano substitute.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, my good friend and colleague, Chairman MILLER of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, has implied that my clear and present danger standard in the substitute that I have offered is too narrow and does not give the Secretary enough tools to dismiss bad employees. I respectfully disagree.

Particularly in the case of the Phoenix VA, the hospital's director, Sharon Helman, clearly posed a threat to the health and safety of veterans. Under my substitute, she would have been immediately removed.

Similarly, many of the speakers on the other side of the aisle cited a crackhouse case where a VA employee took a veteran to a crackhouse.

Now, my substitute and the clear and present standard, the health and safety standard that we have put forward, would clearly have addressed that employee and would have made that employee immediately dismissible.

Let me remind you again that VA does have current title 5 procedures that they have been using to remove poor-performing employees.

We should encourage the VA to use them better, to use the tools that they have. I remind my colleagues that last year 872 permanent employees were removed, 487 more resigned in lieu of being fired, and 958 probationary employees were terminated.

Now, the fact that the VA wait list scandal emerged out of Phoenix was because we do have protections for whistleblowers. They could be strengthened.

Nevertheless, the current civil service protections, the due process protections, afforded those employees the security to move forward and to come forward as whistleblowers.

Again, my amendment in the form of a substitute fixes the deficiencies of my good friend Chairman MILLER's bill.

I have said before that I believe his bill puts extra barriers in front of whistleblowers in coming forward. It complicates and makes more cumbersome their ability to come forward.

If you are an employee who is under threat of dismissal and immediately losing your livelihood, that is a huge, huge barrier to your coming forward as a whistleblower.

That is exactly what his bill would do. It would make everyone in the VA an at-will employee.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT), the chairman of the subcommittee that has jurisdiction over the VA budget.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Chair, I want to thank Chairman MILLER for his leadership on this.

I rise to oppose the substitute amendment. But I want to express my gratitude to the chairman for the work that he and the Veterans' Affairs Committee have done, all the work they have put into this legislation to prevent another VA catastrophe by making sure that the Choice Act funds we appropriated last year can be used for related veterans' community care expenditures.

This bill will ensure that no veterans hospital or care for any veteran will be jeopardized due to the VA's continuing mismanagement of the influx of patients that followed last year's passage of the Choice Act.

Once again, Congress is providing the VA with all the resources they require to provide timely, quality care to our veterans and their loved ones.

It was only about a month ago that we were informed by the Department that there was a shortfall of the magnitude of almost $3.4 billion, and here we are today remedying this problem.

The bill also proposes something that is sorely needed: the consolidation of the myriad programs VA uses to provide care outside their facilities.

Veterans are confused. VA employees are confused. Doctors are confused. Reimbursement rates are not standardized.

We need to make sure that the non-VA care program is thriving so that patients can get the high-quality care they deserve in their homes, in their

home communities, right where they live.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, I will continue to devote time and attention to pinpointing the VA's future funding needs and maintaining vigilant oversight of their appropriated taxpayer dollars.

The VA must develop systems that give us accurate and on-time information and engage with Congress in a transparent and timely manner. We cannot and should not continue to lurch from one VA funding crisis to another.

□ 1615

What we have seen is terrible management and a terrible disservice to our veterans by the VA in many of these cases; we need to fix it. I believe the Secretary is a good and honorable man trying to do his best, but the taxpayers deserve better, and our veterans most assuredly do.

I urge passage of this bill. I thank the chairman and the leadership of the committee.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN), the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Let me just be clear. I am just amazed that, on the last day of the session, we are spending the entire afternoon discussing H.R. 1994—a bill that the Senate will not pick up; and if, by some miracle, it passed, the President would veto it—when there are so many other things that we could be discussing.

How about addressing H.R. 3266, which will give the Secretary the authority to run the VA like a business, which is what we keep saying?

I support the substitute amendment. The accountability substitute is offered today because it brings real accountability to the VA while maintaining constitutionality due process protection for civil service employees.

At the Committee on Veterans' Affairs over the past 2 years, we have learned of widespread mismanagement and—let me emphasize—lack of training at the VA. The problems that the VA has have gone back for many years, over 30. Maybe if we had adequately funded VA, they would have fewer problems.

The majority has introduced H.R. 1994, which attempts to increase accountability by allowing VA to immediately fire any employee for misconduct with only limited due process. The substitute increases accountability by allowing VA to immediately suspend, without pay, any employee whose misconduct posed a direct threat to veterans' health and safety.

Unlike H.R. 1994, the substitute provides sufficient due process rights to meet constitutional requirements by providing an accused employee with a fair chance to tell their side of the story.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this substitute and vote against H.R. 1994.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. May I inquire how much time is remaining on my side?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida has 1 minute remaining. The gentleman from California has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I encourage all of my colleagues to vote for my amendment in the nature of a substitute.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, what this amendment does is basically gut H.R. 1994, which is an accountability bill that provides the Secretary with a desperately needed tool in order to hold people accountable within the Department.

I would like to read for the RECORD the 11 veterans service organizations that support the removal authority: American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, Student Veterans of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Military Officers Association of America, Reserve Officers Association, Concerned Veterans for America, and AMVETS.

I remind Members that VA has only successfully removed three VA employees for reasons related to the wait time manipulation in the VA scandal that was brought to everybody's attention back in April.

Here are those that oppose the accountability bill: the American Federation of Government Employees and the National Treasury Employees Union.

So, again, on opposition are the unions; on support are the veterans service organizations.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) having assumed the chair, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1994) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND VETERANS HEALTH CARE CHOICE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 3236.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 388, I call up the bill (H.R. 3236) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill contains an emergency designation pursuant to section 4(g)(1) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010. Accordingly, the Chair must put the question of consideration under section 4(g)(2) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010.

The question is, Will the House now consider the bill?

The question of consideration was decided in the affirmative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 388, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3236

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015''.

(b) RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS.—The Secretary of Transportation shall reduce the amount apportioned or allocated for a program, project, or activity under this Act in fiscal year 2015 by amounts apportioned or allocated pursuant to the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 and the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2015, including the amendments made by such Acts, for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015.

(c) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; reconciliation of funds; table of contents.

TITLE I—SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM EXTENSION

Subtitle A—Federal-Aid Highways

Sec. 1001. Extension of Federal-aid highway programs.

Sec. 1002. Administrative expenses.

Subtitle B—Extension of Highway Safety Programs
Sec. 1101. Extension of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration highway safety programs.
Sec. 1102. Extension of Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration programs.
Sec. 1103. Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act.
Subtitle C—Public Transportation Programs
Sec. 1201. Formula grants for rural areas.
Sec. 1202. Apportionment of appropriations for formula grants.
Sec. 1203. Authorizations for public transportation.
Sec. 1204. Bus and bus facilities formula grants.
Subtitle D—Hazardous Materials
Sec. 1301. Authorization of appropriations.
TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS
Sec. 2001. Extension of Highway Trust Fund expenditure authority.
Sec. 2002. Funding of Highway Trust Fund.
Sec. 2003. Modification of mortgage reporting requirements.
Sec. 2004. Consistent basis reporting between estate and person acquiring property from decedent.
Sec. 2005. Clarification of 6-year statute of limitations in case of overstatement of basis.
Sec. 2006. Tax return due dates.
Sec. 2007. Transfers of excess pension assets to retiree health accounts.
Sec. 2008. Equalization of Highway Trust Fund excise taxes on liquefied natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas, and compressed natural gas.
TITLE III—ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS
Sec. 3001. Service fees.
TITLE IV—VETERANS PROVISIONS
Sec. 4001. Short title.
Sec. 4002. Plan to consolidate programs of Department of Veterans Affairs to improve access to care.
Sec. 4003. Funding account for non-Department care.
Sec. 4004. Temporary authorization of use of Veterans Choice Funds for certain programs.
Sec. 4005. Modifications of Veterans Choice Program.
Sec. 4006. Limitation on dialysis pilot program.
Sec. 4007. Amendments to Internal Revenue Code with respect to health coverage of veterans.
Sec. 4008. Emergency designations.

TITLE I—SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM EXTENSION

Subtitle A—Federal-Aid Highways

SEC. 1001. EXTENSION OF FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1001(a) of the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (128 Stat. 1840) is amended by striking ''July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''October 29, 2015''.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) HIGHWAY TRUST FUND.—Section 1001(b)(1) of the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (128 Stat. 1840) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) HIGHWAY TRUST FUND.—Except as provided in section 1002, there is authorized to be appropriated out of the Highway Trust Fund (other than the Mass Transit Account)—

''(A) for fiscal year 2015, a sum equal to the total amount authorized to be appropriated out of the Highway Trust Fund (other than the Mass Transit Account) for programs, projects, and activities for fiscal year 2014 under divisions A and E of MAP–21 (Public Law 112–141) and title 23, United States Code (excluding chapter 4 of that title); and

''(B) for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015, 29/366 of the total amount authorized to be appropriated out of the Highway Trust Fund (other than the Mass Transit Account) for programs, projects, and activities for fiscal year 2015 under divisions A and E of MAP–21 (Public Law 112–141) and title 23, United States Code (excluding chapter 4 of that title).''.

(2) GENERAL FUND.—Section 1123(h)(1) of MAP–21 (23 U.S.C. 202 note) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $24,986,301 out of the general fund of the Treasury to carry out the program for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $2,377,049 out of the general fund of the Treasury to carry out the program for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1001(c)(1) of the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (128 Stat. 1840) is amended by striking ''(1) IN GENERAL.—'' and all that follows through ''to carry out programs'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise expressly provided in this subtitle, funds authorized to be appropriated under subsection (b)(1)—

''(A) for fiscal year 2015 shall be distributed, administered, limited, and made available for obligation in the same manner and at the same levels as the amounts of funds authorized to be appropriated out of the Highway Trust Fund (other than the Mass Transit Account) for fiscal year 2014; and

''(B) for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015, shall be distributed, administered, limited, and made available for obligation in the same manner and at the same levels as 29/366 of the amounts of funds authorized to be appropriated out of the Highway Trust Fund (other than the Mass Transit Account) for fiscal year 2015, to carry out programs''.

(2) OBLIGATION CEILING.—Section 1102 of MAP–21 (23 U.S.C. 104 note) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (2); and

(ii) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) $40,256,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(4) $3,189,683,060 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.'';

(B) in subsection (b)(12)—

(i) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2014'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015''; and

(ii) by striking '', and for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015, only in an amount equal to $639,000,000, less any reductions that would have otherwise been required for that year by section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a), then multiplied by 304/365 for that period'' and inserting '', and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015, only in an amount equal to $639,000,000, less any reductions that would have otherwise been required for that year by section 251A of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a), then multiplied by 29/366 for that period'';

(C) in subsection (c)—

(i) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2014 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''; and

(ii) in paragraph (2) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by striking ''for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015, that is equal to 304/365 of such unobligated balance'' and inserting ''for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015, that is equal to 29/366 of such unobligated balance'';

(D) in subsection (d) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2016''; and

(E) in subsection (f)(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2014 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

SEC. 1002. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.

Section 1002 of the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (128 Stat. 1842) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) by striking ''for administrative expenses of the Federal-aid highway program $366,465,753 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015.'' and inserting ''for administrative expenses of the Federal-aid highway program—

''(1) $440,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(2) $34,863,388 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''; and

(2) by striking subsection (b)(2) and inserting the following:

''(2) for fiscal year 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015, subject to the limitations on administrative expenses under the heading 'Federal Highway Administration' in appropriations Acts that apply, respectively, to that fiscal year and period.''.

Subtitle B—Extension of Highway Safety Programs

SEC. 1101. EXTENSION OF NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAMS.

(a) EXTENSION OF PROGRAMS.—

(1) HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAMS.—Section 31101(a)(1) of MAP–21 (126 Stat. 733) is amended—

(A) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(B) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) $235,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(D) $18,620,219 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(2) HIGHWAY SAFETY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—Section 31101(a)(2) of MAP–21 (126 Stat. 733) is amended—

(A) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(B) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) $113,500,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(D) $8,993,169 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(3) NATIONAL PRIORITY SAFETY PROGRAMS.—Section 31101(a)(3) of MAP–21 (126 Stat. 733) is amended—

(A) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(B) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) $272,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(D) $21,551,913 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(4) NATIONAL DRIVER REGISTER.—Section 31101(a)(4) of MAP–21 (126 Stat. 733) is amended—

(A) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(B) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) $5,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(D) $396,175 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(5) HIGH VISIBILITY ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM.—

(A) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 31101(a)(5) of MAP–21 (126 Stat. 733) is amended—

(i) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(ii) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) $29,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(D) $2,297,814 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(B) LAW ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGNS.—Section 2009(a) of SAFETEA–LU (23 U.S.C. 402 note) is amended—

(i) in the first sentence by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and in the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and in the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''; and

(ii) in the second sentence by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and in the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and in the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

(6) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Section 31101(a)(6) of MAP–21 (126 Stat. 733) is amended—

(A) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B); and

(B) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) $25,500,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(D) $2,020,492 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(b) COOPERATIVE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION.—Section 403(f)(1) of title 23, United States Code, is amended by striking ''each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2014, and $2,082,192 of the total amount available for apportionment to the States for highway safety programs under section 402(c) in the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2015, and $198,087 of the total amount available for apportionment to the States for highway safety programs under section 402(c) in the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF TITLE 23.—Section 31101(c) of MAP–21 (126 Stat. 733) is amended by striking ''fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

SEC. 1102. EXTENSION OF FEDERAL MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMS.

(a) MOTOR CARRIER SAFETY GRANTS.—Section 31104(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (9); and

(2) by striking paragraph (10) and inserting the following:

''(10) $218,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(11) $17,273,224 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Section 31104(i)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (I); and

(2) by striking subparagraph (J) and inserting the following:

''(J) $259,000,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(K) $20,521,858 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(c) GRANT PROGRAMS.—

(1) COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.—Section 4101(c)(1) of SAFETEA–LU (119 Stat. 1715) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $24,986,301 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $2,377,049 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(2) BORDER ENFORCEMENT GRANTS.—Section 4101(c)(2) of SAFETEA–LU (119 Stat. 1715) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $26,652,055 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $2,535,519 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(3) PERFORMANCE AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 4101(c)(3) of SAFETEA–LU (119 Stat. 1715) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $4,164,384 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $396,175 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(4) COMMERCIAL VEHICLE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND NETWORKS DEPLOYMENT PROGRAM.—Section 4101(c)(4) of SAFETEA–LU (119 Stat. 1715) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $20,821,918 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $1,980,874 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(5) SAFETY DATA IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.—Section 4101(c)(5) of SAFETEA–LU (119 Stat. 1715) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $2,498,630 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $237,705 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(d) HIGH-PRIORITY ACTIVITIES.—Section 31104(k)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2006 through 2014 and up to $12,493,151 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2006 through 2015 and up to $1,188,525 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

(e) NEW ENTRANT AUDITS.—Section 31144(g)(5)(B) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''per fiscal year and up to $26,652,055 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''per fiscal year and up to $2,535,519 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

(f) OUTREACH AND EDUCATION.—Section 4127(e) of SAFETEA–LU (119 Stat. 1741) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $3,331,507 to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $316,940 to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

(g) GRANT PROGRAM FOR COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATORS.—Section 4134(c) of SAFETEA–LU (49 U.S.C. 31301 note) is amended by striking ''each of fiscal years 2005 through 2014 and $832,877 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2005 through 2015 and $79,235 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

SEC. 1103. DINGELL-JOHNSON SPORT FISH RESTORATION ACT.

Section 4 of the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a) in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking ''each fiscal year through 2014 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''each fiscal year through 2015 and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1)(A) by striking ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2014, and for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2015, and for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

Subtitle C—Public Transportation Programs

SEC. 1201. FORMULA GRANTS FOR RURAL AREAS.

Section 5311(c)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A) by striking ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2014, and $4,164,384 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2015, and $396,175 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''; and

(2) in subparagraph (B) by striking ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2014, and $20,821,918 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2015, and $1,980,874 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

SEC. 1202. APPORTIONMENT OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR FORMULA GRANTS.

Section 5336(h)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2014, and $24,986,301 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''for each fiscal year ending before October 1, 2015, and $2,377,049 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

SEC. 1203. AUTHORIZATIONS FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

(a) FORMULA GRANTS.—Section 5338(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking ''and $7,158,575,342 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''$8,595,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $681,024,590 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015'';

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A) by striking ''and $107,274,521 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$128,800,000 for fiscal 2015, and $10,205,464 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(B) in subparagraph (B) by striking ''for each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $8,328,767 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''for each of fiscal years 2013 through

2015 and $792,350 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(C) in subparagraph (C) by striking ''and $3,713,505,753 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$4,458,650,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $353,281,011 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(D) in subparagraph (D) by striking ''and $215,132,055 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$258,300,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $20,466,393 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(E) in subparagraph (E)—

(i) by striking ''and $506,222,466 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$607,800,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $48,159,016 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(ii) by striking ''and $24,986,301 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$30,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $2,377,049 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''; and

(iii) by striking ''and $16,657,534 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $1,584,699 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(F) in subparagraph (F) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $2,498,630 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $237,705 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(G) in subparagraph (G) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $4,164,384 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $396,175 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(H) in subparagraph (H) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $3,206,575 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $305,055 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(I) in subparagraph (I) by striking ''and $1,803,927,671 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$2,165,900,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $171,615,027 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(J) in subparagraph (J) by striking ''and $356,304,658 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$427,800,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $33,896,721 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''; and

(K) in subparagraph (K) by striking ''and $438,009,863 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''$525,900,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $41,669,672 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

(b) RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT DEMONSTRATION AND DEPLOYMENT PROJECTS.—Section 5338(b) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $58,301,370 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''$70,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $5,546,448 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(c) TRANSIT COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM.—Section 5338(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $5,830,137 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''$7,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $554,645 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(d) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT.—Section 5338(d) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $5,830,137 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''$7,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $554,645 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(e) HUMAN RESOURCES AND TRAINING.—Section 5338(e) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $4,164,384 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $396,175 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(f) CAPITAL INVESTMENT GRANTS.—Section 5338(g) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''and $1,558,295,890 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''$1,907,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $151,101,093 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015''.

(g) ADMINISTRATION.—Section 5338(h) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking ''and $86,619,178 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015'' and inserting ''$104,000,000 for fiscal year 2015, and $8,240,437 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015'';

(2) in paragraph (2) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and not less than $4,164,384 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and not less than $396,175 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''; and

(3) in paragraph (3) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and not less than $832,877 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and not less than $79,235 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

SEC. 1204. BUS AND BUS FACILITIES FORMULA GRANTS.

Section 5339(d)(1) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''each of fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $54,553,425 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $5,189,891 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,'';

(2) by striking ''$1,041,096 for such period'' and inserting ''$99,044 for such period''; and

(3) by striking ''$416,438 for such period'' and inserting ''$39,617 for such period''.

Subtitle D—Hazardous Materials

SEC. 1301. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5128(a) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of paragraph (2); and

(2) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) $42,762,000 for fiscal year 2015; and

''(4) $3,388,246 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015.''.

(b) HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FUND.—Section 5128(b) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in the paragraph heading by striking ''FISCAL YEARS 2013 AND 2014'' and inserting ''FISCAL YEARS 2013 THROUGH 2015''; and

(B) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) by striking ''fiscal years 2013 and 2014'' and inserting ''fiscal years 2013 through 2015''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

''(2) FISCAL YEAR 2016.—From the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Fund established under section 5116(i), the Secretary may expend for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015—

''(A) $14,896 to carry out section 5115;

''(B) $1,727,322 to carry out subsections (a) and (b) of section 5116, of which not less than $1,081,557 shall be available to carry out section 5116(b);

''(C) $11,885 to carry out section 5116(f);

''(D) $49,522 to publish and distribute the Emergency Response Guidebook under section 5116(i)(3); and

''(E) $79,235 to carry out section 5116(j).''.

(c) HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRAINING GRANTS.—Section 5128(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking ''each of the fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and $3,331,507 for the period beginning on October 1, 2014, and ending on July 31, 2015,'' and inserting ''each of fiscal years 2013 through 2015 and $316,940 for the period beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending on October 29, 2015,''.

TITLE II—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 2001. EXTENSION OF HIGHWAY TRUST FUND EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY.

(a) HIGHWAY TRUST FUND.—Section 9503 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''August 1, 2015'' in subsections (b)(6)(B), (c)(1), and (e)(3) and inserting ''October 30, 2015'', and

(2) by striking ''Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2015'' in subsections (c)(1) and (e)(3) and inserting ''Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015''.

(b) SPORT FISH RESTORATION AND BOATING TRUST FUND.—Section 9504 of such Code is amended—

(1) by striking ''Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2015'' each place it appears in subsection (b)(2) and inserting ''Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015'', and

(2) by striking ''August 1, 2015'' in subsection (d)(2) and inserting ''October 30, 2015''.

(c) LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK TRUST FUND.—Section 9508(e)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''August 1, 2015'' and inserting ''October 30, 2015''.

SEC. 2002. FUNDING OF HIGHWAY TRUST FUND.

Section 9503(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating paragraph (7) as paragraph (8) and by inserting after paragraph (6) the following new paragraph:

''(7) ADDITIONAL SUMS.—Out of money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there is hereby appropriated—

''(A) $6,068,000,000 to the Highway Account (as defined in subsection (e)(5)(B)) in the Highway Trust Fund; and

''(B) $2,000,000,000 to the Mass Transit Account in the Highway Trust Fund.''.

SEC. 2003. MODIFICATION OF MORTGAGE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

(a) INFORMATION RETURN REQUIREMENTS.—Section 6050H(b)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (C), by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (G) and by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following new subparagraphs:

''(D) the amount of outstanding principal on the mortgage as of the beginning of such calendar year,

''(E) the date of the origination of the mortgage,

''(F) the address (or other description in the case of property without an address) of the property which secures the mortgage, and''.

(b) STATEMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS.—Section 6050H(d)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''subsection (b)(2)(C)'' and inserting ''subparagraphs (C), (D), (E), and (F) of subsection (b)(2)''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to returns required to be made, and statements required to be furnished, after December 31, 2016.

SEC. 2004. CONSISTENT BASIS REPORTING BETWEEN ESTATE AND PERSON ACQUIRING PROPERTY FROM DECEDENT.

(a) PROPERTY ACQUIRED FROM A DECEDENT.—Section 1014 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(f) BASIS MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH ESTATE TAX RETURN.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The basis of any property to which subsection (a) applies shall not exceed—

''(A) in the case of property the final value of which has been determined for purposes of the tax imposed by chapter 11 on the estate of such decedent, such value, and

''(B) in the case of property not described in subparagraph (A) and with respect to which a statement has been furnished under section 6035(a) identifying the value of such property, such value.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—Paragraph (1) shall only apply to any property whose inclusion in the decedent's estate increased the liability for the tax imposed by chapter 11 (reduced by credits allowable against such tax) on such estate.

''(3) DETERMINATION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the basis of property has been determined for purposes of the tax imposed by chapter 11 if—

''(A) the value of such property is shown on a return under section 6018 and such value is not contested by the Secretary before the expiration of the time for assessing a tax under chapter 11,

''(B) in a case not described in subparagraph (A), the value is specified by the Secretary and such value is not timely contested by the executor of the estate, or

''(C) the value is determined by a court or pursuant to a settlement agreement with the Secretary.

''(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary may by regulations provide exceptions to the application of this subsection.''.

(b) INFORMATION REPORTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subpart A of part III of subchapter A of chapter 61 of such Code is amended by inserting after section 6034A the following new section:

''SEC. 6035. BASIS INFORMATION TO PERSONS ACQUIRING PROPERTY FROM DECEDENT.

''(a) INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO PROPERTY ACQUIRED FROM DECEDENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The executor of any estate required to file a return under section 6018(a) shall furnish to the Secretary and to each person acquiring any interest in property included in the decedent's gross estate for Federal estate tax purposes a statement identifying the value of each interest in such property as reported on such return and such other information with respect to such interest as the Secretary may prescribe.

''(2) STATEMENTS BY BENEFICIARIES.—Each person required to file a return under section 6018(b) shall furnish to the Secretary and to each other person who holds a legal or beneficial interest in the property to which such return relates a statement identifying the information described in paragraph (1).

''(3) TIME FOR FURNISHING STATEMENT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Each statement required to be furnished under paragraph (1) or (2) shall be furnished at such time as the Secretary may prescribe, but in no case at a time later than the earlier of—

''(i) the date which is 30 days after the date on which the return under section 6018 was required to be filed (including extensions, if any), or

''(ii) the date which is 30 days after the date such return is filed.

''(B) ADJUSTMENTS.—In any case in which there is an adjustment to the information required to be included on a statement filed under paragraph (1) or (2) after such statement has been filed, a supplemental statement under such paragraph shall be filed not later than the date which is 30 days after such adjustment is made.

''(b) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as necessary to carry out this section, including regulations relating to—

''(1) the application of this section to property with regard to which no estate tax return is required to be filed, and

''(2) situations in which the surviving joint tenant or other recipient may have better information than the executor regarding the basis or fair market value of the property.''.

(2) PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO FILE.—

(A) RETURN.—Section 6724(d)(1) of such Code is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (C) and inserting '', and'', and by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(D) any statement required to be filed with the Secretary under section 6035.''.

(B) STATEMENT.—Section 6724(d)(2) of such Code is amended by striking ''or'' at the end of subparagraph (GG), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (HH) and inserting '', or'', and by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(II) section 6035 (other than a statement described in paragraph (1)(D)).''.

(3) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for subpart A of part III of subchapter A of chapter 61 of such Code is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 6034A the following new item:

''Sec. 6035. Basis information to persons acquiring property from decedent.''.

(c) PENALTY FOR INCONSISTENT REPORTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 6662(b) of such Code is amended by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph:

''(8) Any inconsistent estate basis.''.

(2) INCONSISTENT BASIS REPORTING.—Section 6662 of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(k) INCONSISTENT ESTATE BASIS REPORTING.—For purposes of this section, there is an 'inconsistent estate basis' if the basis of property claimed on a return exceeds the basis as determined under section 1014(f).''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to property with respect to which an estate tax return is filed after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 2005. CLARIFICATION OF 6-YEAR STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS IN CASE OF OVERSTATEMENT OF BASIS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6501(e)(1)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (i), by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii), and by inserting after clause (i) the following new clause:

''(ii) An understatement of gross income by reason of an overstatement of unrecovered cost or other basis is an omission from gross income; and'', and

(2) by inserting ''(other than in the case of an overstatement of unrecovered cost or other basis)'' in clause (iii) (as so redesignated) after ''In determining the amount omitted from gross income''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to—

(1) returns filed after the date of the enactment of this Act, and

(2) returns filed on or before such date if the period specified in section 6501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (determined without regard to such amendments) for assessment of the taxes with respect to which such return relates has not expired as of such date.

SEC. 2006. TAX RETURN DUE DATES.

(a) DUE DATES FOR RETURNS OF PARTNERSHIPS, S CORPORATIONS, AND C CORPORATIONS.—

(1) PARTNERSHIPS AND S CORPORATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—So much of subsection (b) of 6072 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as precedes the second sentence thereof is amended to read as follows:

''(b) RETURNS OF PARTNERSHIPS AND S CORPORATIONS.—Returns of partnerships under section 6031 and returns of S corporations under sections 6012 and 6037 made on the basis of the calendar year shall be filed on or before the 15th day of March following the close of the calendar year, and such returns made on the basis of a fiscal year shall be filed on or before the 15th day of the third month following the close of the fiscal year.''.

(B) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 6072(a) of such Code is amended by striking ''6017, or 6031'' and inserting ''or 6017''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS RELATING TO C CORPORATION DUE DATE OF 15TH DAY OF FOURTH MONTH FOLLOWING TAXABLE YEAR.—

(A) Section 170(a)(2)(B) of such Code is amended by striking ''third month'' and inserting ''fourth month''.

(B) Section 563 of such Code is amended by striking ''third month'' each place it appears and inserting ''fourth month''.

(C) Section 1354(d)(1)(B)(i) of such Code is amended by striking ''3d month'' and inserting ''4th month''.

(D) Subsections (a) and (c) of section 6167 of such Code are each amended by striking ''third month'' and inserting ''fourth month''.

(E) Section 6425(a)(1) of such Code is amended by striking ''third month'' and inserting ''fourth month''.

(F) Subsections (b)(2)(A), (g)(3), and (h)(1) of section 6655 of such Code are each amended by striking ''3rd month'' and inserting ''4th month''.

(G) Section 6655(g)(4) of such Code is amended by redesignating subparagraph (E) as subparagraph (F) and by inserting after subparagraph (D) the following new subparagraph:

''(E) Subsection (b)(2)(A) shall be applied by substituting '3rd month' for '4th month'.''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to returns for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

(B) SPECIAL RULE FOR C CORPORATIONS WITH FISCAL YEARS ENDING ON JUNE 30.—In the case of any C corporation with a taxable year ending on June 30, the amendments made by this subsection shall apply to returns for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2025.

(b) MODIFICATION OF DUE DATES BY REGULATION.—In the case of returns for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015, the Secretary of the Treasury, or the Secretary's designee, shall modify appropriate regulations to provide as follows:

(1) The maximum extension for the returns of partnerships filing Form 1065 shall be a 6-month period ending on September 15 for calendar year taxpayers.

(2) The maximum extension for the returns of trusts filing Form 1041 shall be a 5½-month period ending on September 30 for calendar year taxpayers.

(3) The maximum extension for the returns of employee benefit plans filing Form 5500 shall be an automatic 3½-month period ending on November 15 for calendar year plans.

(4) The maximum extension for the returns of organizations exempt from income tax filing Form 990 (series) shall be an automatic 6-month period ending on November 15 for calendar year filers.

(5) The maximum extension for the returns of organizations exempt from income tax that are required to file Form 4720 returns of excise taxes shall be an automatic 6-month period beginning on the due date for filing the return (without regard to any extensions).

(6) The maximum extension for the returns of trusts required to file Form 5227 shall be an automatic 6-month period beginning on the due date for filing the return (without regard to any extensions).

(7) The maximum extension for filing Form 6069, Return of Excise Tax on Excess Contributions to Black Lung Benefit Trust Under Section 4953 and Computation of Section 192 Deduction, shall be an automatic 6-month period beginning on the due date for filing the return (without regard to any extensions).

(8) The maximum extension for a taxpayer required to file Form 8870 shall be an automatic 6-month period beginning on the due date for filing the return (without regard to any extensions).

(9) The due date of Form 3520–A, Annual Information Return of a Foreign Trust with a United States Owner, shall be the 15th day of the 3d month after the close of the trust's taxable year, and the maximum extension shall be a 6-month period beginning on such day.

(10) The due date of Form 3520, Annual Return to Report Transactions with Foreign Trusts and Receipt of Certain Foreign Gifts, for calendar year filers shall be April 15 with a maximum extension for a 6-month period ending on October 15.

(11) The due date of FinCEN Report 114 (relating to Report of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts) shall be April 15 with a maximum extension for a 6-month period ending on October 15 and with provision for an extension under rules similar to the rules in Treas. Reg. section 1.6081–5. For any taxpayer required to file such Form for the first time, any penalty for failure to timely request for, or file, an extension, may be waived by the Secretary.

(c) CORPORATIONS PERMITTED STATUTORY AUTOMATIC 6-MONTH EXTENSION OF INCOME TAX RETURNS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 6081(b) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking ''3 months'' and inserting ''6 months'', and

(B) by adding at the end the following: ''In the case of any return for a taxable year of a C corporation which ends on December 31 and begins before January 1, 2026, the first sentence of this subsection shall be applied by substituting '5 months' for '6 months'. In the case of any return for a taxable year of a C corporation which ends on June 30 and begins before January 1, 2026, the first sentence of this subsection shall be applied by substituting '7 months' for '6 months'.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to returns for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2015.

SEC. 2007. TRANSFERS OF EXCESS PENSION ASSETS TO RETIREE HEALTH ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 420(b)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''December 31, 2021'' and inserting ''December 31, 2025''.

(b) CONFORMING ERISA AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Sections 101(e)(3), 403(c)(1), and 408(b)(13) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1021(e)(3), 1103(c)(1), 1108(b)(13)) are each amended by striking ''MAP–21'' and inserting ''Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015''.

(2) Section 408(b)(13) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 1108(b)(13)) is amended by striking ''January 1, 2022'' and inserting ''January 1, 2026''.

SEC. 2008. EQUALIZATION OF HIGHWAY TRUST FUND EXCISE TAXES ON LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS, LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS, AND COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS.

(a) LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4041(a)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (i), by redesignating clause (ii) as clause (iii), and by inserting after clause (i) the following new clause:

''(ii) in the case of liquefied petroleum gas, 18.3 cents per energy equivalent of a gallon of gasoline, and''.

(2) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF GASOLINE.—Section 4041(a)(2) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(C) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF GASOLINE.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'energy equivalent of a gallon of gasoline' means, with respect to a liquefied petroleum gas fuel, the amount of such fuel having a Btu content of 115,400 (lower heating value). For purposes of the preceding sentence, a Btu content of 115,400 (lower heating value) is equal to 5.75 pounds of liquefied petroleum gas.''.

(b) LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4041(a)(2)(B) of such Code, as amended by subsection (a)(1), is amended by striking ''and'' at the end of clause (ii), by striking the period at the end of clause (iii) and inserting '', and'' and by inserting after clause (iii) the following new clause:

''(iv) in the case of liquefied natural gas, 24.3 cents per energy equivalent of a gallon of diesel.''.

(2) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF DIESEL.—Section 4041(a)(2) of such Code, as amended by subsection (a)(2), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF DIESEL.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'energy equivalent of a gallon of diesel' means, with respect to a liquefied natural gas fuel, the amount of such fuel having a Btu content of 128,700 (lower heating value). For purposes of the preceding sentence, a Btu content of 128,700 (lower heating value) is equal to 6.06 pounds of liquefied natural gas.''.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 4041(a)(2)(B)(iii) of such Code, as redesignated by subsection (a)(1), is amended—

(A) by striking ''liquefied natural gas,'', and

(B) by striking ''peat), and'' and inserting ''peat) and''.

(c) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF GASOLINE TO COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS.—Section 4041(a)(3) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(D) ENERGY EQUIVALENT OF A GALLON OF GASOLINE.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term 'energy equivalent of a gallon of gasoline' means 5.66 pounds of compressed natural gas.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any sale or use of fuel after December 31, 2015.

TITLE III—ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 3001. SERVICE FEES.

Paragraph (4) of section 44940(i) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

''(K) $1,560,000,000 for fiscal year 2024.

''(L) $1,600,000,000 for fiscal year 2025.''.

TITLE IV—VETERANS PROVISIONS

SEC. 4001. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''VA Budget and Choice Improvement Act''.

SEC. 4002. PLAN TO CONSOLIDATE PROGRAMS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO CARE.

(a) PLAN.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop a plan to consolidate all non-Department provider programs by establishing a new, single program to be known as the ''Veterans Choice Program'' to furnish hospital care and medical services to veterans enrolled in the system of patient enrollment established under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code, at non-Department facilities.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The plan developed under subsection (a) to establish the Veterans Choice Program to furnish hospital care and medical services at non-Department facilities shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) A standardized method to furnish such care and services that incorporates the strengths of the non-Department provider programs into a single streamlined program that the Secretary administers uniformly in each Veterans Service Integrated Network and throughout the medical system of the Veterans Health Administration.

(2) An identification of the eligibility requirements for any such care and services, including with respect to service-connected disabilities and non-service-connected disabilities.

(3) A description of the authorization process for such care or medical services, including with respect to identifying the roles of clinicians, schedulers, any third-party administrators, the Chief Business Office of the Department, and any other entity involved in the authorization process.

(4) The structuring of the billing and reimbursement process, including the use of third-party medical claims adjudicators or technology that supports automatic adjudication.

(5) A description of the reimbursement rate to be paid to health care providers under such program.

(6) An identification of how the Secretary will determine the eligibility requirements of health care providers at non-Department facilities to participate in such program, including how the Secretary plans to structure a non-Department care network to allow the maximum amount of flexibility in providing care and services under the program.

(7) An explanation of the processes to be used to ensure that the Secretary will fully comply with all requirements of chapter 39 of title 31, United States Code (commonly referred to as the ''Prompt Payment Act''), in paying for such care and services furnished at non-Department facilities.

(8) A description of how, to the greatest extent practicable, the Secretary plans to use infrastructure and networks of non-Department provider programs that exist as of the date of the plan to implement such program.

(9) A description of how—

(A) health care providers at non-Department facilities that furnish such care or services to veterans under such program will have access to, and transmit back to the Department, the medical records of such veterans; and

(B) the Department will receive from such non-Department providers such medical records and any other relevant information.

(10) A description of how the Secretary plans to ensure an efficient transition to such program for veterans who participate in the non-Department provider programs, including a timeline, milestones, and estimated costs for implementation, outreach, and training.

(c) SUBMISSION.—Not later than November 1, 2015, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report containing—

(1) a description of each non-Department provider program and the statutory authority for each such program;

(2) the plan under subsection (a);

(3) the estimated costs and budgetary requirements to implement the plan and to furnish hospital care and medical services pursuant to such plan; and

(4) any recommendations for legislative proposals the Secretary determines necessary to implement such plan.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term ''non-Department facility'' has the meaning given that term in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The term ''non-Department provider programs'' means each program administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary enters into contracts or other agreements with health care providers at non-Department facilities to furnish hospital care and medical services to veterans, including pursuant to the following:

(A) Section 1703 of title 38, United States Code.

(B) The Veterans Choice Program established by section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(C) The Patient Centered Community Care Program (known as ''PC3'').

(D) The pilot program established by section 403 of the Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–387; 38 U.S.C. 1703 note) (known as ''Project ARCH'').

(E) Contracts relating to dialysis.

(F) Agreements entered into by the Secretary with—

(i) the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the Indian Health Service, or any the head of any other department or agency of the Federal Government; or

(ii) any academic affiliate or other nongovernmental entity.

(G) Programs relating to emergency care, including under sections 1725 and 1728 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 4003. FUNDING ACCOUNT FOR NON-DEPARTMENT CARE.

Each budget of the President submitted to Congress under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, for fiscal year 2017 and each fiscal year thereafter shall include an appropriations account for non-Department provider programs (as defined in section 2(d)) to be comprised of—

(1) discretionary medical services funding that is designated for hospital care and medical services furnished at non-Department facilities; and

(2) any funds transferred for such purpose from the Veterans Choice Fund established by section 802 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 128 Stat. 1802).

SEC. 4004. TEMPORARY AUTHORIZATION OF USE OF VETERANS CHOICE FUNDS FOR CERTAIN PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 802 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 128 Stat. 1802) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''Any amounts'' and inserting ''Except as provided by paragraph (3), any amounts''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following paragraph:

''(3) TEMPORARY AUTHORITY FOR OTHER USES.—

''(A) OTHER NON-DEPARTMENT CARE.—In addition to the use of amounts described in paragraph (1), of the amounts deposited in the Veterans Choice Fund, not more than $3,348,500,000 may be used by the Secretary during the period described in subparagraph (C) for amounts obligated by the Secretary on or after May 1, 2015, to furnish health care to individuals pursuant to chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, at non-Department facilities, including pursuant to non-Department provider programs other than the program established by section 101.

''(B) HEPATITIS C.—Of the amount specified in subparagraph (A), not more than $500,000,000 may be used by the Secretary during the period described in subparagraph (C) for pharmaceutical expenses relating to the treatment of Hepatitis C.

''(C) PERIOD DESCRIBED.—The period described in this subparagraph is the period beginning on the date of the enactment of the VA Budget and Choice Improvement Act and ending on October 1, 2015.

''(D) REPORTS.—Not later than 14 days after the date of the enactment of the VA Budget and Choice Improvement Act, and not less frequently than once every 14-day period thereafter during the period described in subparagraph (C), the Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report detailing—

''(i) the amounts used by the Secretary pursuant to subparagraphs (A) and (B); and

''(ii) an identification of such amounts listed by the non-Department provider program for which the amounts were used.

''(E) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

''(i) The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(I) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

''(II) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

''(ii) The term 'non-Department facilities' has the meaning given that term in section 1701 of title 38, United States Code.

''(iii) The term 'non-Department provider program' has the meaning given that term in section 4002(d) of the VA Budget and Choice Improvement Act.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (d)(1) of such section is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''(or for hospital care and medical services pursuant to subsection (c)(3) of this section)''.

SEC. 4005. MODIFICATIONS OF VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM.

(a) INCREASED PERIOD OF FOLLOW-UP CARE.—Subsection (h) of section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by striking ''(but for a period not exceeding 60 days)''.

(b) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—Such section is further amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) of subsection (b) and inserting the following new paragraph:

''(1) the veteran is enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, including any such veteran who has not received hospital care or medical services from the Department and has contacted the Department seeking an initial appointment from the Department for the receipt of such care or services; and''; and

(2) in subsection (g)(1), by striking ''In the case'' and all that follows through '', when'' and insert ''When''.

(c) EXPANSION OF PROVIDERS.—Such section is further amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)(B), by adding at the end the following new clause:

''(v) Subject to subsection (d)(5), a health care provider not otherwise covered under any of clauses (i) through (iv).''; and

(2) in subsection (d), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER PROVIDERS.—In accordance with the rates determined pursuant to paragraph (2), the Secretary may enter into agreements under paragraph (1) for furnishing care and services to eligible veterans under this section with an entity specified in subsection (a)(1)(B)(v) if the entity meets criteria established by the Secretary for purposes of this section.''.

(d) CLARIFICATION OF WAIT TIMES.—Subparagraph (A) of subsection (b)(2) of such section is amended to read as follows:

''(A) attempts, or has attempted, to schedule an appointment for the receipt of hospital care or medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, but is unable to schedule an appointment within—

''(i) the wait-time goals of the Veterans Health Administration for the furnishing of such care or services; or

''(ii) with respect to such care or services that are clinically necessary, the period determined necessary for such care or services if such period is shorter than such wait-time goals;''.

(e) MODIFICATION OF DISTANCE REQUIREMENT.—Subparagraph (B) of subsection (b)(2) of such section is amended to read as follows:

''(B) resides more than 40 miles (as calculated based on distance traveled) from—

''(i) with respect to a veteran who is seeking primary care, a medical facility of the Department, including a community-based outpatient clinic, that is able to provide such primary care by a full-time primary care physician; or

''(ii) with respect to a veteran not covered under clause (i), the medical facility of the Department, including a community-based outpatient clinic, that is closest to the residence of the veteran;''.

SEC. 4006. LIMITATION ON DIALYSIS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) LIMITATION.—None of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may be used to expand the dialysis pilot program or to create any new dialysis capability provided by the Department in a facility that is not an initial facility under the dialysis pilot program until—

(1) an independent analysis of the dialysis pilot program is conducted for each such initial facility;

(2) the Secretary submits to the appropriate congressional committees the report under subsection (b); and

(3) a period of 180 days has elapsed following the date on which the Secretary submits such report.

(b) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report containing the following:

(1) The independent analysis described in subsection (a)(1).

(2) A five-year dialysis investment plan explaining all of the options of the Secretary for delivering dialysis care to veterans, including how and where such care will be delivered.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(2) The term ''dialysis pilot program'' means the pilot demonstration program approved by the Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Health in August 2010 and by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in September 2010 to provide dialysis care to patients at certain outpatient facilities operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(3) The term ''initial facility'' means one of the four outpatient facilities identified by the Secretary to participate in the dialysis pilot program prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4007. AMENDMENTS TO INTERNAL REVENUE CODE WITH RESPECT TO HEALTH COVERAGE OF VETERANS.

(a) EXEMPTION IN DETERMINATION OF EMPLOYER HEALTH INSURANCE MANDATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4980H(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(F) EXEMPTION FOR HEALTH COVERAGE UNDER TRICARE OR THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION.—Solely for purposes of determining whether an employer is an applicable large employer under this paragraph for any month, an individual shall not be taken into account as an employee for such month if such individual has medical coverage for such month under—

''(i) chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, including coverage under the TRICARE program, or

''(ii) under a health care program under chapter 17 or 18 of title 38, United States Code, as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

(b) ELIGIBILITY FOR HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT NOT AFFECTED BY RECEIPT OF MEDICAL CARE FOR SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 223(c)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) SPECIAL RULE FOR INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS BENEFITS.—An individual shall not fail to be treated as an eligible individual for any period merely because the individual receives hospital care or medical services under any law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a service-connected disability (within the meaning of section 101(16) of title 38, United States Code).''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2015.

SEC. 4008. EMERGENCY DESIGNATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—This title, except for section 4007, is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(b) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this title, except for section 4007, is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 403(a) of S. Con. Res. 13 (111th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided among and controlled by the respective chairs and ranking minority members of the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Ways and Means, and Veterans' Affairs.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER), the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER), and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3236 is a 3-month clean extension to the surface transportation legislation. It is the right thing to do.

It gives the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Committee on Ways and Means the time to work out a long-term solution to the surface transportation bill, which we need to pass for the health of this country.

Importantly, it gives the House of Representatives the ability to do its constitutional duty to be heard on important legislation that is important to all 50 States and all 435 congressional districts.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I would direct anyone interested in this legislation to my remarks on the 5-month bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask all 435 Members of the House to support H.R. 3236 with a ''yes'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I just want to echo the comments of the prior chair. We think this is the right solution. This is very similar to the bill we passed earlier. We believe this gives us the time we need to try and put together a long-term highway solution. That is why we are in favor of this.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, here we are with another short-term extension of the highway trust fund. It is silly; it is counterproductive. Anybody who knows anything knows this is ridiculous. They say we have got to have time to work out a compromise. How many years do you need time?

When I served in the State legislature in my home State of Washington, a businessman once told me that businessowners don't care what the rate is or how long; they just want to know how long they have to deal with something.

Now, how can businesses do any kind of planning in this country when they get 1-, 2-, and 3-month extensions? This is the 25th time that we have done a short-term extension of the highway trust fund. Put another way, this is the 25th time the Congress has shirked its responsibility to the taxpayers and businesses to provide reliable transportation infrastructure across this country.

Now, as I thought about this debate, I was reminded of a tube of toothpaste that lays in my bathroom. It is about one-third gone. All of you have one of these at home that is laying there.

You know what you do; you keep squeezing it one more time. You say: Can I get one more brush out of this? Will I get one more? Can I get one more? That is what we have been doing here. We are squeezing the tube one more time. We are going to be back.

You save your toothpaste because it is going to be back; it is going to be back in November or December. We are going to be right back down here squeezing to get a little bit.

Now, my belief is that it is time that we stop this. It is time for a long-term funding bill, and we should have done it this time.

Now, in order to make this bill even worse, they wrap in the toothpaste tube of the Veterans Administration. Let's give a little bit of money here, a little bit of money there; and we will see if we can kind of move it along and then stay out of trouble. We never fix anything here.

This Congress is the Congress of the half-empty toothpaste tube. I will probably vote with everybody else because you don't want the Veterans Administration to be having problems and you don't want the hospital construction to stop.

We will vote for it, but it is foolish, and it is a statement about the failure of the Republican Party to deal with major issues.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. I thank the chairman. I come to the floor today to talk about our bill, H.R. 2514, the Help Veterans Save for Health Care Act, which is part of the legislation now before us.

As a 29-year Air Force veteran and former POW, it is no secret I am a proud advocate for America's veterans. They bravely served our country. They deserve the best care when they return home. Unfortunately, the VA has failed to uphold its end of the bargain. We have been working hard to fix it.

To add insult to injury, the IRS—yes, the IRS—has also let down our veterans. Right now, the IRS prohibits veterans from contributing to a health savings account for a period of time if they choose to get care at the VA.

These health savings accounts enable Americans to save and pay for medical expenses; yet, here, we have the IRS standing in the way of veterans, keeping them from getting the care they want, need, and deserve. That is wrong.

Bottom line, veterans shouldn't have to choose between getting care at the VA for a service-connected disability or being able to save for health care, including their families. My bill would allow veterans to do both.

In closing, I thank my colleagues from both sides of the aisle for their support. I would also like to thank the chairman for working with me on this, but most importantly, I want to personally thank each of our veterans who faithfully serve to protect this great Nation.

Let's get this done.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

□ 1630

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. I thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with the gentleman. I agree that we are squeezing and squeezing and extending and extending when we know better and we know the difference. We know that we could have a meaningful solution to the problem that we face. We know it. We come and we kick the can a little bit, add a little bit more to it.

Like him, I am going to vote for it. But I am going to vote for it not because I think it is the best approach; I am going to vote for it because I want to see construction crews continue to work. I want to see families who are looking for paychecks be able to continue to get them.

I am going to vote for it because I want to see roads and bridges and highways repaired. I want to see veterans be able to go to the doctor and not wonder whether or not the doctor is going to be there to take care of them.

So, yes, I will vote for it; and I will look up and see that we will be back in December voting again, but we do what we have to do. We have to keep America working. I will vote for it to keep America working.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, let's review this week. When I got on the plane from Seattle, we were supposed to be here on Friday. By the time I landed at Dulles Airport, they had already given away Friday. We weren't going to have any votes on Friday. So now the week is 1 day short. They continued to ineptly manage this place in such a way, Mr. Speaker, that they are now giving away Thursday.

Now they want to hurry out of here. They want to get out of here. They don't want the American people to see what they are really doing.

If you look at this transportation issue, what is making us uncompetitive in the rest of the world is that everywhere else they are spending money on infrastructure. People know you have to have roads, you have to have high-speed stuff in the ground that will carry a little bit of a message here and there. All that wiring, all that stuff that we could be doing, we should be doing. We should be planning. But there isn't any State that can plan with this kind of a highway bill.

Now, why aren't we doing the thing today that is right? Well, because the Senate has come up with a great proposal. They have a 6-year authorization, but they come up with 3 years of money. How does a State plan with that? We are authorized for 6 years out to whatever that would be, and we are going to wind up only getting money for 3 years. How do we do bond issues in the State when we don't know what the Feds are going to do? This kind of planning makes government fail. And it is what the Republicans want: a Federal Government that fails.

Now, there was a guy named Eisenhower. When he became President, he came in and said: You know something? This country needs roads. And he created the entire system. He was a Republican from Kansas, of all places, and he understood what the country needed to move forward.

People said in the last election what we need to do is elect Republicans. By God, if we get Republicans, we will get what we need in this country. Well, I don't know if they knew what they were voting for, but what they got is a Senate and House that can't come up with a highway bill. They have been here for 8 months. Everybody knows we need it. The sources of revenue are not mysteries.

Russell Long used to say about taxation: ''Don't tax you, don't tax me, tax that fellow behind the tree.''

We know there is nobody behind the tree. We are going to have to raise some taxes to do what is necessary.

Well, there are those guys that have that money overseas. Maybe we can get those guys who have got that overseas money and bring it back and fund this. I guess they are behind the tree. But they also live here, so they are not really behind the tree.

This argument is going to go on in December or whenever this thing ends. It doesn't really make any difference. We will come back here, and we will get out our toothpaste tube and we will squeeze a little bit more out of it just to see if we can brush our teeth one more time. That is what this is about. We have done it on issue after issue here, and somebody has to call the Republican Party on this.

The American people should understand, they are not serious about running government for the things that affect ordinary human beings. A transit system in a State is absolutely important. As cities get more crowded and more crowded and there is no parking, if you don't have a transit system that works, you can't have development. Everybody wants development.

Where the heck are you going to put the development? Out in the bushes? No. You are going to put it in the city where the people live. But if they can't move around and get to the jobs, you have got terrible problems. In every city and everybody's district, if you have got a city with over 50,000, you have got problems with traffic, and yet we can't get a transportation bill out of here that goes for more than 3 months. Now, that is pathetic.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the gentleman. I think we should pass this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 2 minutes.

First of all, I want to thank the chairman for his continued bipartisan work on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. We all want to do what is best for the veterans, and the chairman has continued to work toward that goal.

On this past Monday, 62 years after the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement, the committee laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery in honor of our fallen military members. Today, we need more than a ceremony. We should honor our veterans now by passing H.R. 3236.

I support this legislation because it addresses the $3 million shortfall for fiscal year 2015 at the VA and keeps hospitals and medical facilities open for our veterans through the end of the fiscal year. Let me repeat that. It will allow the VA to keep hospitals and clinics open for our veterans through the end of this fiscal year.

This legislation allows the VA to use $3.348 billion that was appropriated for the Choice Program to use for non-VA care, to pay for health care provided to veterans and family members under the programs provided by non-VA providers from May 1 to October 1, 2015. The VA has completed more than 56 million appointments between June 1, 2014, and May 31, 2015. That is 2.6 million more than the same time last year.

H.R. 3236 allows the VA to access $3 billion from the Choice fund and $348 million from other unobligated accounts. Of that amount, $500 million may be used for pharmaceutical expenses related to the treatment of hepatitis C at the VA. This is a cure that many of our veterans need, especially those who served in Vietnam.

Three times in this fiscal year, the Secretary has testified before the VA committee, and he has consistently been asking for the authority to run the VA like a business.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Ranking Member BROWN, and, of

course, Chairman DENT, who chairs the Appropriations MILCON–VA Subcommittee, where I serve as ranking member.

Today, this body is debating text within the highway bill to address the Department of Veterans Affairs' $3 billion budget shortfall for veterans' health care in FY 2015. Without this legislation, the VA could run out of money by September. Costs have exploded by more than 10 percent in the last year as a result of higher demand, while the budget increased by only 2.8 percent.

Additionally, costs for treatments have increased. For example, due to the new lifesaving hepatitis C medicine costing as much as $1,000 for a single pill, the VA's $700 million FY 2015 budget for hepatitis C has already been exceeded with more than 2 months left in the fiscal year.

This situation is a prime example of how the sequester caps imposed by the Budget Control Act and locked in by the Republican budget constrain our ability to deal with issues responsibly and in a timely manner. It is well past time that we come to the table to break the cycle of irresponsible funding levels that are shortchanging our veterans' health care.

While the House-passed FY 2016 MILCON–VA Appropriations bill adds $970 million for VA medical care advance appropriations within the FY 2015 bill, the amount still remains $330 million below the VA request, most likely leading to another budget shortfall in FY 2016. Today's bill is only a Band-Aid, a temporary solution, because of budget caps.

To be clear, if we continue to ignore the new reality of increased demand and higher costs, delivery of healthcare services to millions of currently enrolled veterans will be devastated for the foreseeable future.

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. If Congress continues to function under these budgets caps, we will see more gaps in access, utilization, safety, and, ultimately, a lower standard of care. Even further, the caps limit Congress' options to create jobs, keep our communities safe, research lifesaving medical treatments, and give our children a better education.

I urge Members to vote for this bill to ensure that veterans continue to receive the care which they have earned, but we cannot continue to govern in this fashion. Today, we must take the next step towards a more responsible budgeting process so we can eventually stop lurching from one crisis to the next. To do so, the budget caps must be directly addressed in order to properly invest in veterans' health care as well as advance other priorities assisting hard-working Americans.

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

It is a little frustrating as we watch these disparate subjects lumped together on the floor with truncated debate. I want to speak to just one element that we are discussing here today, and that deals with the extension of transportation funding.

The passage of this bill will represent the 34th short-term extension of the surface transportation bill. What country became great building its infrastructure 8 months at a time? 6 months at a time? a year at a time? It is a failure on the part of Congress to be able to understand that you cannot pay for 2015 infrastructure needs with 1993 dollars—the last time we adjusted the user fee, the gas tax that supports the highway trust fund.

□ 1645

I do see a little tiny glimmer of daylight with the 3-month extension. I have personally been urging the President to indicate that this is the last extension that he will sign.

The House Ways and Means Committee could pass a funding measure in a week if we would roll up our sleeves. We have legislation there that is supported by the U.S. Chamber, AFL–CIO, by truckers, transit, the AAA, a wide array of people who say: Step up, raise our user fee, fund the transportation system, and do it right.

We used to have the finest infrastructure in the world. Now, we are about 25th in the world and falling further.

If the Ways and Means Committee would spend a week listening to the people who build, maintain, operate, and use our infrastructure, we could come to a resolution.

Ronald Reagan's approach was to raise the user fee 125 percent in 1982.

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. If we did our job, sending clear signals about transportation funding, the appropriating committee, the T&I, if they knew what they were working with, could come forth with a bill easily in 2 months, so we wouldn't have to continue this charade.

We could put hundreds of thousands of people to work at family-wage jobs in every city around the country; we would meet our obligations, and we would stop this shameful exercise of abrogating our responsibility to rebuild and renew.

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

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have, sir?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Florida has 3 minutes remaining.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I believe that the Secretary needs that authority. In addition to solving the fiscal crisis, this bill will enable the Secretary to run VA more like a business, and that, Mr. Speaker, means a more efficient VA and better care for our veterans.

In closing, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to ensure that our veterans are taken care of.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, only 2 weeks ago, buried in a letter from the Deputy Secretary, the Department of Veterans Affairs made a startling announcement. That announcement was, unless Congress intervened, the VA healthcare system would shut down in August, due to a massive budget shortfall that resulted from larger than anticipated demand for non-VA care and increased costs for hepatitis C treatment.

A VA healthcare system shutdown would be an unprecedented event in these United States' history. The possibility of a shutdown was never mentioned, even once, during a hearing that I called in late June, where VA first publicly admitted its budget troubles, or during any of the four times that Secretary McDonald testified before Congress this year or anywhere in the quarterly financial plan that VA submitted in March, showing that VA was operating under budget so far this fiscal year.

Once again, this Congress comes to rescue a mismanaged Department of Veterans Affairs.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today, H.R. 3236 will come to the floor of the House with a critical 3 month extension to the Highway Trust fund as well as changes to Department of Veterans Affairs' spending authorities. In particular, it contains changes to the Veterans Affairs' Choice Program that I believe are very important for Guam. It expands eligibility for the program and codifies some of the changes that the VA has made since the inception of the program to make it more accessible to veterans in rural or isolated communities and reduces some barriers to timely care.

Though this bill is a good step towards better care for our veterans, there are many more improvements that I will continue to work for with my colleagues and the VA. There is still a need for greater flexibility in the reimbursement rate to health care providers which could be an issue on Guam in the near future. Further, there is a need to improve the methods in which our veterans and their records can move back and forth between VA and non-VA providers. Additionally, though I would have preferred to see additional appropriations to cover the shortfall in the other programs that are covering non-VA provided care for our veterans, I have been assured that the movement of funds within the VA accounts will not negatively affect the care our veterans are receiving through the Choice Program and that the transfer is temporary. I will continue to urge the Obama Administration to provide adequate funding for all VA programs, but particularly the Choice program which has a lot of interest and support on Guam. The Choice

program has the ability to, in the long-term, address some of the systemic issues to VA care in isolated areas of the country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 388, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

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

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 385, nays 34, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 486]

YEAS—385

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

NAYS—34

Amash
Amodei
Barletta
Beyer
Bridenstine
Buck
Byrne
Clark (MA)
DeGette
Garrett
Gosar
Grothman
Hice, Jody B.
Jones
Lummis
McClintock
McDermott
Moulton
Mulvaney
Neugebauer
Pearce
Perry
Polis
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Salmon
Sanford
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Visclosky
Walker
Weber (TX)
Welch

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

McCollum

NOT VOTING—13

Brooks (IN)
Carney
Carter (TX)
Clawson (FL)
Cooper
Costa
Labrador
Levin
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Moore
Peters
Price (NC)
Whitfield

□ 1731

Mr. WALKER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. HONDA, HOYER, RICHMOND, CLYBURN, ISRAEL, CLEAVER, KILDEE, JOHNSON of Georgia, and YOHO changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 486, I was unavoidably detained in DC traffic while returning from a meeting at the White House. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 486, had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond my control, I regretfully missed rollcall vote 486 on July 29th. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to be present for a vote taken on the House floor today, as I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall Vote No. 486.

VA ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 388 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 1994.

Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1733

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1994) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, with Mr. CARTER of Georgia (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114–234 offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) had been postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 191, noes 233, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 487]

AYES—191

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

NOES—233

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

NOT VOTING—9

Brooks (IN)
Carney
Carter (TX)
Clawson (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Granger
Labrador
Levin
Lujan Grisham (NM)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1737

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Chair, on roll-call No. 487, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

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

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) having assumed the chair, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1994) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 388, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

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

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

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

The amendment was agreed to.

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

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

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

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

Mr. TAKANO. I am opposed.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Takano moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1994 to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendments

Page 6, beginning on line 19, strike paragraph (1) and insert the following:

''(1) The Secretary may not remove or demote an individual, including veterans who make up nearly one-third of the Department's workforce, under subsection (a) if the individual has filed a whistleblower complaint, as such term is defined in section 731 of this title, or if the individual is seeking corrective action (or on behalf of whom corrective action is sought) from the Office of Special Counsel or the Inspector General based on—

''(A) an alleged threat to the health or safety of the public; or

''(B) an alleged prohibited personnel practice described in section 2302(b) of title 5.''.

Page 7, line 3, strike ''In the case'' and insert ''Except as provided in paragraph (1), in the case''.

Mr. TAKANO (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1994 makes the VA an at-will workplace, violating longstanding Supreme Court precedent regarding constitutional due process rights and threatening to silence the whistleblowers by creating a culture of fear and intimidation at the VA.

The Republican bill would allow the VA to immediately fire employees for poor performance, making it easier for bad managers to immediately fire

whistleblowers who report wrongdoing, while providing hardly any opportunity for employees to appeal.

My friends, this is wrong.

This means doctors, nurses, police officers, and so many others can be fired at will and with insufficient recourse. Hard-working, loyal employees who are doing everything in their power to treat the incredible needs of our Nation's veterans—fired at will. Let me remind you that one-third of all VA employees are veterans. That is more than 100,000 veterans' livelihoods being put at risk.

This is wrong.

Are there problems with some VA employees? Of course there are. The VA has a process to remove these employees. In fact, during the 1-year period from July 1, 2014, through July 30, 2015, the VA removed 872 permanent employees, and an additional 487 employees resigned or retired in lieu of being removed. The VA has also terminated 958 probationary employees. For employees accused of harming veterans' health or safety, the substitute amendment I offered earlier would have allowed for their expedited firing.

Instead of gutting the due process rights of VA employees, we should be providing a fair and constitutionally sound expedited removal process, and we should encourage the VA to use the disciplinary tools it already has at its disposal.

□ 1745

We all know the critical role that whistleblowers played in exposing the shocking misconduct at the Phoenix VA, but the Republican bill strips away all current whistleblower protections available to Federal employees under Federal law. That is wrong.

Under the Republican bill, any whistleblower who has not filed an official complaint can be fired before they even have the opportunity to report danger to patient safety, wrongdoing, malfeasance, or discrimination. That is wrong.

The Republican whistleblower provisions will encourage bad employees to file for whistleblower status to prevent them from being fired. This will overburden the Office of Special Counsel with frivolous complaints. That is wrong.

The Republican bill does the opposite of what it claims to do for whistleblowers. It offers them no protection. In fact, it will let bad employees hide behind whistleblower status to keep from being fired. That is crazy.

My final amendment protects the employees who are willing to risk it all to expose flaws and abuses in this system.

If there is anybody we must protect from being fired at will without recourse or retaliation, it is the brave men and women with the courage to stand up and expose the VA's biggest vulnerability.

With all due respect, I say to my colleagues anyone who votes against my motion to protect whistleblowers from being fired should themselves be fired.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Last year, almost this very same time in a bill-signing ceremony, the President of the United States said this: ''If you engage in an unethical practice, if you cover up a serious problem, you should be fired, period.'' It should not be that difficult.

This is a bad motion to recommit. I urge my Members to vote it down.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if ordered, and agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 184, noes 241, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 488]

AYES—184

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

NOES—241

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

Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—8

Brooks (IN)
Carney
Carter (TX)
Clawson (FL)
Israel
Labrador
Levin
Lujan Grisham (NM)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1754

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 256, nays 170, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 489]

YEAS—256

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

NAYS—170

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

NOT VOTING—7

Brooks (IN)
Carney
Carter (TX)
Clawson (FL)
Labrador
Levin
Lujan Grisham (NM)

□ 1801

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, July 29, 2015, I missed a series of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcalls 486 and 489. I would have voted "nay" on rollcalls 487 and 488.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EMMER of Minnesota). The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

ADJOURNMENT FROM WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2015, TO FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2015

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 1 p.m. on Friday, July 31, 2015.

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

There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 486, I was unavoidably detained and missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes.''

TEEN CHALLENGE OF ARIZONA

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

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Teen Challenge of Arizona and congratulate them on 50 years of serving our community and those in need.

Teen Challenge is a faith-based residential recovery program for substance abusers. It is often a last resort for those struggling with drug addiction and other problems.

Over the last 50 years, Teen Challenge of Arizona has helped an estimated 25,000 people through recovery programs. Their success rate is an astonishing 80 percent, a testament to their committed and caring approach.

While I served at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, I was a board member of Teen Challenge of Arizona, and I saw the difference they make

firsthand. I was especially privileged to work with the Springboard Home for Youth in Crisis, a place that provides hope and healing for troubled girls in southern Arizona.

Not many organizations can say they have had the impact that Teen Challenge of Arizona has had. It was an honor to be able to contribute to their success. I wish them a happy 50th anniversary and many years of continuing success serving our community. They are literally changing and saving lives every single day.

PATCHWORK EXTENSIONS AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, 65 Republicans joined 54 Democrats in voting ''no'' on the extension of the highway bill to register their disgust with 33 extensions while the Republican Congress then did zero work on a long-term bill.

There are now four long-term Democratic bills and one bipartisan bill. However, today's 34th patchwork extension cannot be applied to even start on the Nation's backlog without assurance of funds to complete construction. Yet House Republicans have now fled for an early vacation.

Eighteen States and the District of Columbia have passed State user gas fee laws without retaliation by the voters, but the federal share is more than half of the funds needed just to get started.

The only way to stop the self-inflicted deterioration of our once magnificent infrastructure is to man up and pass a long-term bill.

H.R. 1994 CONTAINS COMMONSENSE REFORMS

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Chairman JEFF MILLER and the members of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs for their work in helping pass H.R. 1994, which passed the House today. The measure contains commonsense reforms so that any VA employee who engages in misconduct or is performing poorly can be terminated or demoted.

I am also very pleased that H.R. 1994 contains additional important protections for VA whistleblowers. We have worked with several of them over the last couple years out of the Oakland office and other centers that have been retaliated against for speaking out about gross mismanagement and possible violations of law.

This is a very important covenant we would have with our whistleblowers so they could come forward and help us to have better VA performance. It is very critical we have the ability for them to come forward.

I am glad that we have this measure here. I hope the Senate will take it up and pass it so we have better service for our veterans through the VA.

REMEMBERING GWENDOLYN STRONG

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life of Gwendolyn DeBard Strong, who passed away this past Saturday after a heroic, inspiring battle with spinal muscular atrophy.

Simply put, she is our hero. Gwendolyn died a few months short of her eighth birthday, far exceeding the odds that were given to her at birth. In her short life, she had more of an impact and brought more joy to others than many ever could in their lifetime.

Gwendolyn's life was spent on the same things many young girls do—playing princesses with friends, going to school, and spending time with her sister.

She and her family also used their voice to improve the lives of all of us. The Strongs worked hard to end lifetime and annual caps on insurance coverage, improve spinal muscular atrophy research, and promote innovations to make the lives of other children with debilitating diseases a little easier.

She and her incredible family taught those of us in Santa Barbara and around the country that we should never give up. Thanks to her bravery and the efforts of Bill and Victoria, we never will.

I am honored to have known her and take solace in knowing that her efforts will continue to help so many others.

We miss you, Gwendolyn, but want you to know we will never give up.

LANCE CORPORAL SQUIRE WELLS

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

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, this last Sunday, my family and I attended church at the First Baptist Church of Woodstock in Woodstock, Georgia.

It is not the first time we ever attended that church, as we have worshipped there before; but it is possibly the most memorable time that I will have attended that church because it was at this service that we were having the funeral of Lance Corporal Squire Wells, who is known to his friends and family as Skip. Skip was the youngest of those who were killed in the terrorist attack in Chattanooga.

As we were driving to the church, Mr. Speaker, as we were still miles away from the church, along the sides of the road, we began to see American citizens, citizens of the 11th Congressional District lining the road, holding American flags and Marine Corps flags. As we approached closer to the church, the hundreds of people turned into thousands of people.

As we arrived at the church, nearly 500 members of the Patriot Guard Riders, Marine Corps League, the VFW, and the American Legion were standing, lining the sidewalks of this church, bearing American flags to say good-bye and to say thank you to a patriot.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to also say thank you to Skip Wells—Lance Corporal Wells. Although, to my knowledge, we never met in person, I didn't know him personally, but I do know the type of person he is because he was a marine, which told me that he held to the highest standards of decorum and morale and integrity.

He was a Christian who served faithfully in the First Baptist Church of Woodstock, which tells me he had a heart of charity and love.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say thank you to Skip Wells for laying down his life for my freedom, the freedom of my children, and my granddaughter. I want to say thank you to Ms. Cathy Wells, his mom, for raising such a fine person as a single mom raising her only child, who has given his life in defense of this Nation.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the thousands of people from my district who came out and honored the life of this American patriot.

DON'T LEAVE THE EX-IM BANK IN A ZOMBIELIKE STATE

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

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, this Chamber is doing a great disservice to small-business owners and to hundreds of thousands of American workers by going off to recess for the next 6 weeks without renewing the charter of the U.S. Export-Import Bank. It is the wrong thing to do.

Sadly, the minority of ideologues in this Chamber that is blocking the renewal of the Ex-Im's charter is absolutely right about one thing. If the U.S. Ex-Im goes under, all the export business and all the jobs supported by it will be just displaced to other companies.

What they don't mention in their rants against the Bank is that the companies that will get this business will be in other countries and the workers who get those good-paying jobs will be overseas because there are some 85 foreign export credit agencies today happy to help the companies in their countries seal the deal.

We are leaving thousands of American workers at a real competitive disadvantage by leaving the U.S. Export-Import Bank in a zombielike status.

We should renew it. We should keep these jobs in America. We should put more Americans to work.

□ 1815

HONORING NAVY PETTY OFFICER SECOND CLASS RANDALL SMITH

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

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Navy Petty Officer Second Class Randall Smith, who was killed on July 16 during the terrorist attack in Chattanooga.

Randall, who lived with his wife, Angie, and their three young daughters in Rossville, Georgia, was a model of selfless service. He was a devoted and loving husband and father who prioritized his family above all else.

Besides his military service, he was an active volunteer, giving back through charities like Stuff the Truck, the Chattanooga Area Food Bank, and providing rescue assistance during Hurricane Sandy. And less than 2 weeks ago, he made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country. Randall's selfless sacrifice, sense of duty, and sacrifice serve as an example for all of us.

A sign at the entrance to the neighborhood where the Smith family lives sums up what I think many are feeling right now. It reads: ''Thank you for your service. Sorry for your loss. You will be remembered.''

I know that our community in northwest Georgia is forever grateful for Randall Smith's service and sacrifice. May God bless Angie and their three wonderful, beautiful daughters.

ADA'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

First, let me mention the extraordinary respect I have for the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

I had the honor of sponsoring the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1989 and 1990. We passed it in 1990, and it was signed by then-President George H.W. Bush. It was called the Americans with Disabilities Act, Mr. Speaker, but in many ways it should have been called the Americans with Abilities Act. It should have been called that because its intent was to focus on what people could do, what people would do, what people wanted to do.

Mr. LANGEVIN is a perfect example of an extraordinary person with great ability who has a wheelchair. He has a wheelchair because he has a mobility impairment that others of us don't have. But as we have seen in serving with our colleague JIM LANGEVIN from Rhode Island, he is extraordinarily able and he represents his constituency with great energy, with great intellect, and with great integrity. So I am pleased to join him in this Special Order.

We had introduced a resolution, but it is not the practice of the House to bring commemorative resolutions to the floor. So we do this Special Order in addition to what we would have hoped would have been the passage of a resolution, but I understand that is the practice.

The Senate did in fact pass a resolution, sponsored by ORRIN HATCH, PATRICIA MURRAY from Washington State, and LAMAR ALEXANDER, commemorating 25 years of progress on the inclusion of those with a challenge that others might not have in our society, all that our society offers and the opportunities that it offers.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken on numerous occasions over this last week commemorating the ADA, and I have mentioned a number of names. I would like to do that on the floor of this House, because they were people who were absolutely critical. It is not a comprehensive list. It is, however, a list of people with whom I worked very closely for well over a year on the passage of the ADA.

First, I would like to mention President George H.W. Bush. This issue was not a partisan issue. President Bush was a Republican; I was a Democrat—and still am. I worked with an extraordinary Republican Member of the House. His name was Steve Bartlett. He was from Texas. He left the House and became mayor of Dallas. He is now still in Washington, working, and we are partners. Every time something happens with respect to the ADA, Steve Bartlett and I work together on it.

Dave Capozzi and Tony Coelho. Tony Coelho, a Member of this body, was a person perceived with the disease of epilepsy, but he is one of the most able people that any of us know. Tony Coelho, along with Lowell Weicker, were the original two sponsors of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Justin Dart. In 1983, Justin Dart visited every State in the Union in his wheelchair, calling attention to State legislatures, Governors, and others of the importance of ensuring the accessibility of places of opportunity for those with disabilities. Yoshiko Dart, his wife, was with him every step of the way and was with us as we worked for the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

And then we have an extraordinary legislator—one of the best legislators that I have served with, Mr. Speaker—Bob Dole, a Republican from Kansas, majority and minority leader of the United States Senate. Mr. Speaker, when he came to the Senate of the United States, his first speech was about including those with disabilities. He observed that he was an involuntary member of those with disabilities as a result of his extraordinary war wounds in Italy in World War II.

We have Chai Feldblum, who is now on the EEOC and a professor at Georgetown Law School. She was counsel to myself and Steve Bartlett as we considered the complex issues and tried to make sure that ADA could be implemented by all in a way that was affordable and reasonable for them.

We then have Lex Frieden, who is the executive director of the National Council on Disabilities, who worked so closely with us. Also, Boyden Gray, counsel to George Bush, who was a critical ally in this effort.

Then we have a giant in this effort, Senator Tom Harkin from Iowa, who, after Lowell Weicker left, was the principal sponsor of the ADA and fought hard and effectively on its behalf.

ORRIN HATCH and Ted Kennedy. Senator Kennedy and Senator HATCH were partners in so many different things, but on this they were aligned and made this bipartisan effort a very successful one.

Also, Arlene Mayerson; Paul Marchand; former Congressman and now Senator ED MARKEY; Senator JOHN MCCAIN; Congressman Norman Mineta; Ralph Neas; Katie Neas; Carolyn Osolinik; Becky Ogle; Lee Page; Liz Savage; Bobby Silverstein. Like Melissa Schulman who was my chief staffer as we considered the Americans with Disabilities Act, Bobby Silverstein was Tom Harkin's chief staffer.

JIM SENSENBRENNER, our colleague today. Congressman SENSENBRENNER was so critical, along with his wife, Cheryl Sensenbrenner, who, herself, suffered from a disability and showed such courage in encouraging all of us to support the Americans with Disabilities Act.

I mentioned Lowell Weicker. Lowell Weicker was a Senator from Connecticut and then Governor of Connecticut; Bob Williams, who was an extraordinary individual who worked so hard; John Wodatch; and last, but certainly not least, Patricia Wright.

There were literally, Mr. Speaker, thousands of others, many of whom will not be known but who came here to the Congress of the United States, wrote their Members, called them up, and came to town meetings and forums on behalf of those with disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is now used as a sample and has been adopted in some 50 countries throughout the world, perhaps more. There is a disabilities rights convention, which is pending. Only three countries in the world have not signed on to that convention. Unfortunately, we are one. I would hope that the Senate would do that in this Congress. Senator Bob Dole has been an extraordinary proponent of that convention.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my friend, JAMES LANGEVIN, who has been a beneficiary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the reasonable accommodations that we ask to be

effected so that JIM LANGEVIN could get through the door, could get on the elevator, could get into this Chamber. And, Mr. Speaker, there is a lift on the rostrum on which you now sit so that JAMES LANGEVIN would be able to preside, if that were in order. In fact, he has been up there and has presided. That is called a reasonable accommodation. And because of those reasonable accommodations, this Congress, his State, and our country have been advantaged.

Mr. Speaker, I think when we end our careers, most of us who were involved in the adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act will look back on the adoption of it overwhelmingly by this Congress in a bipartisan fashion and the signing of that act by President George Bush as one of our most important contributions and achievements during our service in the Congress of the United States.

I thank Mr. LANGEVIN for his extraordinary example for all those in our country to look at the abilities, not the disabilities.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I thank the gentleman. Let me express my profound gratitude to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished minority whip, for his kind words, Mr. Speaker, but most especially because of his extraordinary commitment and the work that he put in, along with countless others, to actually pass the Americans with Disabilities Act and seeing it signed into law.

As the gentleman from Maryland stated, Mr. Speaker, that law has had a profound impact on my life and on countless other lives—and will for generations to come. I thank the gentleman for his extraordinary work.

Let me also thank the extraordinary list of individuals that the distinguished gentleman from Maryland just read off, some of whom I have had the absolute distinct honor and privilege to meet and to thank personally, and many of whom I will never have the privilege of actually knowing or meeting personally because many have also passed on.

□ 1830

They made an extraordinary difference in the lives of millions of people, as I said, both now and in future generations to come; and it is with profound gratitude that I thank them for their work.

Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday marked the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a tremendous milestone for one of the most significant civil rights laws of the 20th century.

As a Member of Congress, as co-chair of the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus and someone who has lived with the challenges of a disability, both before and after the ADA's enactment in 1990, I have experienced firsthand the profound changes that this law has affected within our society.

When I was paralyzed at the age of 16, my life changed forever. As I lay in my hospital bed, I wondered what life could possibly have in store for me next, but I drew strength and inspiration from other people with disabilities who had accomplished both great things and small. They taught me that there was life after a disability.

I was also incredibly fortunate to have the support of my family and my community, whose generosity and concern ultimately made me want to give back to Rhode Island through a career in public service, but accessibility was not yet considered a civil right at that time, and I know many people with disabilities were not as fortunate as I was.

So many passionate advocates and champions like Mr. HOYER fought for the rights and protections enshrined in this law. For all of us, the ADA has been a profoundly life-altering act that has provided new opportunities and fundamentally changed the way society views and treats people with disabilities.

The ADA has broken down physical and psychological barriers. It has opened up opportunities to education, employment, and technology. It has made public transportation more accommodating, improved voting accessibility, and expanded inclusion and justice for millions.

At its core, this groundbreaking legislation codified the correct collective ideal that no one should suffer discrimination because of a disability.

Mr. Speaker, it was with this same conviction that I was pleased to support the passage of the ADA Amendments Act in 2008, after a number of court decisions diluted the definition of what constituted a disability.

When that law was signed into effect, I had the privilege of being with Mr. HOYER and several of the other champions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the original enactment, original authors of the ADA, including Senator Harkin and Cheryl Sensenbrenner.

I also had the privilege of meeting President George H.W. Bush and be with his son, President George W. Bush, as President George W. Bush signed that bill into law. It was such an honor for me to be able to personally thank President George H.W. Bush personally for his support and leadership in seeing the original ADA signed into law.

Now, when the ADA Amendments Act was passed, these rulings, effectively, the Court rulings that took place necessitating this act effectively limited the ADA's coverage and excluded people with disabling conditions that were not readily visible or apparent, like epilepsy, MS, and various developmental disabilities.

The ADA Amendments Act reaffirmed the protections of the ADA and upheld the ideals of equality and opportunity on which this country was founded. As a result of these efforts, I am proud that future generations will live in a world that is more inclusive, more accessible, and increasingly recognizes the unique talents and abilities of individuals with disabilities.

As we celebrate our accomplishments, so must we recognize that our work is not finished. Equal employment opportunities and fully integrated community living have not yet been entirely realized.

In fact, recent data shows that 31 percent of disabled individuals live below the poverty line, and less than 34 percent are fully employed.

Mr. Speaker, as a nation, we can do better, and we must. It is more important than ever that we educate businesses and connect them with proper resources to create more employment opportunities. Many people with disabilities have both the desire and the capability to work, as well as exceptional talents to offer.

Mr. Speaker, let us not see those talents go to waste. I have often said, Mr. Speaker, that people with disabilities are still one of this Nation's greatest untapped resources, and we need to tap into that talent to see our Nation grow even further.

Mr. Speaker, their divergent backgrounds, unique experiences and wide-ranging talents promote a culture of diversity that doesn't just play a role in the workplace, but also influences the very nature of our society. With proper awareness, accommodation, and investment, our economy and society can reap countless rewards.

We must also ensure that transportation is available and accessible to everyone so that they can get to their jobs, the doctor, or the grocery store.

I have often said that it doesn't do anyone any good if they can actually apply for a job and get the job, but can't get to the job, so that needs to improve.

To help us realize this goal, I have introduced the Transit Accessibility Innovation Act, legislation that would create a competitive grant program to encourage transit systems to make public transportation more accessible and user friendly.

Mr. Speaker, accessible public transportation is essential in order for people with disabilities to live independently and with full inclusion in their communities. By improving these services, we can improve the quality of life for countless individuals and families.

Mr. Speaker, to further promote independence, we must also ensure that family caregivers of people with disabilities have greater access to critical services like respite care. Respite care provides temporary relief to family members engaged in the full-time task of caring for their aging or disabled loved ones with special needs.

Mr. Speaker, these caregivers, I have often said, are unsung heroes. These caregivers devote so much of their time, energy, and love to their families, but in many cases, they can be often unprepared for these new responsibilities, and the challenges that they

face can be daunting, from employment difficulties, to financial challenges, to depression and family stress.

Very often, though, with just a little bit of assistance, they can continue to be extraordinary caregivers and fulfill all of the other challenges and responsibilities that a family requires.

That is why I have introduced and I have championed the Lifespan Respite Care Act, Mr. Speaker, with my friend and former Republican colleague, Mike Ferguson from New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, that law, it passed into law in 2006 and has already provided grants to 32 States and the District of Columbia to help set up respite care networks for families in need.

Mr. Speaker, I continue to push for that program's reauthorization, and I included it in the Military and Veteran Caregiver Services Improvement Act that I introduced in April to strengthen the support services for family caregivers of injured and disabled veterans. I think this is an important thing that we can do for our veterans.

We have come far, Mr. Speaker, since the passage of the ADA, but we still have much more work ahead. Disabilities don't discriminate on the basis of party affiliation, income level, or gender; instead, they can happen to anyone at any time. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that they also have the unique ability to unite us in common purpose.

As we celebrate the silver anniversary of the ADA together, we must use this as a call to action and to reaffirm our commitment to equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities everywhere.

Let me close, Mr. Speaker, by thanking the many champions and the advocates and many unsung heroes who made the ADA possible and saw it through the legislative process and put it on the desk of President George H.W. Bush, who signed it into law and changed the lives of people with disabilities everywhere forever.

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

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE KATRINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, August 29 of this year will mark the 10-year anniversary that Hurricane Katrina struck ground, causing massive devastation throughout southeast Louisiana, as well as other parts of the Gulf Coast, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, tonight, we are going to talk about the devastation that was caused by Hurricane Katrina, and of course, it starts with the more than 1,800 lives that were lost, people from Louisiana, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, and Georgia who all lost their lives through this devastating storm.

Mr. Speaker, we are also going to talk about something else, and that is the strength and resiliency of the people of the Gulf Coast who persevered, who rebuilt. Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, we are going to talk about the recovery of the people of the Gulf Coast from this devastating storm.

First, I will yield to my friend from the great State of Alabama, Mr. ROBERT ADERHOLT.

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I want to just mention to you that it is hard to believe that it has been 10 years ago, in the early morning hours of August 29, just a month from today, that Hurricane Katrina slammed into the Gulf Coast as a category 3 hurricane.

With sustained winds up to 140 miles an hour and a storm surge over 9 meters high in some places, the impact to the gulf region was very devastating.

While the economic cost of the storm is very difficult to measure, some estimates have put the damage over $100 billion. Hundreds of thousands of refugees scattered across the country. Most importantly, no price tag can be assigned to the loss of the nearly 2,000 lives that were lost.

In the aftermath of the tragic storm, there were many hearings; there were many inquiries, studies, investigations, reforms, and policy changes that were conducted, and most of those were for good reason.

The initial emergency response to Katrina was far less than what should be expected of our Federal, State, and local governments.

However, this evening, I do want to thank my colleague for his allowing this, putting together this time. As he said, we are not here to talk about the failures, so much as we are here to talk about the spirit of the people that were affected.

It is easy to sit back and to point fingers and to place blame, but this evening, we want to talk about and bring attention to the spirit of the people that were affected, both directly and indirectly by Hurricane Katrina.

In the days after the hurricane, when it became clear that thousands of people would not be able to return to their homes, work began to find permanent shelter for these individuals.

Thousands of refugees from Louisiana were given housing in manufactured housing that was purchased by FEMA and was stationed, actually, in my home State of Alabama in the State parks.

The outpouring that came the following days of support from the local community was, I think, best described as just overwhelming. As soon as the people found out that the refugees were headed into our area, supplies were starting to be gathered together, and drives were started immediately as they were being organized.

A member of my own staff organized one of those numerous drives on his own initiative. Thousands of pounds of food, of clothing, and personal hygiene products were collected. They were distributed to the people, and these people that were helped had little more than just the clothes on their back.

I am also proud that, after this show of support, that many of the refugees decided to make the Fourth District, the district I represent, their home. In one particular case, a refugee from Louisiana ended up working for Desoto State Park, where she had been housed.

Finally, the resilience of Alabamians who lived along the Gulf Coast was also inspiring as well.

□ 1845

Though the Gulf Coast of Alabama was not the hardest hit of the region, the Gulf Coast of Alabama was severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina.

While there is still some healing that needs to be done, the Gulf Coast is not only back in business, but it has returned to life as usual and it is thriving.

New shipyards are being constructed, new businesses are opening up, and tourism has returned to the region. This, I believe, is a testament to the spirit of the people of the State of Alabama as well as our neighboring States, Mississippi and Louisiana.

As we move forward as a country and as a region, I hope that we will not only look to the lessons we have learned from the failures of this response, but also to the lessons we learned about kindness, the lessons of charity, being a good neighbor, and, actually, the spirit of this great Nation.

So I want to thank my colleague from Louisiana for putting this time together to draw attention—again, not to place the blame on the individuals or organizations that we could point blame to this evening, but to the spirit and to the greatness of all those that were involved and to the kindness, the charity, and the spirit that arose from that occasion.

Mr. SCALISE. I thank you. I appreciate my colleague from Alabama's (Mr. ADERHOLT) comments.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, so much of the national attention on Hurricane Katrina focused on the city of New Orleans.

We all remember the pictures, the visuals, of people that were displaced, of floodwaters that sat, in many cases, for 2 or 3 weeks.

But then, of course, we also remember the many things that happened along the way for people who rebuilt, who came back, who persevered.

My colleague and friend who represents the city of New Orleans along

with me obviously was deeply involved in a lot of those recovery efforts.

I want to yield now to my colleague from New Orleans (Mr. RICHMOND).

Mr. RICHMOND. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), who represents the neighboring district from me in part of the metropolitan area of New Orleans.

Let me just start off by saying something about New Orleans and the people of New Orleans. Now, the people of New Orleans are a very, very resilient people, and it started from the beginning of the history of New Orleans up until today.

We started off—you can go back to 1788, when there was a fire in New Orleans that burned 856 of the 1,100 buildings that made up New Orleans. So that was 80 percent of the city burned. Then 6 years later another 212 buildings burned.

But the good thing about the people of New Orleans is that we always pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and continue to do the work to rebuild and make a better life.

Then you can go to 1853, when we had a yellow fever outbreak and epidemic. In 1853, almost 8,000 people died of yellow fever.

And if you look at the time between 1853 and 1905, 41,000 people in the city of New Orleans lost their lives due to yellow fever. But again the city picked itself up, dusted itself off, and worked to make a better New Orleans.

Then fast-forward to 1965. That was the year that Hurricane Betsy devastated the city of New Orleans. That was the first storm to rack up a cost of $1 billion in damage.

And then, of course, I will talk about Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that hit New Orleans and devastated the entire Gulf Coast, but significantly damaged New Orleans.

Let me just say for the record, even after we picked ourselves up and dusted ourselves off and started to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina, a few years later then comes the BP oil spill.

And again the people of New Orleans—we picked ourselves up, dusted ourselves off, and we started to create a better New Orleans and a better Louisiana.

Now, going back to Hurricane Katrina, which my good friend STEVE SCALISE already talked about, the total loss of life in Hurricane Katrina was over 1,800 people, and 1,577 of those people were from Louisiana.

Let me just break down some of the causes of death: 40 percent of the deaths were caused by drowning; 25 percent by injury and trauma; and heart conditions caused another 11 percent.

If you remember the devastation and destruction on the TVs that covered it, you will understand the anxiety that the people that were down there suffered.

Let me take a second before I go into some of the other statistics to just say many people always say that Hurricane Katrina was the largest natural disaster in the history of the United States.

Well, I appreciate the sentiment. But, factually, that is just not correct. Hurricane Katrina was the result of a manmade disaster combined with a natural disaster.

The Army Corps of Engineers had great notice that the levees that protected New Orleans and the metropolitan area were not sufficient. When the storm hit, the levees washed away.

Then there was something called the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, which we call MRGO. It was designed by the Corps of Engineers to allow ship traffic to the great Port of New Orleans all the way up to America's heartland. It was designed to be almost 100 yards wide to allow ship traffic.

By the time Katrina hit, almost 30, 40 years after it was built, it was not 100 yards wide anymore. It was almost a mile wide in its largest sections. And that water coming out of the Gulf of Mexico caused a lot of the devastation.

So I wanted to clear up the fact that this was not a natural disaster. It had a large part to do with mankind having their hand in it and inadequate building by the Corps of Engineers.

Before I finish and yield back to Congressman SCALISE, let me also say that, when Katrina hit, although the government response was lacking, the American people stood up, recognized the situation, and opened their hearts to the people of Louisiana, the people of Mississippi, and some of the people of Texas.

Baton Rouge alone handled 300,000 to 400,000 displaced individuals from the New Orleans area.

Houston, Texas, handled right around 250,000 people in terms of bringing them into shelters and other places so that they could be safe and have some housing.

Now you still have 111,000 people in Houston that are from the greater New Orleans area. I remember traveling to Houston after the storm and going to the shelters and watching the extraordinary work of SHEILA JACKSON LEE and AL GREEN to provide for New Orleans and New Orleans-area evacuees.

100,000 evacuees in Atlanta, in shelters and in homes, with HANK JOHNSON and the Honorable JOHN LEWIS helping. Now Atlanta still is home to 70,000.

San Antonio, Texas, held almost 35,000 people at the time of the storm, and now they still hold 15,000 to 18,000.

Then that brings me to Birmingham which right after the storm housed 20,000 people, and now they house in between 1,500 to 13,000.

So the magnitude of this storm was great.

I just want to cover the population decrease. And then the other things with Hurricane Katrina I will cover more in depth with my good friend and colleague from Mississippi, BENNIE THOMPSON, whose district was also impacted.

But I will just say the population of New Orleans was 484,000 before Katrina. Right after Katrina it was right around 230,000 people. And that is a decrease of almost half of the city's population.

So when you look at that damage and you look at the fact that we lost 134,000 housing units, 70 percent of all occupied housing units of the city, you will understand the magnitude and the depth of the devastation that our district suffered.

But once again the people of New Orleans and the people of Louisiana—we pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and we start building a better New Orleans and a better future.

However, we still have many needs. We still have many things that we need to right that didn't go right during the storm.

But, as of now, I just wanted to talk about how resilient the people of New Orleans were during the storm and the outpouring of love from the rest of the country.

Mr. SCALISE. Thank you, Congressman RICHMOND.

Of course, as the gentleman talked about, the devastation and those 1,833 lives that we lost throughout the Gulf Coast still live with us. We still remember the people who gave their lives, who lost their lives, in this devastating storm.

But, Mr. Speaker, some of the things that you saw from the people of southeast Louisiana—I know I saw firsthand the strength, the resiliency, of the people back at a time not long after the storm hit when there were people questioning whether or not the city of New Orleans would be rebuilt or should be rebuilt. You saw that conversation start around the country.

But, Mr. Speaker, that didn't last long before you saw the Nation come together and make a commitment, and you saw the people of New Orleans make a commitment that the city would be rebuilt.

But I think this is where the story of recovery comes out so bright and strong, Mr. Speaker. That is how the people of the Gulf Coast, how the people of New Orleans, responded.

People didn't say they were just going to rebuild what was broken. You saw people demanding, demanding, Mr. Speaker, that we rebuild better, stronger, more efficient. People started demanding that government work differently, that government work better.

Those levees that failed, Mr. Speaker, caused so much of that devastation. People said: We need to reform the way that levees are built. You saw a citizen uprising, in fact, that led to dramatic changes in State law.

I was a State representative at the time. We actually changed the constitution of Louisiana to require that people who serve on levee boards actually have experience in things like engineering, hydrology.

You saw citizen groups like Women of the Storm emerge, where over 50,000 people signed a petition not long after that demanded that laws be changed, Mr. Speaker, to make those kinds of reforms in levee boards.

And when you look at the levees that were rebuilt today with the help of our colleagues up here in Congress and the work of FEMA and other agencies—when you look at those levees, they are dramatically better.

The flood protection systems are better in southeast Louisiana. That didn't happen by accident. That happened because the people demanded those kinds of changes.

You look at the political reform. As we all know, every State has got its problems. But Louisiana had a bad history of political corruption going back over 100 years.

The people of Louisiana demanded a better political system. You actually saw citizens picking up the telephone, calling the FBI if they saw an ounce of political corruption.

There became a zero tolerance for political corruption in the city of New Orleans and the surrounding regions. People went to jail.

But it was because the public said: We demand better. And, ultimately, that helped lead to the recovery that we see today 10 years later.

Just look at the school system, Mr. Speaker. Before Katrina struck, New Orleans had one of the most failed and corrupt public school systems in the country.

There were kids that were graduating—we had a high school valedictorian who couldn't pass the State exit exam.

After Katrina, again people said: We are going to rebuild, but we are going to demand a better public school system.

And you saw sweeping reforms move through the State legislature, setting up a system of charter schools in the New Orleans area that are now touted as the model for reform for urban education systems.

That didn't happen by accident. That happened because the people demanded better from government. We saw government fail at every level, Federal, State, and local. It is well documented.

□ 1900

The story of New Orleans today, 10 years after the storm, is the story of a strong and resilient people who said: We absolutely will rebuild, but we are not going to rebuild the same way that it was before with all of the flaws and problems that existed; we are going to demand better.

You can see better today, you can see the recovery. It is not over. There are still some neighborhoods that are working to rebuild, but there are so many neighborhoods that are stronger today, that are more thriving today. Young people coming in from other States to be a part of this renaissance, to be a part of this recovery.

It is an exciting time to be in the New Orleans region today; but obviously, as we reflect upon the devastation of Katrina 10 years ago, we know how far we have come and how much it took people pulling together, working with groups like the Pastors Resource Council, pastors from all around the country that came together to say that, while government had its failings, individuals, communities came together, churches came together, faith-based groups stood up like we have known that they do in so many other disasters to help get food to people, get shelter to people, and help people recover.

We, obviously, reflect on and pray for the lives that were lost and remember the devastation that was so horrific, but we also celebrate the recovery that is still so evident in the people of Louisiana.

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

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE KATRINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, nearly 10 years ago, the scenes flashing across our television screens showed what appeared to be a Third World country—literally bodies floating in the streets, people that were homeless, homes washed away—one of the worst natural disasters in America's history.

Mr. Speaker, over 1,200 of our brothers, our sisters, our mothers, fathers, uncles, aunts, our neighbors, our friends perished in the disaster on August 29, 2005. We lost over 1,200 people, Mr. Speaker.

These vulnerabilities were not vulnerabilities that were unknown. As a matter of fact, Mark Schleifstein with The Times-Picayune published a series known as ''Washing Away'' in 2002, years before Hurricane Katrina hit our State and caused all this devastation.

That series accurately predicted, the vulnerabilities accurately predicted the outcomes of a direct hit by a storm like Hurricane Katrina upon our communities. We saw what had happened. Homes, businesses, monuments, schools, our history, our dreams, our hopes, our future were all flooded as a result of Hurricane Katrina 10 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, this wasn't a Third World country; it was one of America's great cities that was underwater. Many people look back at Hurricane Katrina, and they view the impacts as being parochial, things that impacted Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama, not something that impacted the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. When the Mississippi River was shut down and all the ports associated with it across the Gulf Coast as a result of the devastating impacts, the farmers in the Midwest had no way of getting their crops out to market. There was no capacity within other transportation mediums to get these crops out; therefore, the farmers in the Midwest suffered as a result of Hurricane Katrina's impacts on the Gulf Coast.

Mr. Speaker, rail lines, Louisiana is only one of two places in the United States where we have all six class I rail lines. In many cases, the rail lines and the associated infrastructure was destroyed, therefore, once again, severely impacting America's intermodal transportation system.

The economy, one of the places that has these amazing natural resources, has an amazing energy industry, petrochemical industry, agriculture industry, and many, many others, severely impacted, causing impacts not just again to the regional economy, but to the national economy.

Mr. Speaker, one great example of that is gasoline prices. Following Hurricane Katrina, we watched gasoline prices spike 75 cents a gallon; but let me be clear, not in Louisiana, nationwide—75 cents a gallon is the national average price increase as a result of those 2005 hurricanes on the Gulf Coast—75 cents a gallon.

As I recall, I believe that translates into $450 million in higher consumer payments per day as a result of the impacts those storms had, the 2005 hurricanes—Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita—had on the Gulf Coast and had on, really, the Nation.

Importantly, Mr. Speaker, the deficit, much of the recovery that was funded by the Federal Government, in fact, the far majority of it, was funded by deficit spending, funded by deficit spending. This wasn't spending that was offset; this wasn't reserve dollars that the Federal Government had sitting there waiting for this unbelievable disaster. This was deficit spending.

Our children, our grandchildren, our great-grandchildren will be paying for decades for this. I want to be clear, Mr. Speaker, this was preventable, which I am going to talk about in a minute.

Also the impact to the environment, here you see the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and you see the EPA out there talking about the importance of wetlands and the importance of waters of the United States and writing all of these extraordinary rules to grant themselves more aggressive jurisdiction, larger jurisdiction over our private lands; yet as a result of those storms alone in 2005, we lost over 200 square miles of coastal wetlands in the State of Louisiana alone.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to say again, a lot of people looked at this and watched it on TV and saw it as being a parochial problem, a problem of the Gulf Coast, a problem of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Mr. Speaker, you could cut and paste that situation; you could paste virtually any other coastal city, any other coastal State in this Nation, and they potentially could face the same repercussions, the same outcomes as

we experienced in 2005 because this Nation continues to have a reactive policy to disasters, and it is something that we have got to change.

We could have taken the hundred-plus billion dollars that Congress appropriated following the 2005 hurricanes to help recover, to help get these communities back on their feet across the Gulf Coast. We could have taken a fraction of those dollars, and we could have invested it proactively and prevented it from happening.

Mr. Speaker, any city on our coast could experience the same disaster we saw; and I remind you, just in 2012, we saw Hurricane Sandy cause profound consequences in New York, New Jersey, and other communities on the East Coast. I will say it once again, disasters that were preventable, and so this is something that we all need to be paying attention to.

While in New Orleans, while in south Louisiana and Mississippi and in Alabama, there were amazing stories of communities coming together, of people coming together, of resilient families coming together to ensure that while this did knock them down, they were getting back up again, and they were going to recover—strong resolve from these communities all across the Gulf Coast.

Mr. Speaker, one other thing that was truly amazing is watching the incredible outpouring of support not just from the Gulf Coast, but from all over this Nation and countries around the world, committing to come help us recover across the Gulf Coast.

It was an amazing opportunity for people to come together, to put down differences, and to all come together in support of the recovery of these communities, the recovery of these families, the recovery of these businesses, the recovery of the hopes and dreams of these communities across the Gulf Coast.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to see this play over and over again. We are going to continue to see these types of disasters over and over again until we turn the policies around in the United States, until we see fundamental changes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pivot back to the recovery; I want to pivot back to New Orleans; I want to pivot back to Plaquemines Parish and St. Bernard, St. Tammany; I want to pivot back to lower Jefferson Parish. These communities, in many cases, were destroyed.

Everything was underwater, everything. I will say it again, the homes, the businesses, the schools, the hopes, the dreams, the future underwater—and 10 years ago, 10 years ago, unbelievable. I think that most people would have told you these communities aren't coming back; they can't come back. They have been so profoundly impacted that they simply can't recover from this, but that is not what happened.

As you just heard Mr. SCALISE discuss, people came together. We now have an amazing progress, amazing recovery of our schools in south Louisiana, amazing recovery in our economy.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we now have tens of billions of dollars in economic development projects on the horizon while, in other areas, you are seeing people losing jobs, you are seeing businesses close, you are seeing small businesses shut down and a trend of more small businesses closing and opening across the Nation; but in Louisiana, Mr. Speaker, tens of billions of dollars in new economic development projects on the horizon.

As a matter of fact, we have the largest foreign investment in U.S. history committed to projects in south Louisiana. We are seeing a manufacturing renaissance, and it is happening because our people are so resilient because we have come back, because we have come together, and because we have plotted a path to the future using the resources that Louisiana is so blessed with, the Louisiana maritime transportation system that we have, and the amazing natural resources in regard to the inexpensive, readily available natural gas, oil, petrochemical industry, the rail lines, the intermodal transportation facilities.

We have been able to accomplish a manufacturing renaissance not in Mexico, not in Asia, but right here in the United States in south Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to say I pray that there is not another community, that there is not another city, that there is not another State in this Nation that has to experience, that has to go through the tragedy, the travesty that we experienced in south Louisiana, the loss of over 1,200 of our friends, our relatives, and our neighbors, to see the type of recovery, to see people come together.

To see us finally help to build a resilient protection system, resilient ecosystem to ensure that the next storm isn't going to cause the same devastation to New Orleans as we saw 10 years ago, I pray, Mr. Speaker, that that doesn't have to happen again.

The only way we prevent it from happening again is if people learn from the lessons of Hurricane Katrina, from Hurricane Rita, if they actually apply the lessons learned that we so painfully went through in south Louisiana, in Mississippi, and in Alabama, that we apply those lessons around the United States to make our communities more resilient; to make our economy more resilient; to make our businesses more resilient; to make our families more resilient; and, Mr. Speaker, most importantly, to ensure that we can all accomplish the American Dream.

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

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF HURRICANE KATRINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I want to just thank my colleagues from Louisiana for also talking about the devastation that we received in hurricanes, both Katrina and Rita, which we call the ''sister hurricanes'' because they were only separated by a couple of days and what damage that Hurricane Katrina caused. Just a few days later, Hurricane Rita came right behind it and exacerbated that damage.

Let me just hit on a few of the misperceptions of Katrina. Well, actually, since I have had a little time and I want to make sure that everyone involved has a chance to have time to speak on this, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), my good friend, who at the time was chair of the Homeland Security Committee, who made sure that some of the deficiencies in FEMA and some of the other places that caused us undue headaches during the rebuilding, that those headaches were relieved a little bit or eased a little bit because of the hard work of BENNIE THOMPSON, whose State also incurred some damage.

□ 1915

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I appreciate the gentleman from New Orleans for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise for two reasons—one, to talk about what it is to be in the eye of a hurricane and to be without basic necessities for over 10 days because of a hurricane and, two, what it is that our government should do when those situations occur at the Federal, State, and local levels.

In my comments, initially, I will talk a little bit about what happened in August of 2005—how, in fact, so many people were impacted as well as what we have done as a government, what we didn't do, and what we should do in going forward.

As the gentleman from Louisiana has said, for the most part, both Hurricanes Rita and Katrina ravaged Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and a little bit of Florida, but I will limit my comments to Katrina. In Hurricane Katrina, there were over 1,800 people—from Florida to Texas—who died.

In my home State of Mississippi, 238 individuals died. Basically, what we had after that is over 1.2 million housing units damaged, and in my home State, almost 120,000 were completely destroyed. In southern Mississippi, that meant that over 60 percent of the single family dwellings were either destroyed or rendered uninhabitable, and the statistics were worse for rental units. Along the Gulf Coast—the beautiful Gulf Coast where we have the largest manmade beach in the United States—there were over 1 million people displaced. One month after the storm, 600,000 families were still homeless, and, ultimately, 114,000 were housed in FEMA trailers.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have to tell you what happened with the FEMA trailers. It was a mess. The government's

response to the temporary housing situation could only be characterized as a mess. We fixed it, but during that time, we put people in trailers that had basically been pieced together and shipped to the good people of the Gulf Coast. Many of them had Chinese drywall in those trailers that let off formaldehyde, which, ultimately, impacted the health of everybody we put in the trailers, ostensibly, for temporary housing. We created a bigger health problem.

Obviously, we passed legislation to address some of it in terms of the health costs and other things. Ultimately, a lawsuit provided some relief to the families. What we have done in correcting that temporary housing situation is to direct FEMA to not just be the response and recovery agency. We want you to also understand that, when people are in trouble, not only do you come, but you come with the right resources to make sure that you don't create and make life worse for them. After our Katrina experience, we have a more nimble operation, and we have far better individuals who are trained so that, when disasters come, we can respond.

The problem that I have goes back, Mr. Speaker, to the comments that a speaker on the other side made.

When you are in a disaster, whether it is a hurricane or a flood or a tornado, the last thing you want is for somebody to ask, ''Well, who is going to pay for it?'' These are citizens of the United States of America. The only thing we should say is, ''In your darkest hour, in your time of need, your government will not let you down.'' I would hope that people understand that we are a great nation because we take care of all of our people, especially when the chips are down and when they have no other place to turn. So I would hope that we would not talk about issues of deficit spending when people are being plucked off the roofs of their homes or when they are being dislocated hundreds of miles from their residences simply because they can't get back into their neighborhoods.

What I also want to talk about is the fact that, since Katrina, we have made sure that first responders can communicate with each other. There were a number of stories about individuals who wanted to help but who couldn't talk to each other. Hopefully, we have started fixing that interoperability issue so that those individuals can communicate with each other, whether they are paid firemen, volunteer firepersons, or whether they are law enforcement at the State, county, or local level, because, when we are involved in any natural disaster that is federally declared, the constituents who need our help don't want us to get bogged down in the territories. They just want the help. Part of the help is making sure that these individuals can communicate with each other.

We had nonprofit organizations. The Red Cross, most specifically, was severely criticized because of its response to Katrina. A substantial number of citizens who were impacted were in low-income, minority communities, and we started getting responses such as: ''We don't know what to do in those areas''; ''We are afraid to go in those areas.'' Yet, if you are part of the national preparedness system, you go and help; you don't try to qualify that help. Part of that agreement we have with an organization like the Red Cross is that you will do better, that you will respond when other organizations don't have the capacity.

We are continuing to work on the Red Cross' response to natural disasters in this country. Sometimes they do a good job, and sometimes they don't. What we have to do is make sure that, every time they respond, they respond in a manner that is helping someone. Regardless of people's socioeconomic statuses in life, they are still American citizens. I look forward to continuing to work on that.

The other thing we have to work on, Mr. Speaker, is in making sure that the moneys that are sent to the devastated areas don't get diverted to other areas.

In my home State of Mississippi, our Governor at the time diverted over $600 million, which was directed to low- and middle-income housing problems, to a port expansion, which had nothing to do with housing, but the flexibility to do it was there. We had a number of people who lost everything they had, and they didn't have any means to come back. The moneys that we sent from Washington to attempt to make those individuals whole and to reintroduce them to the communities from which they had been displaced had been sent to the Port of Gulfport. It is a worthy project, but you shouldn't have to take moneys to do that which were intended by Congress to go for low- and middle-income housing.

As of this date, the requirements for that money still have not met the satisfaction of not only the HUD officials, but also of members of the communities. We should not take moneys in times of emergency and fund pet projects. If those projects are worthy to be funded, then let's fund them out of traditional sources and not out of emergency sources. I am concerned that we do that.

I want to pay a special tribute to the Mississippi Center for Justice, which has done a wonderful job in pursuing the expenditure of these funds consistent with the intent of those funds. I want to pay a special tribute as well to the Mississippi Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. They have provided witnesses and testimony at hearing after hearing as well as documentation about the questionable expenditures around Hurricane Katrina.

As I said in the beginning, as one of those individuals who experienced Katrina firsthand, our government has to step up and help these people in their time of need. What we have done in the last 10 years is to attempt to fix everything that we have identified that didn't work. We have solved our interoperability problem. We have provided training for first responders. We have provided evacuation routes for individuals so that they know how to leave as well as routes for vulnerable populations or whether they are handicapped in some form. We have even created opportunities so that pets won't be left alone when evacuations occur. All of those things are very important because it goes to who we are as a people. So how we treat the least of them in their most desperate hours goes to the character of who we are as a nation.

As we mark this 10-year anniversary of Katrina, Mr. Speaker, I want us to understand that it is still a work in progress and that it doesn't matter whether you live in a house on a hill or if you live in a house around the corner that is at a dead end—you are still an American citizen. When things like a Hurricane Katrina happen, you should rest assured that your government will be Johnny on the spot.

As I step back from my microphone, I want to compliment the gentleman from Louisiana for leading this Special Order, because we should really understand how difficult Katrina has been for those individuals who were in the brunt.

Let me also take a point of personal privilege to talk about the good job that the men and women of the United States Coast Guard did in response to Katrina. They really did a tremendous job in working and in managing a lot of the recovery and response to Katrina.

In August 2005, nearly ten years ago, Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Mississippi and ravaged the Gulf Coast.

The storm pummeled everything in its path.

Over 1800 people from Florida to Texas died, including 238 from my home State of Mississippi.

After what felt like an eternity, the storm died down.

We inventoried our losses, and the painfully slow recovery process began.

1.2 million housing units were damaged, and 120,000 were completely destroyed.

In Southern Mississippi, more than 60 percent of single-family dwellings were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable—and the statistics were worse for rental units.

Along the Gulf Coast, over 1 million people were displaced.

One month after the storm, About 600,000 families were still homeless, and ultimately 114,000 were housed in FEMA trailers.

The recovery process was slow and wrought with mistakes at the Federal, State, and local level.

At the Federal level, chain-of-command and coordination failures complicated the quick and efficient delivery of Federal resources, undermining both response and recovery efforts.

Opportunities to pre-stage important resources were missed.

Interoperable emergency communications challenges and lack of qualified, well-trained, and well-funded emergency response personnel—capability gaps first identified during

the response to the September 11th attacks—persisted.

Ineffective and underdeveloped disaster housing and disaster procurement policies dragged out recovery efforts and drove up costs.

States appeared to lack capacity to drawdown Federal recovery funds quickly or effectively.

For example, my home state of Mississippi was awarded $3 billion in Katrina related infrastructure grants, but by January 2009, it had only drawn down a little over half of those funds ($1.7 million).

FEMA allocated $156 million in hazard mitigation grant funds to Mississippi, but the State had only drawn down $40 million two-and-a-half years after the storm struck.

My governor at the time diverted $600 million in CDBG funds initially intended for the construction of low and middle income housing to a port expansion project.

Parts of southern Mississippi are still feeling the impact of that ill-advised decision to this day.

In the aftermath of the storm, Congress overhauled the national emergency management infrastructure by enacting The Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, or PKEMRA.

The legislation sought to address preparedness, response and recovery gaps identified through oversight activities carried out by this Committee, including:

(1) apparent uncertainty regarding who had authority to coordinate and direct response and recovery efforts under the National Response Plan;

(2) ineffective coordination of Federal, state, local, private sector response and recovery efforts;

(3) inadequate Federal coordination of preparedness planning, including lack of effective evacuation and temporary housing plans to meet the needs of all of those in a community;

(4) lack of operable and interoperable communications to support response and recovery efforts; and,

(5) lack of effective emergency alert and warning systems to notify the public of potential threats to health and safety.

Nationally, we have made progress on addressing these gaps.

For example, we have saved lives by getting people out of danger's path with the Integrated Public Alerts and Warnings System.

Our planning and exercise programs have improved relationships among Federal, State, and local responders to facilitate quicker, more effective response and recovery efforts.

And we have honed the national doctrine on preventing, protecting against, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from natural and manmade disasters.

But significant challenges with long term recovery efforts remain.

For example, the Federal government's failure to have adequate disaster housing plans in place before the storm struck resulted in last-minute scrambling to find long-term recovery housing for the displaced.

We ended up with botched FEMA trailer contracts that cost taxpayers millions of dollars, and ultimately provided Hurricane survivors with formaldehyde-laced dwellings.

A class action lawsuit from 55,000 Gulf Coast Residents against over two dozen mobile home manufacturers was finally settled for over $42.5 million in 2012.

Despite this difficult lesson, as we saw in 2012 after Hurricane Sandy, developing viable disaster housing options for regions across the United States continues to be an elusive goal.

Although we have made progress on achieving interoperability, gaps continue to hinder effective responses.

Despite the horrific loss, survivors demonstrated inspiring resilience.

And the American people proved once again their commitment to helping those affected by disaster by sending resources and flocking affected areas to aid recovery.

Over the past decade, Gulf Coast residents, with Federal support and the help of volunteers from across the country, have rebuilt much of what was lost.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the important work of the Mississippi Conference of the NAACP and the Mississippi Center for Justice.

Both of those organizations traveled to and opened offices on the Coast to offer legal services to the thousands of Gulf Coast area residents who needed an advocate to help make them whole.

Notably, they filed a lawsuit on behalf of community groups and individuals against the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development resulting in a landmark settlement of $132 million dollars for low-income households in nine Mississippi counties.

The Mississippi Center for Justice has continued to spearhead numerous Federal and state policy battles to demand and restore safe and affordable housing to Hurricane Katrina's most vulnerable survivors, including thousands of children.

The Hurricane Katrina recovery, in many respects, has become a story of American perseverance and generosity—and I am glad we are here to commemorate and honor it this evening.

Mr. RICHMOND. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, let me inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARDY). The gentleman has 17 minutes remaining.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, before I get into some of the misconceptions and perceptions that still remain from Katrina, let me just finish where the gentleman from Mississippi left off.

In its aftermath and the rescue and recovery, one of the shining stars during Hurricane Katrina was the United States Coast Guard. They did a phenomenal job, both day and night, in rescuing people with helicopters and boats and everything at their disposal. They didn't care if they were tired, and they didn't care if they were hungry. They just did the job that they should have done just like most of our servicemen. They were the shining stars.

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I mentioned earlier that one of the perceptions that is just inaccurate about Katrina was that it was a natural disaster. It is not just me who will call it a manmade disaster.

In 2009, Judge Duval ruled that the Federal Government was liable for the damage related to MRGO because the canal's original purpose was navigation. That decision was affirmed, and then it was overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

However, on May 1, 2015, a Federal claims judge, Susan Braden, ruled that the Army Corps of Engineers is liable for damages resulting from flooding during Katrina again and that the damage caused in both St. Bernard Parish, which is not in my district, and the lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans, which is in my district, was that the Army Corps of Engineers was responsible and liable for the damage caused to their homes because the Coast Guard was responsible for the increased storm surge and flooding during Hurricane Katrina and that the Army Corps knew that their failure could have that effect.

So Judge Braden has ordered that the Federal Government, more specifically, the Justice Department, enter into settlement negotiations with the attorneys of those residents in both the lower Ninth Ward and St. Bernard Parish. I would just continue to urge the Federal Government to step up to do that because it is the right thing to do.

Some of the other things that I just want to spend a quick moment in correcting are that, after the storm, there was violence in the streets and people were shooting at the rescue boats. That was just absolutely untrue.

As I tout the success of the Coast Guard, I have to now question and criticize the effort of both the Red Cross and our National Guard.

In the days after Katrina, there were Red Cross buses on the side of the highway that lined from New Orleans all the way to Baton Rouge because the buses were scared to go into New Orleans because it was dangerous.

The Red Cross and the National Guard had 18-wheelers and military trucks full of water that were designated to go into New Orleans, but they were on the side of the interstate opposite the buses because they thought it was too dangerous to go into New Orleans.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I just want to tell you, while the National Guard, the Red Cross, and others were scared to go into New Orleans, I myself, with another council member, Oliver Thomas at the time, was driving a minivan into New Orleans filled with water with no security, no protection, and the only thing we encountered were grateful people who were looking for some help, some water, some food, and some direction as to how and when this recovery would start.

What I don't want is people to look at New Orleans and remember back to those days and just believe the misinformation about all of those other things.

While I am correcting that, let me also touch on why people didn't leave. Many people have said people just chose not to leave for various reasons, they didn't know better. All of that is absolutely untrue, also.

The biggest reason people didn't leave was that the warnings were weak

and they were not enough notice. I remember watching the news and watching the mayor of New Orleans say: Well, I am sending my family to Dallas. If I were you, I would evacuate.

Well, in moments like this, you need stern warnings and you have to be blunt.

I was on the conference calls where FEMA and Red Cross said that they were sending 10,000 body bags. We knew this was the real one. It was the time to show leadership and tell people to leave the city in no uncertain terms.

I remember having a conference call with Governor Blanco in which she talked about all of these things, along with the Red Cross and FEMA.

By the time that it was my turn to talk, I said, ''Governor, I understand that this is the real deal. However, there are 1,500 people across the street from my house playing Little League. They don't get the benefit of hearing what you just said on this conference call.''

It was later that day and the next morning that people pushed, but it was only a day out from the storm.

And then we never talked about the expenses associated with evacuating once or twice in the city, packing your family up, driving to another city, paying for a hotel, feeding your family, and then coming back.

When that happens over and over again and they were false alarms, if you don't give them the stern warning when you know it is the real one, you know some people won't leave.

The last part of it is we came up with a bad idea of using shelters that were in harm's way. We had thousands of people in the Louisiana Superdome that is located in New Orleans. Well, the Superdome was right in harm's way.

One of the other perceptions—and you actually heard it tonight—was that the new New Orleans has a great school system that has turned around education in this urban setting, and the truth of the matter is it is a work in progress at best.

The State came in and took over most of our schools, all but maybe five or six of them. Out of those 57 schools that they took over, seven are B schools, no A schools, 20 are C schools, and 24 are D and F schools.

We still have some work to do in the area of education. We have made some improvements, but we have kids now that are being bused and staying on the bus almost 2 hours to get to a school in the morning and 2 hours in the evening. That is not a system that we want.

Our good schools don't have attendance zones, and it has become a maze in order to apply and to get into our better schools.

Those are things that can be fixed if everybody is willing to come to the table and figure out the best way to do it and not look at everyone who has suggestions or criticisms of the school system as being an enemy.

Public education: Even if you look at the Brown v. Board of Education decision years ago, 50, 75 years ago, that decision came about because the Justices talked about how an education is important to being a good citizen, thriving, and being a success.

Because of that, we should spend more time in working to make sure that the New Orleans public school system is a system that educates all of the kids.

Whether you are Black or White, whether you are poor or rich, whether you live in a great neighborhood or whether you live in a bad neighborhood, every kid should have the opportunity to succeed.

The other thing that people see a lot now, whether we are hosting a Super Bowl, the Final Four, or the Sugar Bowl, people assume that the city is back because the areas that they cover on TV are the areas that are back.

If you look at Canal Street, Bourbon Street, and all of those areas, the Superdome, the New Orleans arena, they are back.

However, there are still areas that are not back. You still have areas where homeowners are still struggling to rebuild.

You can look at the lower Ninth Ward. You can look at the upper Ninth Ward. You can look at Gentilly. You can look at New Orleans East. Those areas are still fighting to recover.

You can look at some of the complaints from homeowners when the Road Home process was set up. They complain that they were fingerprinted and treated like criminals during the application process in the onset of asking for government assistance.

Remember, we are talking about homeowners, the most responsible people in a community, being fingerprinted and treated like criminals during the application process.

Also, the Federal Government prohibited grants exceeding the value of a property. So Road Home tied its calculation to a home's prestorm value as opposed to the actual cost of rebuilding.

So when you look at the 36,000 grant recipient collection letters for alleged overpayments, duplication of insurance proceeds, or failure to comply with the covenants, you see 36,000 people that are being unjustly punished by the Federal Government.

I would just say that we said it very early on in the process, that using appraised value was going to harm minority communities because an appraisal is subjective, depending on where you live. So homes in the more affluent areas of New Orleans appraised a lot higher.

I can just tell you, doing electrical work when I was small, doing construction work, to rebuild a 1,500-square-foot house, whether it is in Lakeview or whether it is in the lower Ninth Ward, Sheetrock, plywood, screws, and nails are all going to cost the same. Instead of using appraised value, we should have used rebuilding cost. That is just not my opinion.

I will tell you that the Federal court ruled that the Road Home's method of calculating grants discriminated against African American homeowners. That was back in 2010.

The problem with that ruling was that, in order for the State to stop using prestorm value to calculate Road Home grants, it was only for the future grants. By that time, a majority of the grants had already been given out.

So I will just tell you that that $62 million in additional grants helped about 1,500 homeowners. Remember, we had over 100,000 properties that were damaged in the storm. So you can see the abundance of people that did not get assistance.

Some of the other remaining issues with Road Home was that we still have people who need money to get back into their homes because they have an unmet need.

HUD could have done something very simple to figure out where we are now, and that is to figure out what people received from their insurance company, what people received from FEMA, and what people received from Road Home.

You add those up and then you figure out the cost to rebuild. If the rebuilding cost exceeds those, that is the unmet need that we need help from the government because there is money that is still available.

I would say we need the Federal Government to actually take some time, investigate, and figure out how we can use the unused money to make people whole that were not made whole in the beginning.

Also, let me bring up just one other thing so you can get a full idea of the picture of New Orleans. If you just look at rent, in the 9 years since Katrina, the share of people paying 50 percent of their income for rent is now 37 percent.

So what you are really saying is that secure housing cost burdens 50 percent of household income, and that indicates a serious problem in housing affordability.

In 2004, just to give you a reference, the share of severely cost-burdened renters in New Orleans was 24 percent. Now it is 37 percent in New Orleans. It is 26 percent nationally.

That is a problem and we really need to work on it because, if you can't live in the city, you can't work in the city. This government is better than that.

So the other thing I would just say is that people think we are back and we are rebuilt, and that is not the case. The other thing is that people think that we received everything we need to rebuild.

I would say that Congress, the government, and the President did a great job in immediately sending down $14 billion to New Orleans and putting it in a fund, which is unheard of in Congress, to take money and just put it in a fund and say: Corps of Engineers, as you rebuild the levee, spend this

money, protect New Orleans. They did it, and they did a good job of doing it.

We still have outlying areas that need flood control. If you look at the cost of Katrina—and I will give you a few figures—you will see that we still have a gap.

You had $150 billion in damages. Most of the Federal spending went for relief, not rebuilding. $120.5 billion in total spending. Emergency relief was 75 billion. Rebuilding funds was 45 billion.

So if you look at the Federal funding, private insurance claims, and charitable giving, it still leaves a gap of about $60 billion. When you talk about a gap of $60 billion, I just want you to understand what that means.

That means, in every community, every neighborhood, including mine, you will see five houses where people have come back, saved up money, and rebuilt using both insurance, savings, retirement, FEMA, government money. Then you will see a house or two that is not rebuilt at all.

Then if you go down to the lower Ninth Ward, you will see one house that is rebuilt. Then you will see six or seven houses that are not rebuilt where the grass is just as high as the trees and it looks like a forest.

If you are that one homeowner that took the time to come home and rebuild and you have to pass that every night, it is just not a safe situation. We, as a country, can do better than that.

So what I would hope is that, as we continue the process of helping New Orleans and Louisiana recover from Katrina, that we look at the lessons learned and we find the people who still have unmet needs, we find the people that are still not back in their homes who want to be in their homes, and we figure out a way to help them.

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That is what HUD is for. We still have the money, and in fact, citizens and community groups—and I can think of a bunch of them, A Community Voice, Justice and Beyond—all of those groups have been asking Congress and the inspector general to do an audit and an investigation of how much funds we received, where did they go, what is left, how do we move forward and make sure that everyone who wants to come home has the ability to come home.

Now, all of those things and, I think, lessons learned and misperceptions of Katrina, I think we have to take those same things and look at Sandy and all other hurricanes.

What I wanted to do before we went home for a break and celebrate the 10th anniversary of Katrina is to let people know that we still have needs; we still have things we have to do to complete the recovery, but also thank Congress for what they did do.

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

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO LEBANON—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–53)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Lebanon that was declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond August 1, 2015.

Certain ongoing activities, such as continuing arms transfers to Hizballah that include increasingly sophisticated weapons systems, undermine Lebanese sovereignty, contribute to political and economic instability in the region, and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *July 29, 2015*.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, July 28, 2015.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On July 23, 2015, pursuant to section 3307 of Title 40, United States Code, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider 15 resolutions included in the General Services Administration's fiscal years 2015 and 2016 Capital Investment and Leasing Programs.

The Committee continues to work to reduce the cost of federal property and leases. Of the 15 resolutions considered by the Committee, the nine alteration projects will address critical life safety repairs or allow for space consolidations, the two reprogramming prospectuses are fully offset by reductions in other projects, the two construction prospectuses include offsets and reductions in spending from avoided lease costs, and the two lease prospectuses will result in significant reductions in lease costs through the reduction of space. In total, these resolutions represent $327 million in avoided lease costs and offsets.

I have enclosed copies of the resolutions adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 23, 2015.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Enclosures.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING, NEW YORK, NY

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 3307, appropriations are authorized for the design for the build out of approximately 314,000 rentable square feet of vacant space in the Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building located at 26 Federal Plaza in New York City, New York, of which approximately 30,000 rentable square feet will provide swing space for future alteration and consolidation projects in the building, at a design cost of $7,660,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
Prospectus for Design

Description

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is seeking committee approval for a design project that GSA will schedule for construction in a future year. A project description is attached.

Justification

By seeking approval to start the design for the project prior to construction phase funding, an orderly and timely accomplishment of a planned program is ensured. Under the separate funding approach, GSA will submit the construction prospectus for the project along with a future budget request.

The subject project addresses realignment and consolidation of agency space, and replacing and repairing affected building and safety systems.

Recommendation

Approve design for $7,660,000 for the project attached. The construction costs indicated at this time are preliminary and will be finalized prior to future requests for funding.

Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested in this Prospectus
(Design) $7,660,000

Certification of Need

The proposed projects are the best solutions to meet validated Government needs.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on April 27, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
Prospectus for Design

FISCAL YEAR 2015 ALTERATION DESIGN PROJECT
(Alphabetical by State)

LOCATION	FY 2015 FUNDING
New York, NY	
Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building	$7,660,000
TOTAL	**$7,660,000**

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
Prospectus for Design

Prospectus Number: PDS-02015
Congressional District: 08

PROJECT:	Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building
LOCATION:	New York, NY
ESTIMATED TOTAL PROJECT COST:	$ 104,004,000
DESIGN:	$ 7,660,000
CONSTRUCTION:	$89,211,000
MANAGEMENT & INSPECTION:	$7,133,000
AMOUNT REQUESTED IN FY2015 (Design):	$ 7,660,000

WORK ITEM SUMMARY
Demolition and abatement, interior construction, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and fire/life safety upgrades.

DESCRIPTION
The Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building (FOB) is located at 26 Federal Plaza, New York City, NY. It consists of three interconnected buildings: a 45-story, plus basement, office building; an eight-story court/office building (both built in 1967); and a 45-story addition (Annex) built along the west side of the original 45-story building in 1977. The two 45-story buildings function together as the FOB while the 8-story court/office building functions as the James L. Watson Court of International Trade (CIT). The CIT is connected to the FOB via a 4-story pedestrian bridge. The entire Federal complex consists of over 2.3 million square feet of rentable space.

GSA proposes design for the build out of approximately 314,000 rentable square feet (rsf) of vacant space, of which approximately 30,000 rsf will provide swing space for future alteration and consolidation projects in the FOB. The project will remove asbestos, upgrade mechanical and electrical systems and address fire/life safety issues. The project will help to maintain the Federal presence in downtown Manhattan, avoid future lease costs, and will allow for the overall reduction in tenant footprints.

The request will fund the design and review for the build-out of approximately 314,000 rentable square feet (RSF) of vacant space in the FOB, of which approximately 30,000 RSF will provide swing space for future alteration and consolidation projects in the building. The project will complete the design associated with asbestos removal, mechanical and electrical system upgrades, and fire and life safety issues. The completed project will maintain the Federal presence in downtown Manhattan, relocate the U.S. Department of Justice - Federal Bureau of

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
Prospectus for Design

Investigation from a leased location , and allow the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to consolidate its operations currently scattered throughout the FOB.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—1800 F STREET BUILDING, PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations at the GSA Headquarters building, located at 1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC for the reconfiguration and alteration of approximately 90,000 usable square feet of space to provide short-term space for the Presidential Transition Team (PTT) and the Offices of the President-Elect and Vice-President Elect after the November 2016 Presidential Election, at a design and related services cost of $534,000 an estimated construction cost of $8,900,000 and a management and inspection cost of $488,000 for a total estimated project cost of $9,922,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
1800 F STREET BUILDING
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-PTT-WA15

Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project at the GSA Headquarters building, located at 1800 F Street, N.W., Washington, DC, for the reconfiguration and alteration of approximately 90,000 usable square feet of space to provide short-term space for the Presidential Transition Team (PTT), and the Offices of the President-Elect and Vice President-Elect. The space provided will facilitate the orderly transfer of executive power in connection with the expiration of the terms of the current President and Vice President and the inauguration of the newly elected President and Vice President after the November 2016 Presidential Election. The space must be available by October 1, 2015, for up to two years; this includes phased construction, occupancy and restoration.

FY2015 Committee Approval Requested **$9,922,000**

FY2015 Appropriations Requested[1] **$0**

Major Work Items

Interior alterations; security upgrades; exterior alterations; building automation system upgrades; conveyance system modifications; electrical system upgrades.

Project Budget

Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	$8,900,000
Design and Related Services (Design)	534,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	488,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$9,922,000**

Schedule	Start	End
Design and Construction	FY2015	FY2017[2]

Building

[1] Although no new funds are being requested in this prospectus, its approval is needed for this alteration project. Concurrently, GSA will request to reprogram $9,922,000 in savings from previously appropriated sources of funds to this alteration project.

[2] FY2017 - Restoration of Space

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
1800 F STREET BUILDING
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-PTT-WA15

The 1800 F Street, N.W., Washington, DC, GSA Headquarters building is a seven-story, approximately 764,000 gross square foot, limestone-clad public building situated at 1800 F Street, N.W., just west of downtown Washington, DC. The building provides 518,700 useable square feet of space and includes outside parking in an interior courtyard. The building was constructed in 1917 as the headquarters of the Department of the Interior, which resided in it until 1949, at which time it became the headquarters of GSA, which occupies the building today. It was one of the first steel-framed buildings constructed in Washington, as well as one of the first government buildings to use limestone on the exterior. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Tenant Agencies

Presidential Transition Team, GSA

Proposed Project

GSA currently occupies the basement through floor seven of the eastern wing of 1800 F Street, known as Wing One. Personnel in this space will be consolidated into the other wings of the building to allow Wing One to be occupied by PTT. Physical move costs associated with this relocation are anticipated to be minimal and will be covered by other sources of funding already available to GSA.

The proposed project consists of the construction of demising walls, barriers and check points; installation of additional security items/systems per the Department of Homeland Security United States Secret Service (USSS) specifications; rebuilding or altering portions of interior and exterior space to accommodate special space needs of PTT and security; providing emergency power; construction of Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility (SCIF) space; installation of secure conduit, cabling, audio visual (AV)/information technology (IT)/security infrastructure; building out executive offices; and modifying existing building systems to accommodate PTT functions. GSA will, to the greatest extent possible, use the currently available space in its current configuration. A portion of these infrastructure investments will be retained for future use by GSA, as well as for future PTT requirements.

Security systems will include items such as cameras, access control and intrusion detection. AV and IT systems will be modified and new systems added, as needed. Building Automation Systems will require modified controls, electrical systems will require back up power and elevators will need modified controls.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
1800 F STREET BUILDING
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-PTT-WA15

At a minimum, exterior work will include security upgrades of cameras, detection devices and provisions for other security components as directed by USSS. GSA is evaluating the appropriate positioning of special spaces within the building that will require evaluation of blast and ballistic conditions and potential upgrades at various locations, which may be internal or external. There also is a potential need for exterior posts to accommodate USSS personnel.

Restoration will entail putting the building back to its pre-PTT configuration, but leaving alone what GSA has designed to remain in place within walls, ancillary spaces, mechanical spaces, and the roof. GSA plans to utilize this space for future transitions resulting in reduced costs in the future.

Major Work Items

Interior Alterations	$2,650,000
Security Upgrades	4,500,000
Exterior Alterations	1,000,000
Building Automation System Upgrades	250,000
Conveyance System Modifications	250,000
Electrical System Upgrades	250,000
Total ECC	**$8,900,000**

Justification

The Presidential Transition Act of 1963, P.L. 88-277, authorizes the GSA Administrator to provide the President-elect and the Vice President-elect, upon their request, necessary services and facilities during the transition period between Election Day and Inauguration Day.

GSA will, to the greatest extent possible, use the currently available space in its current configuration. A portion of these infrastructure investments will be retained for future use by GSA, as well as for future PTT requirements.

Summary of Energy Compliance

A number of high performance green initiatives were incorporated into the modernization of Wing One, which was completed in 2013. These initiatives included high-performance glazing for replicated historic windows, added insulation at the exterior walls and roof, daylight harvesting through a networked lighting control system, an automated roller shade system for daylight control, and photovoltaic rooftop arrays that feed direct current into the power grid.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
1800 F STREET BUILDING
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-PTT-WA15

GSA will continue to use the new base building systems installed with the aforementioned modernization, making adjustments on a case-by-case basis to accommodate PTT requirements.

Prior Appropriations

Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
None			

Prior Committee Approvals

Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
None			

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years):

Prospectus	Description	FY	Amount
P.L. 111-5 (ARRA)	Modernization & Expansion	2009	$153,664,000

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value costs)

Given the short-term nature of the proposed requirement (3 years), a 30-year present value cost analysis is not suited for this type of project. The cost to procure the required square footage in proximate leased space significantly exceeds the proposed cost of the repair and alteration alternative. Furthermore, the government will realize additional long-term savings as the proposed location will serve as future housing for PTT.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
1800 F STREET BUILDING
PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION TEAM
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-PTT-WA15

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on June 26, 2015

Recommended _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved _____
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY PROGRAM, VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to upgrade, replace, and improve fire protection systems and life safety features in government-owned buildings during Fiscal Year 2016 at a total cost of $20,000,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PFP-0001-MU16

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes alterations to upgrade, replace, and improve fire protection systems and life safety features in government-owned buildings during Fiscal Year 2016.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested.....$20,000,000

Program Summary

As part of its Fire Protection and Life Safety efforts, GSA is identifying projects in Federal buildings throughout the country through surveys and studies. These projects will vary in size, location, and delivery method. The approval and appropriation requested in this prospectus is for a diverse set of retrofit projects with engineering solutions to reduce fire and life safety hazards. Typical projects include the following:

- Replacing antiquated fire alarm and detection systems that are in need of repair or for which parts are no longer available.
- Installing emergency voice communication systems to facilitate occupant notification and/or evacuation in Federal buildings during an emergency.
- Installing and/or expanding fire sprinkler systems to provide a reasonable degree of protection for life and property from fire in Federal buildings.
- Constructing additional exit stairs or enclosing existing exit stairs to ensure safe and timely evacuation of building occupants in the event of an emergency.

Justification

GSA periodically assesses all facilities using technical professionals to identify hazards and initiate correction or risk-reduction protection strategies to assure that no aspect of our buildings' design or operation presents an unreasonable risk to GSA personnel, occupant agencies, or the general public. Completion of these proposed projects will improve the overall level of safety from fire and similar risks in GSA-controlled Federal buildings nationwide.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested.....$20,000,000

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS - ALTERATION
FIRE PROTECTION AND LIFE SAFETY PROGRAM
VARIOUS BUILDINGS

Prospectus Number: PFP-0001-MU16

Certification of Need

Over the years a number of fire protection and life safety issues have been identified that need to be addressed in order to reduce fire risk. The proposed program is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—SIXTH STREET FEDERAL BUILDING, LOS ANGELES, CA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to upgrade outdated building systems in the 59-year-old facility and renovate and reconfigure the interior layout for operations efficiency and workplace optimization at the Federal Building located in downtown, Los Angeles, CA, at a design cost of $982,000, an estimated construction cost of $10,335,000 and a management and inspection cost of $966,000 for a total estimated project cost of $12,283,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
SIXTH STREET FEDERAL BUILDING
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0149-LA16
Congressional District: 34

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project of the Federal Building, located in downtown, Los Angeles, California on Sixth Street. The project will upgrade outdated building systems in the 59-year-old facility and renovate and reconfigure the interior layout for operations efficiency and workplace optimization.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, M&I) $12,283,000

Major Work Items

Exterior construction, HVAC, electrical, plumbing, fire protection and elevator system upgrades, hazardous material abatement, interior construction

Project Budget

Design	$982,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	$10,335,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	$966,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$12,283,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for tenant improvements above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule	Start	End
Design and Construction	FY2016	FY2019

Building

The Federal Building is a stand-alone structure solely occupied by the Department of Justice located in downtown Los Angeles. The building includes two stories (plus basement) and is of steel-frame construction with exterior pre-cast concrete cladding. The building was previously used as an office for the Department of Interior (Minerals Management), and is now utilized by Department of Justice in conjunction with their other Los Angeles locations.

Tenant Agencies

Department of Justice

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
SIXTH STREET FEDERAL BUILDING
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0149-LA16
Congressional District: 34

Proposed Project

The project will upgrade outdated building systems and realign the tenant agency work space. The work includes heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system replacements and upgrades, fire protection replacement, plumbing upgrades, interior seismic work, electrical distribution upgrades, elevator upgrades, and exterior construction. In addition, abandoned mechanical areas will be converted to rentable square footage, and the tenant agency will be realigned as required for efficient operations and workplace optimization.

Major Work Items

Electrical Upgrades	$2,100,000
HVAC Upgrades	$1,950,000
Demolition/Hazardous Material Abatement	$1,832,000
Exterior Construction	$1,400,000
Interior Construction/Seismic Upgrades	$1,253,000
Plumbing Upgrades	$850,000
Elevators Upgrades	$485,000
Fire Protection Upgrades	$465,000
Total ECC	**$10,335,000**

Justification

The 59-year-old asset requires significant reinvestment to continue providing reliable service for years to come. The building has not undergone a major reinvestment since originally constructed. Currently, the systems are beyond their useful life requiring costly fabrication of parts when replacement items are necessary. In addition, DOJ requires reconfiguration and renovation of interior space in the building to support its mission, accommodate additional personnel, improve space utilization, and increase workplace efficiencies. Minimal investment in this facility is the most cost-effective long term solution.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
SIXTH STREET FEDERAL BUILDING
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0149-LA16
Congressional District: 34

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

Alteration $27,539,000
Lease $37,477,000
New Construction $43,945,000

The 30-year, present value cost of alteration is $9,937,000 less than the cost of leasing with an equivalent annual cost advantage of $568,000.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
SIXTH STREET FEDERAL BUILDING
LOS ANGELES, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-0149-LA16
Congressional District: 34

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

January 2015

Housing Plan
Federal Building

PCA-0149-LA16
Los Angeles, CA

Locations	Current						Proposed					
	Personnel		*Usable Square Feet (USF)*[1]				*Personnel*		*Usable Square Feet (USF)*			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total[1]
Sixth Street Federal Building												
U S. Department of Justice	148	173	38,340	1,505	2,142	41,987	165	190	33,417	1,505	8,110	43,032
Total	148	173	38,340	1,505	2,142	41,987	165	190	33,417	1,505	8,110	43,032

Office Utilization Rate[2]		
	Current	Proposed
All building office tenants	202	158

Current UR excludes 8,435 USF of office support space.
Proposed UR excludes 7,352 USF of office support space.

Total Building USF Rate[3]		
	Current	Proposed
All building tenants	243	226

Special Space	
Technician Shop	1,075
Physical Fitness	1,661
Vault	710
Fire Arms Storage	210
ADP	883
Crypto Room	131
Food Service	745
Restrooms/Showers	400
Telephone Room	185
Conference/Training	1,960
Holding Cells	150
Total:	8,110

NOTES:
[1] Total USF in proposed increases due to obsolete mechanical area being converted to USF for technician shop
[2] Office Utilization Rate = total office space available for office personnel. UR calculation excludes office support space USF
[3] Total Building USF Rate = total building USF (office, storage, special) available for all building occupants (office and non-office personnel)

USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—DENVER FEDERAL CENTER BUILDING 56, LAKEWOOD, CO

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to upgrade building systems and undertake exterior repairs at the Denver Federal Center (DFC) Building 56 located at West 6th Avenue & Kipling Street in Lakewood, Colorado, at a design cost of $613,000, an estimated construction cost of $5,022,000 and a management and inspection cost of $507,000 for a total estimated project cost of $6,142,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER BUILDING 56
LAKEWOOD, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-0533-LA16
Congressional District: 7

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project to upgrade building systems and undertake exterior repairs at the Denver Federal Center (DFC) Building 56, at West 6th Avenue & Kipling Street in Lakewood, CO. In addition to addressing heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), fire alarm, roofing, and exterior closure deficiencies, the project also promotes energy savings.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, M&I) $6,142,000

Major Work Items

Roof Replacement, Exterior Repairs, HVAC and Fire Alarm Upgrades

Project Budget

Design	$ 613,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	5,022,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	507,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$6,142,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule	**Start**	**End**
Design and Construction	FY2016	FY2018

Building

Building 56 is part of the DFC's main campus and contains 354,159 gross square feet. Originally constructed in 1941 as part of the Denver Ordinance Plant, Building 56 is one of the largest buildings on the DFC campus and provides office, laboratory, and industrial space.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER BUILDING 56
LAKEWOOD, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-0533-LA16
Congressional District: 7

Tenant Agencies

Farm Service Agency, Rural Housing Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, General Services Administration

Proposed Project

The proposed project involves numerous upgrades to the building exterior, including replacement of the roof, repairs to the exterior walls, limited reinstallation of exterior brick, and replacement of the exterior roll-up door. Interior system upgrades include the replacement of the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system's aged air handler unit dampers and pneumatic controls and the installation of a new building wide fire alarm system. The project also will abate hazardous materials encountered during construction.

Major Work Items

Roof replacement	$ 3,540,000
Exterior Closure Repairs	571,000
HVAC Repairs	382,000
Fire Alarm Replacement	529,000
Total ECC	**$5,022,000**

Justification

The roof is more than 30 years old, in poor condition, and beyond its useful life. There have been water leaks into tenant agency space, causing damage to the building structure and tenant property and resulting in work outages. Replacement of the roof will also improve insulation and promote energy efficiency. The project will not impact sections of the roof that were affected during the High Performance Green Building ARRA solar panel installation project.

The building has gaps in the exterior perimeter walls where air, moisture and other contaminates and occasionally wind driven snow enter the building and tenant spaces and conditioned air escapes the building. The exterior walls need to be repaired, gaps sealed and exterior brick reinstalled to prevent further damage, improve energy efficiency and tenant comfort.

The exterior roll-up door is original, beyond its useful life and requires maintenance on a regular basis. The door will be replaced with an insulated door that meets current energy

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER BUILDING 56
LAKEWOOD, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-0533-LA16
Congressional District: 7

performance requirements and eliminates the entry of air, moisture and other contaminates.

The existing dampers and controls on the building air handling units are past their useful life, allow air infiltration, and create inefficiencies in the building heating and air conditioning. This project proposes to fix the leaky dampers and allow better control of outside air entering the space with upgraded digital energy efficient equipment.
The existing fire alarm system is also past its useful life and has become increasingly difficult and costly to repair. The system currently does not meet the requirements in GSA PBS-P100 Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service or the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards (ABAAS). The building requires installation of a new system that meets current code requirements.

The building offers both light industrial and laboratory space, including space used by the Bureau of Reclamation for electrical testing of equipment and engineering testing of structural dam models. Undertaking the necessary infrastructure improvements will help ensure long-term tenancy and meet customer agency needs. Building 56 offers unique space for its federal tenants that would be difficult to find or replicate in the private market.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

Prospectus	Description	FY	Amount
111-5 (ARRA)	High Performance Green Building including solar panel installation and chiller and boiler replacement	2009	$2,367,000

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER BUILDING 56
LAKEWOOD, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-0533-LA16
Congressional District: 7

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a limited scope renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER BUILDING 56
LAKEWOOD, CO

Prospectus Number: PCO-0533-LA16
Congressional District: 7

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE, DETROIT, MI

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations for phase III of a multi-phase alteration project to correct significant building deficiencies of the historic Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse located at 231 West Lafayette Boulevard in Detroit, Michigan, including replacement or repair of major heating and air conditioning system components including air handling units and fiberboard ductwork and upgrades to the building automation system and plumbing, at an estimated construction cost of $62,752,000 and a management and inspection cost of $6,040,000 for a total estimated project cost for phase III of $68,792,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE16
Congressional District: 14

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) is proposing phase III of a multi-phase alteration project to correct significant building deficiencies of the historic Theodore Levin U.S. Courthouse (Levin Courthouse) located at 231 West Lafayette Boulevard in Detroit, MI. The Levin Courthouse houses the Federal Courts for the Eastern District of Michigan. The proposed multi-phase project will correct deficiencies to ensure the long term occupancy of federal agencies by providing a safe and reliable work environment. The proposed scope for this phase includes replacement or repair of major heating and air conditioning system components including air handling units and fiberboard ductwork and upgrades to the building automation system and plumbing.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Phase III M&I and ECC) $68,792,000

Major Work Items (all phases)

HVAC replacement/repair, electrical systems replacement, elevator improvements, plumbing and fire and life safety upgrades, interior construction

Project Budget

Design
- Design (FY2014) $10,200,000
- **Total Design $10,200,000**

Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)
- Phase I (FY2014) $19,259,000
- Phase II (FY2015) 37,539,000
- **Phase III (FY2016 request) 62,752,000**
- **Total ECC $119,550,000**

Management and Inspection (M&I)
- Phase I (FY2014) $1,541,000
- Phase II (FY2015) 2,960,000
- **Phase III (FY2016 request) 6,040,000**
- **Total M&I $10,541,000**

Estimated Total Project Cost* $140,291,000

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE16
Congressional District: 14

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by GSA.

Schedule

	Start	End
Design	FY2014	FY2016
Construction	FY2016	FY2019

Building

The Levin Courthouse, located at 231 West Lafayette Boulevard in Detroit, MI was constructed in 1934 in the Neo-Classical Revival style using reinforced concrete with an Indiana limestone façade. The building is 771,904 gross square feet and contains 19 inside parking spaces. It has 10 stories above grade with a pair of two-story penthouses and a below grade level where vehicles access the basement for deliveries, prisoner transfer to the building and judges' parking. The central core of the building opens to form a light-well from the 3rd to 10th floors. The building is located on the southeastern edge of the central portion of the central business district of Detroit. This asset is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a contributing property to the historic district.

Tenant Agencies

Judiciary, Department of Justice, Congress-House of Representatives, General Services Administration, U.S. Tax Court

Proposed Project

The three-phase project includes replacement of the building's chillers, air handling units, perimeter fan coil units, fiber-board ductwork, and upgrades to the Building Automation System. The building's electrical distribution system and emergency generator will be replaced and cloth wiring will be removed throughout the building. Domestic water piping will be repaired and restrooms will be renovated to provide Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard (ABAAS) compliance. An egress stairwell will be added, the fire alarm will be replaced, and the sprinkler system will be extended to provide full coverage. Public elevators will be replaced and a new freight elevator will be added. The basement loading dock area will be modified to better facilitate deliveries to the building. Hazardous materials related to the scope of work will be abated.

This proposed final phase includes replacement or repair of major heating and air conditioning system components, including air handling units and fiberboard ductwork and upgrades to the building automation system and plumbing throughout the building.

PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE16
Congressional District: 14

In this phase, temporary swing space will be constructed within the building for successive tenants to occupy while work is performed in their space. The build-out of internal swing space will require the relocation of a tenant from the building into external swing.

Phase I (FY2014) included the design of the entire project and the addition of the egress stairwell and Fort Street stair corridor, a new freight elevator, replacement of the chillers, and reconfiguration of the basement loading dock area.

Phase II (FY2015) of the project included the replacement of the fire alarm, electrical distribution system and emergency generator, perimeter fan coils, and the majority of the passenger elevators, and extension of the fire sprinkler system

Major Work Items

HVAC Replacement/Repair	$56,891,000
Fire and Life Safety Upgrades	19,961,000
Electrical System Replacement	15,973,000
Interior Construction	13,039,000
Plumbing Upgrades	7,178,000
Elevator Improvements	6,508,000
Total ECC	**$119,550,000**

Justification

The historic Levin Courthouse serves as the Federal Courts for the Eastern District of Michigan. In recent years, the Courthouse has experienced electrical outages, failures of the HVAC system, elevator outages, and frequent flooding resulting from pipe ruptures, resulting in major disruptions to tenant agencies' mission execution. Major building systems are well beyond their useful lives, do not comply with current codes, and are inefficient and difficult to maintain. Fire and life safety systems are outdated and egress pathways are inadequate.

Public restrooms do not comply with accessibility requirements and the current configuration of the basement loading dock area prevents the delivery of materials during normal business hours. The building's freight elevator is undersized, which makes the transport of materials throughout the building very inefficient.

PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE16
Congressional District: 14

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

Theodore Levin Courthouse Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
113-76	2014	$31,000,000	Design/Construction
113-235	2015	$40,499,000	Construction
Appropriations to Date		**$71,499,000**	

Prior Committee Approvals

Theodore Levin Courthouse Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
House T & I	2/11/14	$31,000,000	Design/Construction
Senate EPW	2/6/14	$31,000,000	Design/Construction
House T & I	7/16/14	$40,499,000	Construction

Prior Prospectus Level Projects in the Building (past 10 years)

None

PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE16
Congressional District: 14

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

Alteration: $237,103,000
Lease $339,241,000
New Construction: $313,266,000

The 30-year, present value cost of alteration is $76,163,000 less than the cost of new construction with an equivalent annual cost advantage of $4,351,000.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS –ALTERATION
THEODORE LEVIN U.S. COURTHOUSE
DETROIT, MI

Prospectus Number: PMI-0029-DE16
Congressional District: 14

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—GOODFELLOW FEDERAL COMPLEX, ST. LOUIS, MO

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to undertake critical life safety infrastructure renovations and to replace and upgrade the remainder of the deteriorating sewer system infrastructure at the Goodfellow Federal Complex located at 4300 Goodfellow Boulevard in St. Louis, Missouri, at a design cost of $3,101,000, an estimated construction cost of $38,079,000 and a management and inspection cost of $2,667,000 for a total estimated project cost of $43,847,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
GOODFELLOW FEDERAL COMPLEX
ST. LOUIS, MO

Prospectus Number: PMO-00AF-SL16
Congressional District: 01

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project to undertake critical life safety infrastructure renovations and to replace and upgrade the remainder of the deteriorating sewer system infrastructure at the Goodfellow Federal Complex (Goodfellow) located at 4300 Goodfellow Boulevard, St. Louis, MO.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, M&I) $43,847,000

Major Work Items

Electrical system replacement, maintaining land repairs, and building structure repairs, sewer separation and replacement.

Project Budget

Design	$3,101,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	38,079,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	2,667,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$43,847,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule	**Start**	**End**
Design and Construction	FY2016	FY2018

Complex

The Goodfellow Federal Complex consists of 24 buildings constructed out of steel frame and concrete floors with masonry exterior walls. The complex was built in 1941 by the Department of Defense and was utilized as an Army Small Arms Munitions Plant to support the World War II effort. On July 1, 1996, the ownership and operation of this complex was transferred from the Army to GSA. GSA renovated the complex into a suburban office park.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
GOODFELLOW FEDERAL COMPLEX
ST. LOUIS, MO

Prospectus Number: PMO-00AF-SL16
Congressional District: 01

Tenant Agencies

Department of Defense (DoD) - Defense Information System Agency (DISA), U.S. Army, U.S. Department of Veterans Affair, U.S. Department of Commerce, and GSA Field Office

Proposed Project

The proposed project will address the fire and life safety and occupational safety/health deficiencies within the electrical vaults system and substations, and complete the replacement of the sewer system project begun under ARRA.

Proposed repairs to the electrical vault system include waterproofing the exterior concrete tunnels; removing of all debris and abandoned utilities; cleaning and sealing the tunnel interior; mold remediation; replacing electrical lighting and components; replacing sump pumps and fans; reconnection to Building Automation System; repairing leaking piping and re-insulation; replacing mechanical ventilation system equipment; and installing new access gates, including emergency notification hardware.

The building structure repairs for Building 103 will focus on dehumidification of the crawl space and repairing deteriorated column connections. The building structure repairs will also address electrical issues with lighting and panels; and removal of abandoned pipes, supports and wiring.

The sewer system portion of the project includes completion of the replacement and separation of the existing sanitary and storm sewers, attaching new storm sewers to an existing storm water detention area, and landscape and hardscape restoration. The new system will incorporate sustainable practices to reduce stormwater runoff and enhance the landscape with native landscaping.

Major Work Items

Electrical Systems Replacement	$20,972,000
Building Structure/Site Repairs	10,702,000
Sewer Separation and Replacement	6,405,000
Total ECC	**$38,079,000**

Justification

The electrical vaults and utility tunnel systems are in critical disrepair. Currently, the vaults and tunnel are in violation of OSHA regulation 29CFR 1910 and NFPA life safety 101 guidelines for the electrical vaults system. Access to the vaults has been severely

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
GOODFELLOW FEDERAL COMPLEX
ST. LOUIS, MO

Prospectus Number: PMO-00AF-SL16
Congressional District: 01

restricted due to safety concerns creating an unsafe environment for employees and contractors who are required to perform work in the tunnels.

The 60 year old utility tunnels, which house electrical, telecom network cabling, domestic potable and fire protection water supplies for various buildings on the campus are underground, and due to insufficient water proofing of the exterior, are experiencing water infiltration. The infiltration is causing delamination of the interior tunnel walls; corrosion of structural steel piping supports, lighting fixtures, and some stream piping; mold and humidity issues which are having a negative impact on the indoor air quality of the buildings above. These deteriorating elements increase risk for loss of service, potentially impacting the 24/7 mission critical operations for many of the tenants.

Water infiltration is also impacting the crawl space of Building 103 and is causing humidification issues, electrical issues, deterioration of the column connections and negative air quality impacts to the tenant spaces above the crawl space.

Approximately 60 percent of Goodfellow's sewer system has been replaced under ARRA. Original ARRA project scope was to separate and reuse the existing sanitary system and add a storm water system. However, it was determined that the original scope was not viable due to deterioration and code, requiring GSA to limit the scope of the ARRA project. This proposed project will replace the remainder of the deteriorating sewer system infrastructure. The existing sewer system is leaching, causing soil erosion and building settlement egress issues. The existing sewer is causing sidewalks connecting the various buildings on the complex to settle or sink into the ground, causing Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards and potential tripping hazards.

Undertaking this proposed project will promote the government's commitment to achieving the mandates set forth in Executive Order 13154 and the Clean Water Act, and correct safety deficiencies. The proposed project incorporates sustainable practices to reduce storm water runoff via the utilization of current detention ponds for on-site irrigation and will enhance the site with native landscaping.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
GOODFELLOW FEDERAL COMPLEX
ST. LOUIS, MO

Prospectus Number: PMO-00AF-SL16
Congressional District: 01

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Complex (past 10 years)

Prospectus	Description	FY	Amount
PMO-0609/0612-SL06	Amend Prospectus PMO-02004	2006	$4,125,000
P.L. 111-15	ARRA-partial sewer replacement	2009	$16,000,000

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a limited scope renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
GOODFELLOW FEDERAL COMPLEX
ST. LOUIS, MO

Prospectus Number: PMO-00AF-SL16
Congressional District: 01

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—ALEXANDER HAMILTON U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations for Phase I of a two-phase repair and alteration project to correct building deficiencies at the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, a National Historic Landmark, located at 1 Bowling Green, New York City, New York, including water infiltration remediation in the sub-basement and basement levels to prevent further damage to the building, at a design cost for Phase I and Phase II of $5,204,000, an estimated construction cost for Phase I of $38,079,000 and a management and inspection cost for Phase I of $3,215,000 for a total estimated project cost of $46,498,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS -ALTERATION
ALEXANDER HAMILTON U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Prospectus Number: PNY-0131-NY16
Congressional District: 10

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes Phase I of a two-phase repair and alteration project to correct building deficiencies at the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, a National Historic Landmark located at 1 Bowling Green, New York City, New York. This proposed project (Phase I) will remediate water infiltration in the sub-basement and basement level to prevent further damage to the building. Phase II, to be submitted as part of a future request, proposes replacing the skylight, replacing the exterior windows with blast windows and repairing the laylight. The proposed two-phase project will ensure the long-term occupancy of federal agencies by providing a safe and reliable work environment.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, Phase I ECC and M&I) $46,498,000

Major Work Items

Exterior construction and restoration; interior construction and restoration; hazardous materials abatement; building coordination and security

Project Budget

Design Phase I and II (FY16 Request)	**$5,204,000**
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	
Phase I (FY2016 Request)	$38,079,000
Phase II (TBD)	25,047,000
Total ECC	**$63,126,000**
Management and Inspection (M&I)	
Phase I (FY2016 Request)	3,215,000
Phase II (TBD)	2,194,000
Total M&I	**5,409,000**
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$73,739,000**

Schedule

	Start	End
Design (Phase I and II)	FY2016	FY2017
Construction (Phase I)	FY2017	FY2019
Construction (Phase II)	TBD	TBD

PROSPECTUS -ALTERATION
ALEXANDER HAMILTON U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Prospectus Number: PNY-0131-NY16
Congressional District: 10

Building

The Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, located in lower Manhattan at the beginning of Broadway and just east of Battery Park, was designed by the renowned architect Cass Gilbert and includes artwork by Daniel Chester French and Reginald Marsh. The building presents a square plan with a central rotunda and surrounding corridors. It contains 501,225gross square feet of space and features a heavily detailed gray granite façade and monumental sculptural elements located in front of the building. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1976.

Tenant Agencies

U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Smithsonian Institution, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Trade Commission, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Archives and Records Administration.

Proposed Project

Phase I of the project is intended to remediate water infiltration in the sub-basement level and basement level of the building. This project will include the excavation/replacement of the sidewalk around the building to provide access to the affected areas in the sub-basement. It will involve leak mitigation for the vehicle ramp, the access hatches, the sidewalk vault and the exterior joints and replacement/repair of piping as needed. The project will also involve major structural repairs to support beams as needed as well as the removal of hazardous materials.

Phase II of the project consists of the replacement of all exterior windows with blast protection windows on all sides and replacement of the skylight and repair of the laylight in the rotunda. Restoration of murals in the rotunda including architectural repair work for the entire ceiling in the rotunda, and restoration of exterior sculptures on the northern façade parapet including the center cornice will also be completed.

Major Work Items (Phase I)

Exterior Construction	$22,448,000
Interior Construction	12,260,000
Hazardous Materials Abatement	433,000
Building Coordination and Security	2,938,000
Total	**$38,079,000**

PROSPECTUS -ALTERATION
ALEXANDER HAMILTON U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Prospectus Number: PNY-0131-NY16
Congressional District: 10

Justification

Water infiltration in the sub-basement and basement is jeopardizing the structural integrity of the building and building systems. Electrical wiring and conduit has corroded and has been replaced due to water infiltration. Water and drain piping located under the sidewalk vault could collapse causing additional damage and is a potential safety hazard. Falling debris from damaged areas could pose a safety concern to personnel and would result in more costly emergency work. Water infiltrating into the windows is also causing damage to the building interior and is negatively affecting the building's energy efficiency.

The building does not meet current standards for facility security. Additionally, age and exposure to weather and the elements is negatively impacting the building's exterior and interior artwork. Failure to make the appropriate repairs to the building will result in further damage to this National Historic Landmark.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years):

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a limited scope renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS -ALTERATION
ALEXANDER HAMILTON U.S. CUSTOM HOUSE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Prospectus Number: PNY-0131-NY16
Congressional District: 10

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING, NEW YORK, NY

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations for the reconfiguration and alteration of vacant space to consolidate functions and meet the long-term needs of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Corps of Engineers at the Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building located at 26 Federal Plaza in New York, New York, at an estimated construction cost of $89,211,000 and a management and inspection cost of $7,133,000 for a total estimated project cost of $96,344,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
NEW YORK, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-0282-NY16
Congressional District: 08

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project for the reconfiguration and alteration of vacant space at the Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building (FOB) located in New York City, New York, to consolidate functions and meet the long-term needs of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the U.S. Corp of Engineers (USACE). The proposed consolidation will reduce the overall federal footprint in downtown Manhattan, recapture approximately 312,000 rentable square feet (rsf) and 235,000 usable square feet (usf) of vacant space, upgrade multiple building systems, remove hazardous materials, and eliminate annual lease payments to the private sector by approximately $13,000,000 annually.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(ECC, M&I).....$96,344,000

Major Work Items

Demolition; hazardous material abatement; interior construction; mechanical, electrical, and fire protection and life safety upgrades

Project Budget

Design (FY2015 Reprogramming)	$7,660,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	89,211,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	7,133,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)*	**$104,004,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for tenant improvements above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

Schedule

	Start	End
Design	FY2015	FY2016
Construction	FY2016	FY2019

Building

The Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building (FOB) is located at 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY. It consists of three interconnected buildings: a 45-story office building plus

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
NEW YORK, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-0282-NY16
Congressional District: 08

basement, an eight-story courthouse and office building built in 1967 (the James L. Watson Court of International Trade), and a 45-story addition (Annex) built along the west side of the original 45-story building in 1977. The two 45-story buildings function together as the Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building. The Watson Court of International Trade (CIT) is connected to the FOB via a 4-story pedestrian bridge. The entire Jacob K. Javits Federal Building complex consists of approximately 2.9 million gross square feet.

Tenant Agencies

Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), U.S. Department of Defense - Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Proposed Project

The proposed project includes the build-out of approximately 312,000 rsf and 235,000 usf of space to accommodate the FBI, which is currently housed in leased space, and consolidated space for HHS and USACE, which are currently located within the FOB. In addition, the project will remove asbestos, upgrade mechanical and electrical systems, and address fire and life safety issues.

Major Work Items

Demolition and Abatement	$7,583,000
Interior Construction	24,346,000
Mechanical and Electrical Upgrades	52,284,000
Fire/Life Safety Upgrades	4,998,000
Total ECC	**$89,211,000**

Justification

In late 2015, GSA will to move to One World Trade Center, vacating multiple floors in the FOB and providing an opportunity for the consolidation of agency space within the FOB.

The FBI has an immediate need to relocate their New York Field Office Joint Terrorism Task Force and Joint Operation Center, currently housed in costly leased space at 85 Tenth Avenue, New York, NY, into the FOB. The FBI, which currently occupies floors 22 through 28, will be provided contiguous space within the FOB. Additionally, the FBI currently has parking space associated with its operations at 85 Tenth Avenue, housed in

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
NEW YORK, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-0282-NY16
Congressional District: 08

leased space at 516-520 West 20th Street, New York, NY. The FBI will improve their overall utilization rate from 196 usf to 132 usf.

HHS and USACE, which are currently located in the FOB, will be able to consolidate their operations within the renovated space. HHS will improve their overall utilization rate from 281 usf to 174 usf and USACE from 266 usf to 199 usf.

Asbestos removal and upgrades to the fire alarm system will ensure occupant safety. Planned upgrades to the HVAC mechanical system and replacement of perimeter induction units are necessary to sustain the life of the equipment. Upgrades to the lighting system to LED with associated control systems and modifications to normal and emergency power distributions systems will increase energy efficiency.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above minimum performance criteria.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years):

Prospectus	Description	FY	Amount
P.L. 111-5 (ARRA)	Plaza Restoration	2009	$25,360,000
PNY-0282-2-NY14	Renovation FBI space	2014	$6,520,000

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
NEW YORK, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-0282-NY16
Congressional District: 08

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

Alteration: $141,133,000
Lease $321,448,000
New Construction: $575,825,000

The 30-year, present value cost of alteration is $180,316,000 less than the cost of leasing with an equivalent annual cost advantage of $10,301,000.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
NEW YORK, NY

Prospectus Number: PNY-0282-NY16
Congressional District: 08

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

January 2015

Housing Plan
Jacob K. Javits FOB

PNY-0282-NY16
New York, NY

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
Lease												
85 Tenth Ave, NY, NY (FBI)	602	602	102,782	6,000	9,391	118,173						
Jacob K. Javits FOB												
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	375	375	98,182		862	99,906	375	375	73,924		862	74,786
U.S. Department of Justice - FBI[2]							602	602	57,083	2,584	23,440	83,107
U.S. Health and Human Services	440	440	122,666		1115	123,781	440	440	74,711	820	1,115	76,646
Subtotal	815	815	220,848		1,977	223,687	1,417	1,417	205,718	3,404	25,417	234,539
Total	1,417	1,417	323,630	6,000	11,368	341,860	1,417	1,417	205,718	3,404	25,417	234,539

Office Utilization Rate[3]		
	Current	Proposed
All Building Office Tenants	178	113

Overall USF Rate[4]		
	Current	Proposed
All Building Tenants	241	166

Current Office UR excludes 71,199 usf of office support space.
Proposed Office UR excludes 45,258 usf of office support space.

Special Space	USF
ADP	5,546
Secure Teaming / Meeting	6,774
Conference/Training	10,944
Credit Union	947
Interview Room	512
Mug and Fingerprint	244
Break room	450
Total	25,417

NOTES:
1 USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
2 Total current FBI assignment within the FOB is approximately 350,000 USF.
3 Office Utilization Rate = total office space available for office personnel. UR calculation excludes office support space USF.
4 Total Building USF Rate = total building USF (office, storage, special) available for all building occupants (office, and non-office personnel).
5 Total current USF for the Jacob Javits FOB is approximately 1,700,000 USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING, SEATTLE, WA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to address exterior deficiencies at the historic Federal Office Building located at 909 1st Avenue in Seattle, Washington, at a design cost of $1,690,000, an estimated construction cost of $17,515,000 and a management and inspection cost of $1,645,000 for a total estimated project cost of $20,850,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
SEATTLE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-0036-SE16
Congressional District: 7

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project to address exterior deficiencies at the historic Federal Office Building, located at 909 1st Avenue, Seattle, WA.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, M&I) $20,850,000

Major Work Items

Exterior construction; roof replacement

Project Budget

Design	$1,690,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	17,515,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	1,645,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$20,850,000**

Schedule	Start	End
Design and Construction	FY2016	FY2018

Building

The Federal Office Building, constructed in 1933, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and provides approximately 305,000 gross square feet over 11 stories, including sub-basement and basement levels. There are 53 indoor parking spaces located in the sub-basement level. The building is located across the street from the Henry M. Jackson Federal Building.

Tenant Agencies

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; U.S. Department of Interior Department; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; Department of Energy; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs; U.S. Postal Service; and U.S. Department of Defense

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
SEATTLE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-0036-SE16
Congressional District: 7

Proposed Project

The proposed project will restore deteriorated exterior facade to stop material degradation and water intrusion into the building. The project will clean the exterior masonry of all biological growth and inspect, repair, and repoint the mortar joints, granite, brick, and terra cotta to provide protection from water penetration and prevent dislodging debris from falling onto the sidewalk below. The project will also replace roofs on the wing and dome shoulder and restore steel windows by stripping exterior paint, removing all corrosion, replacing broken glass, and installing new glazing putty, and restore the corroded flag pole base.

Major Work Items

Exterior restoration	$16,315,000
Roof replacement	1,200,000
Total ECC	**$17,515,000**

Justification

The proposed restoration project is required to restore the deteriorated exterior facade and to stop material degradation and water intrusion into the building, to protect the tenants and general public. There are multiple locations on the exterior envelope where materials have decayed due to water infiltration in the interior wall cavity, causing damage and biological growth on the masonry. The window putty is deteriorated and the steel casing surrounding the windows is corroding causing glass to break. The roof on the wing and shoulder dome is deteriorated. Without restoration, the exterior materials will continue to degrade, compromising the building structure and putting pedestrians and tenants at risk from falling debris.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
SEATTLE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-0036-SE16
Congressional District: 7

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

None

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a limited scope renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
SEATTLE, WA

Prospectus Number: PWA-0036-SE16
Congressional District: 7

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE, MILWAUKEE, WI

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for repairs and alterations to repair and restore the granite façade at the historic Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse located at 517 E. Wisconsin Avenue in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, at a design cost of $2,026,000, an estimated construction cost of $23,294,000 and a management and inspection cost of $2,071,000 for a total estimated project cost of $27,391,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
MILWAUKEE, WI

Prospectus Number: PWI-0044-MI16
Congressional District: 4

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a repair and alteration project to repair and restore the granite façade at the historic Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse located at 517 E. Wisconsin Ave, Milwaukee, WI.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested

(Design, ECC, M&I) $27,391,000

Major Work Items

Exterior construction

Project Budget

Design	$2,026,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	23,294,000
Management and Inspection (M&I)	2,071,000
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)	**$27,391,000**

Schedule	Start	End
Design and Construction	FY2016	FY2018

Building

The Milwaukee Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse in Milwaukee, WI, is a five-story, granite structure originally constructed between 1892 and1899 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Between 1929 and 1932, a five-story addition was erected to the south of the original building which was later increased in height to seven stories during the 1940s. The FB/CT, including the addition, has 543,510 gross square feet of space. Each corner of the original building features a short, round tower with a conical roof and a skylight atrium in the center. The building also features an open air light court at its center that extends down to the roof of the first floor.

Tenant Agencies

Judiciary, Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and U.S. Tax Court.

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
MILWAUKEE, WI

Prospectus Number: PWI-0044-MI16
Congressional District: 4

Proposed Project

The proposed project includes the repair and restoration of the building's façade. The façade repairs include the stone cornices and gutters at the turrets on the North building and damaged granite corners on South building. The project also includes treatment and preservation of the exterior stone and brick masonry, as well as tuckpointing and sealant corrections.

Major Work Items

Exterior construction	$23,294,000
Total ECC	**$23,294,000**

Justification

Starting in 2010, pieces of the spalled granite façade and stone fell from the exterior of the North and South buildings to the ground creating hazardous conditions for building tenants and the public. As a temporary measure to prevent similar occurrences until the façade is restored, structural netting was installed on all six turrets on the North building and on the four corners of the South building in 2011.

All the stone cornices on the North building show significant levels of spalling and cracking. Aged steel anchor bolts set in the top face of the cornice stone have corroded. The gutter's drip edge offers minimal overlap with the stone cornice below and is allowing water to infiltrate behind the face of the stone.

The corners on the South building show a remarkable amount of displacement and cracking. Repairs were undertaken in the 1990s, however the repairs did not address the root causes of the displacement nor reset the displaced stones; consequentially, the repairs have failed and the stones have continued to move, re-opening the cracks and mortar joints.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
MILWAUKEE, WI

Prospectus Number: PWI-0044-MI16
Congressional District: 4

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

Prior Prospectus-Level Projects in Building (past 10 years)

Prospectus	Description	FY	Amount
PWI-0044-MI07	Repair and renovate windows, window frames, and doors	2007	$5,599,000

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value cost analysis)

There are no feasible alternatives to this project. This is a limited scope renovation and the cost of the proposed project is far less than the cost of leasing or constructing a new building.

Recommendation

ALTERATION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – ALTERATION
FEDERAL BUILDING AND U.S. COURTHOUSE
MILWAUKEE, WI

Prospectus Number: PWI-0044-M116
Congressional District: 4

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

CONSTRUCTION—DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY CONSOLIDATION AT ST. ELIZABETHS, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 3307, appropriations are authorized for the continued development of the DHS consolidated headquarters at St. Elizabeths Campus in Washington, DC in accordance with and as revised and reduced by the 2015 DHS Headquarters Consolidation Enhanced Plan at an additional design cost of $18,422,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution, as amended by this resolution. This resolution amends the resolution approving prospectus PDC–0002–WA11 on December 2, 2010 by reducing the estimated construction cost by $18,422,000.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CONSOLIDATION AT ST. ELIZABETHS
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-0002-WA16

Overview of FY2016 Project Requirements

GSA proposes to continue the ongoing development of the DHS consolidated headquarters at St. Elizabeths Campus by continuing work on the perimeter security, completing the final construction of the access road and new interchange between Malcolm X Avenue and Interstate 295[1], rehabilitating buildings necessary to accommodate components of the DHS Secretary directorate plus Undersecretary of Management (USM) to be housed in the West Addition to the Center Building, Allison Quad, Home and Relief Buildings, and Administration Row (Building 69 plus Buildings 72 through 75), continuing design of future phases, and historic preservation activities.

Fiscal Year 2016 Requirements

Historic Preservation	2,807,000
Design (Phase 2a & 2b)	35,244,000
Management and Inspection (Infrastructure, Highway Interchange & Phase 2a)	24,135,000
Estimated Construction Cost (Infrastructure, Highway Interchange & Phase 2a)	317,479,000
Total FY2016 Requirements	**$379,665,000**

FY2016 House Committee Approval Requested[2] $231,521,000

FY2016 Senate Committee Approval Requested[3] $221,358,000

FY2016 Appropriation Request $379,665,000

Overview of Project

GSA and DHS have worked collaboratively to update and revise the original DHS HQ consolidation program at St. Elizabeths Campus. The updated program, referred to as the 'enhanced plan' seeks a more efficient utilization of space at a lower cost. The West Campus is a 176–acre National Historic Landmark that included 70 existing buildings containing approximately 1.2 million gsf of existing space. Several existing buildings have been demolished to make way for the USCG headquarters; as of December, 2014 there were 61 buildings remaining that contain approximately 1 million gsf. Under the enhanced plan, DHS and GSA cut back on the overall scope of the program. DHS components will require less space

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[1] This includes mitigation work such as landscaping and retaining walls for the access road along Shepherd Pkwy.

[2] This represents the balance of committee approval needed for this request less remaining appropriations needed for the Infrastructure Program and Highway Interchange Program, neither of which is subject to the requirements of 40 U.S.C. Section 3307.

[1] See Footnote 2 above.

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CONSOLIDATION AT ST. ELIZABETHS
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-0002-WA16

through realized efficiencies and the FEMA's headquarters that was planned for the East Campus will be consolidated onto the West Campus. The West Campus, however, will continue to be developed in accordance with guidelines set out in the Master Plan as amended and/or as a result of continued compliance with NHPA and NEPA during specific project designs[4].

Committee approval and appropriations for Phase 1 of the project – construction of a new headquarters facility for the USCG called the Munro Building – have already been obtained. Development Phase 2a includes construction of office space to consolidate DHS headquarters and the re-scoped DHS Operations Center (DOC), house various DHS leadership components, and provide amenity space. Phase 2b proposes the construction of a new headquarters facility for FEMA plus appropriate amenity space. Parking will also be included with these later phases. Phase 3 will accommodate portions of the remaining elements of DHS headquarters units such as CBP and ICE. The project will include the rehabilitation of existing space as well as construction of new space. This prospectus seeks approval for appropriations to finish mitigation measures for the access road and interchange between Malcolm X Avenue and I-295. The Firth Sterling portion of the road was completed in conjunction with completion of Phase 1. Also included will be continued work on perimeter security for the campus, rehabilitation of several existing buildings, historic preservation, and design and new construction.

Project Phasing

Phase 1a	USCG – HQ (completed)	Coast Guard Headquarters
Phase 1b	USCG – CC (completed)	Coast Guard Command Center/shared use space/GSA Field Office
Phase 2a	DHS (ongoing)	Office of the Secretary and Senior Leadership
Phase 2a	DOC A (to be built out)	DHS Operations Center / West Addition
Phase 2a	Other (to be completed)	Leadership presence of components not fully moving to St. Elizabeths
Phase 2b	FEMA HQ (to be completed)	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Headquarters
Phase 3	ICE, CBP (to be completed)	Significant presences of these components

[4] The Master Plan can be found at the project's web site: http://www.stelizabethsdevelopment com/

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CONSOLIDATION AT ST. ELIZABETHS
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-0002-WA16

Description

Site Information

Government-owned	176 acres
Building without parking (gsf)	up to 3,750,000
Building with parking (gsf)	up to 5,081,000
Number of structured parking spaces	up to 3,803

Cost Summary at St. Elizabeths

Planning	20,008,000
Site Acquisition	6,722,000
Design Cost	199,791,000
Management and Inspection	139,039,000
Historic Preservation Mitigations	5,899,000
Estimated Construction Cost	2,042,255,000
Estimated Total Project Cost	**$2,413,714,000**

Primary Occupants

USCG, DHS Headquarters Elements, the DOC, FEMA, CBP, ICE, and a Leadership Presence of Other DHS Components not relocating to the St. Elizabeths Campus

I. SITE ACQUISITION PROGRAM SUMMARY

Delineated Areas for Site Acquisition

The proposed sites to be acquired are as follows:

1. Approximately two acres of land located on Firth Sterling Avenue in southeast Washington, DC, where it is contiguous to the northwest corner of St. Elizabeths West Campus; the land is currently controlled by DC and CSX Corporation.
2. Approximately one acre of land located along the east side of Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue in southeast Washington, DC, between the Unified Communications Center and the current tunnel between the East Campus and West Campus. The land is currently controlled by DC.
3. Approximately fourteen (14) acres of land located on Shepherd Parkway in southeast Washington, DC, between the St. Elizabeths West Campus and Malcolm X Avenue, parallel to Interstate 295. The land is currently controlled by the National Park Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CONSOLIDATION AT ST. ELIZABETHS
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Total Site Acquisition Project Budget

Site Acquisition (Firth Sterling Avenue) (FY2009)	$2,722,000
Site Acquisition (Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue) (ARRA)	500,000
Site Acquisition (Shepherd Parkway) (ARRA)	3,500,000
Total Acquisition Budget[5]	**$6,722,000**

II. INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM SUMMARY

Infrastructure repair / replacement costs include: demolition of specific buildings identified by the Master Plan; replacement of site utilities including electricity substations and local utility requirements, an addition to the existing power plant for a fully functional CUP with co-generation capability; distribution systems for electricity, natural gas, domestic water, storm water, waste water, data systems and telecommunications; roadways, surface parking and sidewalks; refurbishment of historical ornamental landscape and creation of new landscape features as needed including flora; cleanup / repair of existing tunnels on site to improve safety and for potential use as systems distribution pathways; and site security fencing, entry gates, guard stations, and other site security features. There was $46 million for the access road construction originally included in the Infrastructure budget in prior years that has been moved to the Highway Interchange program budget in Part III of this prospectus.

The planned alterations are necessary to preserve, maintain, and reuse this historic site. Existing infrastructure and the landscape have suffered from aging and deferred maintenance. The utility distribution systems are antiquated and deteriorated. Building repairs include repair and improvement of structural and life safety systems while maintaining historic integrity. The landscape will be maintained, protected, and preserved to the extent feasible.

[5] Unused project funds originally requested for acquisition of parcels along Firth Sterling Avenue were redirected to Phase 1b of the project to cover unforeseen conditions. Please see Section V, Phase 1b footnotes.

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Total Infrastructure Project Budget

Design

Design (FY2006) Phase 1a	$7,645,000
Design (FY2009) Phase 1b	3,000,000
Design (ARRA) Phase 1b	12,346,000
Design (ARRA) Phase 2a	700,000
Design (future year request) Future Phases	9,272,000
Design Subtotal	**$32,963,000**

Management and Inspection (M&I)

M&I (FY2006) Phase 1a	$370,000
M&I (FY2007) Phase 1a	532,000
M&I (ARRA) Phase 1b	5,382,000
M&I (FY2016) Phase 2a	3,000,000
M&I (future year request) Future Phases	9,272,000
M&I Subtotal	**$18,556,000**

Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)

ECC (FY2006) Phase 1a	$5,080,000
ECC (FY2007) Phase 1a	5,912,000
ECC (FY2009) Phase 1a	5,249,000
ECC (ARRA) Phase 1b	131,783,000
ECC (FY2016) Phase 2a	57,000,000
ECC (future year request) Future Phases	115,896,000
Estimated Construction Cost Subtotal	**$320,920,000**

Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC) for Infrastructure **$372,439,000**

III. HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Highway Interchange Program that was developed as part of the Master Plan proposes an access road to the St. Elizabeths West Campus that extends between Firth Sterling Avenue to the north and Malcolm X Avenue to the south, parallel to Interstate-295. Funds for construction of the access road in the amount of $46 million were originally included in the Infrastructure program described above, but additional transportation improvements have subsequently been identified. A new, reconfigured interchange between Malcolm X Avenue and I-295 is one of these improvements. This reconfiguration will be necessary to direct St. Elizabeths traffic onto the access road that, in turn, will mitigate the impacts of additional traffic that is anticipated as

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the result of the redevelopment of St. Elizabeths. GSA worked closely with FHWA and the DC Department of Transportation to prepare an Interchange Justification Report (IJR) to facilitate required modifications to the Malcolm X Interchange. Other related transportation improvements that are needed as a result of the St. Elizabeths development are also included below as separate line items. These improvements need to be funded in conjunction with Phase 2 of the project to avoid further schedule delays and cost escalations.

Total Highway Interchange Project Budget

Design	
Design (ARRA)	3,500,000
Design (FY2012)[6]	2,500,000
Design (FY2015)	12,210,000
Design Subtotal	**$18,210,000**
Management and Inspection (M&I)	
M&I (FY2012)[7]	1,500,000
M&I (FY2015)	9,000,000
M&I (FY2016)	3,210,000
M&I Subtotal	**$13,710,000**
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)	
ECC (ARRA) Access Road	38,000,000
ECC (2012) Access Road	33,300,000
ECC (FY2015) Access Road	122,790,000
ECC (FY2016) Access Road	5,415,000
Estimated Construction Cost Subtotal	**$199,505,000**
Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC) for Highway Interchange	**$231,425,000**

IV. HISTORIC PRESERVATION MITIGATIONS PROGRAM SUMMARY

As of December 9, 2008, GSA and DHS along with NCPC entered into a Programmatic Agreement (PA) with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office (DCHPO), and the United States Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The PA outlines five (5) specific mitigation actions that must be

[6] These funds were redirected from Infrastructure funds in FY2012.
[7] See Footnote 6 above.

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undertaken by GSA to "resolve adverse effects from certain complex project situations".[8] These actions are as follows:

1. Documentation and recordation including buildings and site, as needed, archives, historic structure reports, building preservation plans, landscape preservation treatment and management, and archaeological resources treatment and management;
2. Public outreach, interpretation, and education including the establishment of a citizens advisory panel, a permanent interpretative exhibit, a museum and visitors education center, signage, and public relations materials;
3. Public access program to be developed by GSA and DHS;
4. Conservation and artifact preservation; and
5. The 19th Century cemetery including interpretative program, perpetual care, and public access.

Major Work Items for Mitigation

Documentation and Recordation (FY2016)	$1,407,000
Documentation and Recordation (future year request)	400,000
Public Outreach (FY2016)	500,000
Public Outreach (future year request)	1,375,000
Cemetery (FY2016)	500,000
Staffing (FY2014)	200,000
Staffing (FY2016)	400,000
Staffing (future year request)	1,317,000
Total	**$5,899,000**

[8] Programmatic Agreement dated December 9, 2008, page 1.

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V. BUILDING PROGRAM SUMMARY

PHASE 1a – USCG Headquarters

Building Phase 1a [9]

Office and Special Space	1,179,500 gsf
Estimated Total Phase 1a	**1,179,500 gsf**

Cost Information Building Phase 1a

Design (FY2006)	$24,900,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (FY2009)	12,925,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (FY2009)	313,465,000
Estimated Total Cost Phase 1a	**$351,290,000**

Schedule for Building Phase 1a

FY 2009 – Design Completion
FY 2009 - Start Construction
FY 2013 - Complete Construction

PHASE 1b – USCG Command Center and Special Space

Building Phase 1b

Command Centers/Fitness Center/Chapel/Retail	158,450 gsf
GSA Field Office[10]	20,800 gsf
Estimated Total Phase 1b	**179,250 gsf**
Structured Parking (983 cars)	up to 344,050 gsf

Cost Information Building Phase 1b

Design (ARRA)	$10,659,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (ARRA)[11]	15,902,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (ARRA)[12]	171,563,000
Estimated Total Cost Phase 1b	**$198,124,000**

[9] Square footage is based on USCG housing plan, approved Master Plan, and design documents.
[10] The Field Office is in addition to the USCG housing plan, not included with it, and was ready upon completion of Phase 1 and occupancy by USCG.
[11] Unused project funds of $228K from site acquisition were used for M&I to complete Phase 1b.
[12] Unused project funds $4.05M from site acquisition were used for unforeseen conditions in Phase 1b.

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Schedule for Building Phase 1b

FY 2010 - Design Completion
FY 2010 - Start Construction
FY 2013 - Complete Construction

PHASE 2a – DHS Headquarters Elements and the DOC

Building Phase 2a

Office for DHS Headquarters	234,000 gsf
DHS / USM Offices	590,000 gsf
Estimated Total Phase 2a	**824,000 gsf**
Structured Parking (990 cars)	up to 346,500 gsf

Cost Information Building Phase 2a

Design (FY2009)	$5,000,000
Design (ARRA)	11,300,000
Design (FY2014)	10,837,000
Design (FY2016)[13]	23,053,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (FY2011)	1,500,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (FY2014)	7,925,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (FY2016)[14]	17,925,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (future year request)	3,509,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (ARRA)[15]	26,000,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (FY2011)[16]	28,500,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (FY2014)	136,038,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (FY2016)[17]	255,064,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (future year request)	8,165,000
Estimated Total Cost Phase 2a	**$534,816,000**

Schedule for Building Phase 2a

FY 2016 - Design Completion
FY 2014 - Start Construction
FY 2019 - Complete Construction

[13] This includes funds for West Addition that will replace the re-scoped DOC under the Enhanced Plan.
[14] This includes funds for Ice House and Hitchcock Hall originally planned for completion in Phase 1.
[15] ECC is for parking garage in ravine that was completed in conjunction with garage for USCG staff.
[16] This amount was for DOC shell construction.
[17] This includes funds for Ice House and Hitchcock Hall originally planned for completion in Phase 1.

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PHASE 2b – FEMA

Building Phase 2b

Office for FEMA Headquarters	423,000 gsf
Estimated Total Phase 2b	**423,000 gsf**
Structured Parking (775 cars)	up to 271,250 gsf
Structured Parking for Visitors (640 cars)	up to 224,000 gsf

Cost Information Building Phase 2b

Design (ARRA)	17,401,000
Design (FY2016 request)	12,191,000
Design (future year request)	1,669,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (future year request)	18,504,000
Estimated Construction Costs (ECC) (future year request)	222,671,000
Estimated Total Cost Phase 2b	**$272,436,000**

Proposed Schedule for Building Phase 2b

FY 2017 - Design Completion
FY 2018 - Start Construction
FY 2021 - Complete Construction

PHASE 3 –ICE, CBP, and Component Leadership

Building Phase 3

Office for ICE Headquarters elements	469,000 gsf
Office for CBP Headquarters	499,000 gsf
Estimated Total Phase 3	**968,000 gsf**
Structured Parking (415 cars)	up to 145,250 gsf

Cost Information Building Phase 3

Design (ARRA)	10,000,000
Design (future year request)	21,608,000
Management and Inspection (M&I) (future year request)	28,811,000
Estimated Construction Cost (ECC) (future year request)	360,136,000
Estimated Total Cost Phase 3	**$420,555,000**

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Proposed Schedule for Building Phase 3

FY 2019 - Design Completion
FY 2018 - Start Construction
FY 2021 - Complete Construction

Summary of Energy Compliance

Cogeneration and Waste Heat: Approximately 30% of the campus power will be produced on site via cogeneration. This percentage represents 100% of the critical campus electrical needs in times of emergencies. The waste heat generated by the natural gas fired turbines will be converted to both steam and hot water to help heat the buildings and, through steam driven absorption chillers, to help cool the buildings.

Solar Energy: Photovoltaic energy collection arrays were considered for electric street lighting but did not meet historic preservation requirement. Large photovoltaic arrays were also found to be untenable at the site due to the limited acreage that could be used to house the solar panels. However, solar energy collecting panels or roofing membranes have been incorporated on portions of the roof tops, for example, the Detached Dining Hall being rehabilitated for use as a cafeteria.

Geothermal: Geothermal wells will be considered to support heat pump systems for new construction of the support buildings, such as the remote delivery facility and pump house. If viable, future appropriations will be requested.

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Prior Appropriations

St. Elizabeths Consolidation Prior Appropriations			
Public Law	**Fiscal Year**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
109-115	2006	$24,900,000	Design of US Coast Guard HQ
109-115	2006	$13,095,000	Infrastructure, Design, Construction and Management and Inspection
110-5	2007	$6,444,000	Infrastructure, Construction, and Management and Inspection
111-5	2009	$454,258,000	Site acquisition, Construction and Development
111-8	2009	$346,639,000	Site acquisition, Design, Infrastructure, Construction, and Management and Inspection
112-10	2011	$30,000,000	Construction of DHS Operations Center
112-34	2012	$37,300,000	Construction of Modular Utility Plant, Pump House, and portion of Access Road related to the US Coast Guard.
113-76	2014	$155,000,000	Adaptive reuse of Center Building
113-235	2015	$144,000,000	Highway interchange and access road
Appropriations to Date[18]		**$1,211,636,000**	

[18] This amount does not include $20,008,000 of planning funds expended by HHS and GSA prior to FY2006.

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Prior Committee Approvals

St. Elizabeths Consolidation Prior Committee Approvals			
Committee	**Date**	**Amount**	**Purpose**
House T&I	10/26/2005	$24,900,000	Design of US Coast Guard HQ
Senate EPW	7/20/2005	$24,900,000	Design of US Coast Guard HQ
House T&I	4/5/2006	$383,997,000	Construction and Management and Inspection Phases 1-a and 1-b
House T&I	5/23/2007	$318,887,000	Design, Construction, and Management and Inspection
House T&I	5/23/2007	$7,000,000	Site Acquisition
Senate EPW	9/20/2007	$318,887,000	Design, Construction, and Management and Inspection
Senate EPW	9/20/2007	$7,000,000	Site Acquisition
Senate EPW	9/17/2008	$140,140,000	Additional Design and Construction
House T&I	9/24/2008	$525,236,000	Design, Review, Management and Inspection, and Construction
House T&I	12/2/2010	$1,149,406,000	Design, Review, Management and Inspection, and Construction
Senate EPW	7/13/2011	$281,015,000	Design and Construction of West Campus

Alternatives Considered (30-year, present value costs)

New Construction $3,496,124,000
Lease $3,926,325,000

The 30-year, present value cost of new construction is $430,201,000 less than the cost of leasing, or an equivalent annual cost advantage of $21,949,000.

Recommendation

CONSTRUCTION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
CONSOLIDATION AT ST. ELIZABETHS
WASHINGTON, DC

PDC-0002-WA16

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved _____
for Administrator, General Services Administration

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

CONSTRUCTION—ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE BUILDING, PEMBINA, ND

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for design and construction of a new 6,685 gross square foot facility, including the acquisition of approximately eight acres of land, for the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service located at the Pembina, North Dakota U.S. Land Port of Entry, at a design cost of $284,000, a wetland mitigation cost of $540,000, an estimated construction cost of $4,297,000 and a management and inspection cost of $236,000 for a total estimated project cost of $5,357,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE BUILDING
PEMBINA, ND

Prospectus Number: PND-0550-PE16
Congressional District: 01

FY2016 Project Summary

The General Services Administration (GSA) proposes the acquisition of approximately eight acres of land, along with the design and construction of a new 6,685 gross square foot facility for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) at the Pembina, North Dakota, U.S. Land Port of Entry (LPOE). Construction of this facility provides a permanent solution for APHIS at a secure location directly on the port, remedies a potential life safety concern with the current location of the temporary modular trailer, improves traffic configuration, places all APHIS operations on the U.S. side of the U.S./Canada border and eliminates rental payments to the private sector of approximately $317,000 annually.

This project was among those previously included in GSA's FY 2015 Capital Investment Program. The prospectus was not approved by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and the project could not be accommodated within the enacted level. GSA is resubmitting the project in FY 2016 with no change in scope or budget.

FY2016 Committee Approval and Appropriation Requested
(Wetland Mitigation, Design, ECC and M&I) ..... $5,357,000[1]

Overview of Project

The proposed permanent housing solution for APHIS at the Pembina LPOE will be constructed to include both on-load and off-load animal inspection facilities with an administrative support wing at one location. The new building will contain two main components: 1) an enclosed off-load animal inspection area with runways, pens, chutes, and loading ramps. 2) an administrative office area with a counter, waiting room, water fountain, and a unisex restroom for customers. The building will include infrastructure for modern mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems. It will adapt design elements that will conform to the rest of the existing port.

The project includes land acquisition and wetland construction. GSA will acquire up to eight acres of vacant land in the Pembina area and convert the land to designated wetlands per National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines.

[1]Additional funding by a Reimbursable Work Authorization (RWA) may be required to provide for as yet unidentified elements of this project.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE BUILDING
PEMBINA, ND

Prospectus Number: PND-0550-PE16
Congressional District: 01

Building Area[2]

Site Area (Government-Owned) ..... 3 acres
Building ..... 6,685 gsf
Number of outside commercial truck parking spaces 15
Number of outside standard vehicle parking spaces 8

Project Budget

Wetland Mitigation[3] **$540,000**
Site Acquisition $40,000
Wetland Construction $500,000

Design **$284,000**

Estimated Construction Cost (ECC)[4] **$4,297,000**
Site Development Cost[5] $2,635,000
Building Cost ($183/gsf) $1,662,000

Management and Inspection (M&I) **$236,000**

Estimated Total Project Cost (ETPC)* **$5,357,000**

*Tenant agencies may fund an additional amount for emerging technologies and alterations above the standard normally provided by the GSA.

[2]The project may contain a variance in gross square footage from that listed in this prospectus upon measurement and review of design drawings.
[3]Wetland Mitigation includes site acquisition costs for approximately eight acres of land and the construction of new wetlands to mitigate the loss of wetlands due to construction. This will occur simultaneously with the Design phase. Further details are dependent upon Design elements.
[4]ECC is broken into two parts – Site Development Cost and Building Cost
[5]Site development costs include paved commercial construction and circulation areas with space for 15 inspection lanes, extension of existing Port utilities to the new site area, site lighting, fencing and gates, and flood control features.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE BUILDING
PEMBINA, ND

Prospectus Number: PND-0550-PE16
Congressional District: 01

Location

The proposed new facility will be located alongside southbound Interstate-29 on government-owned land at the southwest corner of the port.

Schedule	Start	End
Wetland Mitigation	FY2016	FY2017[6]
Design and Construction	FY2016	FY2018

Tenant Agencies

USDA APHIS

Justification

The Pembina, North Dakota, U.S. LPOE is the busiest northern port between Blaine, Washington and Detroit, Michigan, and the fifth busiest along the U.S./Canada border. The port has seen a steady increase in traffic flow since its completion in 1997. In 2003, in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the original APHIS building was demolished to accommodate new LPOE Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System (VACIS) requirements. A modular trailer was leased and moved to a landscape median island near the center of the port as a temporary housing solution for APHIS. On-load inspections are conducted at this location (in the median with traffic flowing on both sides). Off-load inspections are performed at the Emerson Canadian Port where GSA leases another facility for APHIS approximately one mile north and east of the Pembina LPOE. This is operationally inefficient.

Commercial truck parking and circulation are inadequate with little or no lane control. With the increase in traffic flow this has created a potential life safety concern for APHIS inspectors and truck drivers. In addition to the potential life safety concern, the temporary modular trailer is in poor condition and requires ongoing repairs to keep the building habitable. The proposed project will provide APHIS with a facility that is operationally safe and efficient. Construction of a permanent inspection facility will not materially hinder any operations at the port.

[6] Upon construction completion, the newly converted wetlands will be monitored for a period of at least five years to ensure a successful conversion.

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE BUILDING
PEMBINA, ND

Prospectus Number: PND-0550-PE16
Congressional District: 01

Approximately three acres of undeveloped government-owned wetlands on the southwest corner of the Pembina Port will be used to prepare the new project site. A thorough Feasibility Study has determined the proposed site to be the most advantageous location to maximize traffic flow and security for the Port and its stakeholders. To mitigate the reduction of wetlands to the environment, the NEPA requires the creation of two net new acres of wetlands per each acre of wetlands negatively affected by construction.

Since it is somewhat common for a small portion of newly created human-made wetlands to fail to convert properly to permanent wetlands, an extra two acres of site acquisition have been included in the project for contingency purposes, allowing for the acquisition of up to eight acres of land for wetland mitigation. The newly converted wetlands will be monitored for a period of at least five years to ensure a successful conversion.

Upon project completion, on-load inspections will take place in 15 open-air commercial truck parking stalls just outside of the new building. This will no longer require inspector personnel or truck operators to cross several lanes of oncoming traffic on foot.

Other alternatives (off of the port) pose security challenges to APHIS inspection personnel and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and logistics issues for commercial truck operators. Alternatives locating the APHIS facility in different areas on the port were problematic due to traffic flow constraints. The proposed plan is in a strategically situated area to facilitate maximum traffic flow at the port.

Summary of Energy Compliance

This project will be designed to conform to requirements of the Facilities Standards for the Public Buildings Service and will implement strategies to meet the Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings. The GSA encourages design opportunities to increase energy and water efficiency above the minimum performance criteria. The proposed project is Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) and Energy Policy Act (EPACT) compliant.

Prior Appropriations

None

Prior Committee Approvals

None

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE BUILDING
PEMBINA, ND

Prospectus Number: PND-0550-PE16
Congressional District: 01

Alternatives Considered

GSA owns and maintains the existing facilities at this Port of Entry; thus new Federal construction is in the best interest of the government and the taxpayer.

Recommendation

CONSTRUCTION

GSA **PBS**

PROSPECTUS – CONSTRUCTION
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE BUILDING
PEMBINA, ND

Prospectus Number: PND-0550-PE16
Congressional District: 01

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on February 2, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

January 2015

Housing Plan
New APHIS Facility

PND-0550-PE16
Pembina, ND

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
Modular Trailer (at Pembina LPOE)												
U.S. Department of Agriculture - APHIS	4	4	1,248	-	-	1,248	-	-	-	-	-	-
LEASED												
Emerson Building (I-29 on Canadian Border)												
U.S. Department of Agriculture - APHIS	-	-	786	-	6,325	7,111	-	-	-	-	-	-
New APHIS Building	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	6	1,100	200	4,517	5,817
Total	4	4	2,034	-	6,325	8,359	6	6	1,100	200	4,517	5,817

Office Utilization Rate[2]		
	Current	Proposed
All Building Office Tenants	397	143

Current Office UR excludes 447 usf of office support space.
Proposed Office UR excludes 242 usf of office support space.

Total Building USF Rate[3]		
	Current	Proposed
All Building Tenants	2090	970

Special Space	USF
Raised Personnel Platform	300
Animal Pen Area	2020
Personnel Perimeter	770
Area	650
Pnuematic Chute Area	150
Commercial Cattle Tub	527
Restrooms	100
Total	4,517

NOTES:
[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2] Office Utilization Rate = total office space available for office personnel. UR calculation excludes office support space USF.
[3] Total Building USF Rate = total building USF (office, storage, special) available for all building occupants (office, and non-office personnel).

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, DC

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. § 3307, appropriations are authorized for a replacement lease of up to 473,000 rentable square feet of space for the Federal Communications Commission currently located at 445 12th Street SW and 1250 Maryland Avenue SW in Washington, DC at a proposed total annual cost of $23,650,000 for a lease term of up to 15 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 180 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 180 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-06-WA16

Executive Summary

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a replacement lease of up to 473,000 rentable square feet (RSF) of space to house the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), currently located at 445 12th Street, SW, and 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington DC.

The replacement lease will provide continued housing for FCC and will improve FCC office and overall utilization rates (UR) from 178 to 115 usable square feet (USF) per person and 272 to 180 USF per person, respectively, while housing current personnel in 186,030 RSF less than the total of its current occupancies at the 445 12th Street, SW, and 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW, locations. In the absence of this reduction, the status quo cost of continued occupancy at the proposed market rental rate would be $32,951,500.

Description

Occupant:	Federal Communications Commission
Lease Type	Replacement
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	659,030 (Current RSF/USF = 1.10)
Proposed Maximum RSF[1]:	473,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.20)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	186,030 (Reduction)
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	272
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	180
Proposed Maximum Leasing Authority:	15 years
Expiration Dates of Current Lease(s):	10/16/2017 (445 12th Street, SW) 10/31/2017 (1250 Maryland Ave, SW)
Delineated Area:	Washington, DC CEA
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	None
Scoring:	Operating Lease
Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[2]:	$50.00 / RSF

[1] The RSF/USF at the current location is approximately 1.10; however, to maximize competition, a RSF/USF ratio of 1.2 is used for the proposed maximum RSF as indicated in the housing plan.

[2] This estimate is for fiscal year 2017 and may be escalated by 1.9 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-06-WA16

Proposed Total Annual Cost[3]:	$23,650,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$34,658,703
	(445 12th St. - Lease Effective 07/01/97)
	(1250 Maryland - Lease Effective 11/17/94)

Background

The FCC is responsible for the regulation of interstate and foreign communications by radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable; the orderly development and operation of broadcast services; and the provision of rapid, efficient nationwide and worldwide telephone and telegraph services at reasonable rates. FCC is also responsible for the use of communications for promoting safety of life and property and strengthening national defense.

Justification

The current leases at 445 12th Street, SW, and 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW, expire October 16, 2017, and October 31, 2017, respectively, and FCC requires continued housing to carry out its mission. In addition, FCC wants to capitalize on the opportunity presented by the expiring leases to reduce its footprint by 186,030 RSF, or 28.2 percent of its current 659,030 RSF and reduce their annual rental costs by approximately $11 million.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

[3] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC

Prospectus Number: PDC-06-WA16

Interim Leasing

GSA will execute such interim leasing actions as are necessary to ensure continued housing of the tenant agency prior to the effective date of the new lease. It is in the best interest of the Government to avert the financial risk of holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on May 20, 2015

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Acting Administrator, General Services Administration

March 2015

Housing Plan
Federal Communications Commission

PDC-06-WA16
Washington, DC

Leased Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
445 12th St SW	1,963	1,963	460,637	21,890	65,617	548,144						
1250 Maryland Ave SW	228	228	40,084	8,348	0	48,432						
Proposed Lease							2,191	2,191	324,384	12,474	56,775	393,633
Total	2,191	2,191	500,721	30,238	65,617	596,576	2,191	2,191	324,384	12,474	56,775	393,633

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	178	115

UR = average amount of office space per person

Current UR excludes 110,159 usf of office support space

Proposed UR excludes 71,364 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	272	180

R/U Factor[4]			
	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max. RSF
Current	596,576	1.10	659,030
Proposed	393,633	1.20	473,000

Special Space	USF
Conference Training Rooms	19,725
Data Center	5,700
Fitness Center	1,500
Health Ctr Exam Rooms	1,200
Hearing Room	1,800
High Density Storage	11,700
Print Plant	9,000
SCIF	3,450
Security Command Ctr.	1,350
Tech. Experience Center	1,350
Total	56,775

NOTES:

[1] USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.

[2] Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people

[3] USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel.

[4] R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

LEASE—FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, WESTERN-PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE, HAWTHORNE, CA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for a new lease of up to 154,000 rentable square feet of space, including 573 official parking spaces, for the Federal Aviation Administration currently located at the Hawthorne Federal Building in Hawthorne, California, at a proposed total annual cost of $7,546,000 for a lease term of up to 20 years, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Approval of this prospectus constitutes authority to execute an interim lease for all tenants, if necessary, prior to the execution of the new lease.

Provided that, the Administrator of General Services and tenant agencies agree to apply an overall utilization rate of 187 square feet or less per person.

Provided that, except for interim leases as described above, the Administrator may not enter into any leases that are below prospectus level for the purposes of meeting any of the requirements, or portions thereof, included in the prospectus that would result in an overall utilization rate of 187 square feet or higher per person.

Provided that, to the maximum extent practicable, the Administrator shall include in the lease contract(s) a purchase option that can be exercised at the conclusion of the firm term of the lease.

Provided further, that the Administrator shall require that the delineated area of the procurement is identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, *except that*, if the Administrator determines that the delineated area of the procurement should not be identical to the delineated area included in the prospectus, the Administrator shall provide an explanatory statement to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives prior to exercising any lease authority provided in this resolution.

Provided further, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
WESTERN-PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
HAWTHORNE, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-01-HA15
Congressional District: 33, 43

Executive Summary

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) proposes a new lease of up to 154,000 rentable square feet (RSF) for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) located in the Hawthorne Federal Building (HFB) in Hawthorne, California.

The new lease will provide continued housing for FAA and will improve FAA office and overall utilization rates from 176 to 112 usable square feet (USF) per person and 261 to 187 USF per person, respectively. As a result of the improved utilization, the new lease will reduce the rentable square footage of the requirement by 19 percent, housing FAA personnel in 36,329 RSF less than the total of its current occupancies at the HFB location.

Description

Occupant:	FAA
Lease Type	New
Current Rentable Square Feet (RSF)	190,329 (Current RSF/USF = 1.22)
Proposed Maximum RSF:	154,000 (Proposed RSF/USF = 1.2)
Expansion/Reduction RSF:	36,329 Reduction
Current Usable Square Feet/Person:	261
Proposed Usable Square Feet/Person:	187
Proposed Maximum Lease Term:	20 Years
Expiration Dates of Current Leases:	NA
Delineated Area:	8-mile radius from Hawthorne Federal Building located at 15000 Aviation Boulevard Hawthorne, CA 90250
Number of Official Parking Spaces:	573
Scoring:	Operating lease

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
WESTERN-PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
HAWTHORNE, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-01-HA15
Congressional District: 33, 43

Maximum Proposed Rental Rate[1]:	$49.00 / RSF
Proposed Total Annual Cost[2]:	$7,546,000
Current Total Annual Cost:	$5,994,350 (fiscal year 2013 FAA rent paid to GSA)

Justification

The HFB has a serious structural deficiency. GSA is relocating FAA based on life-safety considerations. In addition, the relocation allows FAA to optimize its footprint (reduction of 18 percent) with more advanced workplace strategies.

Summary of Energy Compliance

GSA will incorporate energy efficiency requirements into the Request for Lease Proposals and other documents related to the procurement of space based on the approved prospectus. GSA encourages offerors to exceed minimum requirements set forth in the procurement and to achieve an Energy Star performance rating of 75 or higher.

[1] This estimate is for fiscal year 2015 and may be escalated by 2.0 percent annually to the effective date of the lease to account for inflation. The proposed rental rate is fully serviced including all operating expenses whether paid by the lessor or directly by the Government. GSA will conduct the procurement using prevailing market rental rates as a benchmark for the evaluation of competitive offers and as a basis for negotiating with offerors to ensure that lease award is made in the best interest of the Government. Lease award shall not exceed the maximum rental rate as specified in this prospectus.

[2] New leases may contain an escalation clause to provide for annual changes in real estate taxes and operating costs.

GSA PBS

PROSPECTUS – LEASE
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
WESTERN-PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
HAWTHORNE, CA

Prospectus Number: PCA-01-HA15
Congressional District: 33, 43

Resolutions of Approval

Resolutions adopted by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works approving this prospectus will constitute approval to make appropriations to lease space in a facility that will yield the required rentable area.

Interim Leasing

Since FAA will remain housed in the HFB until it relocates to the new lease, interim leasing will not be necessary. There is no risk to the Government of a holdover tenancy.

Certification of Need

The proposed project is the best solution to meet a validated Government need.

Submitted at Washington, DC, on September 29, 2014

Recommended: _____
Commissioner, Public Buildings Service

Approved: _____
Administrator, General Services Administration

August 2014

Housing Plan
Federal Aviation Administration

PCA-01-HA15
Hawthorne, CA

Locations	CURRENT						PROPOSED					
	Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)[1]				Personnel		Usable Square Feet (USF)			
	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total	Office	Total	Office	Storage	Special	Total
DOT-FAA	642	642	144,910	599	10,567	156,076	684	684	98,644	4,809	24,750	128,203
GSA - PBS	1	4	860	260	-	1,120	-	-				
Joint Use	-	-	1,439	509	8,047	9,994	-	-				
Vacant	-	-	1,684	-	-	1,684	-	-				
Total	**643**	**646**	**148,893**	**1,368**	**18,614**	**168,874**	**684**	**684**	**98,644**	**4,809**	**24,750**	**128,203**

Office Utilization Rate (UR)[2]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	176	112

UR=average amount of office space per person
Current UR excludes 31,880 usf of office support space
Proposed UR excludes 21,177 usf of office support space

Overall UR[3]		
	Current	Proposed
Rate	261	187

R/U Factor[4]	Total USF	RSF/USF	Max RSF
Current	168,874	1.13	190,329
Proposed	128,203	1.20	154,000

Special Space	USF
AV	462
Data Center	1,539
Conference Training, Library	5,462
Food Service	462
IT computer and special	5,202
Comms Security Room	150
Secure Room	225
High Density Files	3,140
Medical Examination Room	254
Restrooms. Lactation	277
Simulator	1,538
UPS Room	462
Lobby and Secure Entry	923
Mail Room	923
Locker Room	923
Safe, secure files	577
Triangulation Room	231
Break / Pantry / Copy	2,000
Total	**24,750**

NOTES:

[1]USF means the portion of the building available for use by a tenant's personnel and furnishings and space available jointly to the occupants of the building.
[2]Calculation excludes Judiciary, Congress and agencies with less than 10 people
[3]USF/Person = housing plan total USF divided by total personnel
[4]R/U Factor = Max RSF divided by total USF

There was no objection.

RESILIENT FEDERAL FORESTS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about something that is positive that this body has done recently, something that is good for America and something that is good for our environment and good for our citizens. What I am talking about is the passage of the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is good for trees. When we have healthy trees and when we have a healthy forest, then we also have better air quality; we have better water quality; we have better wildlife habitat; we have less fire danger; we protect private property and public property, and it is a win-win-win situation for our treasured natural resource of our Federal forest. It is a winning situation for America, as we are good stewards and we conserve this valuable resource that we have.

Now, what this bill does is it allows us to actively manage our forests. We have qualified personnel in our Forest Service, people who are trained as foresters, people who have the expertise and the experience to manage these forests in a sustainable way; yet our forest managers' hands have been tied in previous years.

They have been working hard with local constituents, local stakeholders in these collaborative efforts to come up with forest plans, forest management plans, so that they can manage the forests in a way that is good for the local economy, in a way that is good for the wildlife in the forest, in a way that is good for the health of the forest; yet these forest management plans have been held up through frivolous lawsuits from outside groups, sometimes as far as a thousand miles away that file a suit against these plans.

They hold them up in court, and at the end of the day, the forest is not managed properly. Because of this, we have seen an increasing amount of forest fires over the past several decades.

Because of these increased forest fires, we are destroying our valuable natural resource. Not only are we destroying our resource, we are destroying our budget for the Forest Service. Currently, the single greatest cost to the Forest Service is fire suppression, and the next cost is litigation, and where the cost should be, in the management and health of the forest, comes in third.

What the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2015 would do, it would take the focus off of fire suppression and put that focus on fire prevention. These are forestry practices that I have seen carried out in my home State of Arkansas.

In my district, the Fourth District, I have approximately 2.5 million acres of Federal forest inside my district, on the Ouachita National Forest, on the Ozark National Forest, and also in four different U.S. Fish and Wildlife service areas.

Fortunately, in Arkansas, we have been able to manage these forests in a way that is good for the forest. A lot of this was done in an effort to protect an endangered species, the red-cockaded woodpecker. What our Forest Service employees have done is they have gone into the forests, they have assessed it, and they determined what would create the best habitat for this endangered species. They found that a habitat with an open understory, one which has large nesting trees for the woodpecker, is great habitat for the woodpecker.

They implemented a plan to go in and thin the forest—not clear-cut it, but thin it—and then develop a fire regime to keep the underbrush out. You might think that thinning the forest and burning the forest would cause a decrease in biodiversity, but our foresters saw something quite the opposite. Our forests in Arkansas were much like the ones across the country, many forests out West. They had been cut as much as a century ago and allowed just to grow back with the only management being putting the fires out when they start.

What happens in a situation like this is forests are dynamic; they continue to grow until they fill up all the growing space, and then they start competing with one another. When they compete with one another, they get weak; they are subject to insect and disease attack.

You get more fuel that falls on to the forest floor, creating a fuel load; you get dead and weakened timber, and you get a lightning strike, and it burns the whole forest down.

When you manage the forest, when you thin it and you use controlled burns, you open up the canopy; you open up the forest floor, and you see a flush of fauna, and you see biodiversity increase tremendously.

At the same time as the biodiversity and plant life increases, you get a flush in wildlife. On these plots in Arkansas, not only did we see an increase in numbers in red-cockaded woodpecker, we saw an increase in the bobwhite quail, in wild turkeys, in deer, in several other songbird species.

This management scheme is good for the forest; it is good for the wildlife; it creates cleaner air; it creates cleaner water. Again, it is a win-win situation. By applying these management practices—and they will be different as you go across the country in different regions.

As we let the local professionals and the local stakeholders manage the forests the way it was intended to be managed, we will create a healthy forest, which is good for all the local communities where these forests are located.

Another thing that we have done in this bill is we strengthened the secure rural schools provisions. We stipulate that 25 percent of funding has to go into local counties to provide emergency services to fund schools. This is critical for these local communities where forest activities around the national forests have greatly decreased over the past several decades.

We used to cut nearly 12 billion board feet of timber off of the forests. Now, we are down to less than 3 billion board feet per year. Many of these local economies depended on those forests. As we quit cutting timber and the infrastructure to process the timber left, these communities suffered all across our country where these natural forests are located.

This bill will allow funding to go to these communities, so that they continue to provide emergency services, so they can continue to provide funds for education and help to grow the communities.

Another provision in this bill is it allows the salvaging of timber after a catastrophic event. Now, a clear cut actually mimics a wildfire in the forest; so when you have a wildfire that is a stand-replacing fire, it causes the damage when the fire occurs.

In forestry terms, the land is essentially being clear-cut when the fire happens, but you will still have dead standing trees. These trees need to be salvaged. They have value, value that can be extracted and used to reforest the land, value that not only creates value in reforestation, it also cleans up the land, so you can reforest it and prevent future fire dangers.

What has happened in the past is the salvage cuts have been held up in court again, and you get standing dead timber that, the next time a fire comes through, it makes it dangerous for our firefighters to go in and fight the fire.

What this bill does is it still requires an environmental assessment of the area, but it speeds the process in that, and it prevents injunctions from allowing these salvage cuts so that this timber can be salvaged, and the revenue is used to go back into the Forest Service to reforest these lands and, again, provide the management practices to have healthy forests.

What happens now is we see, after a catastrophic event, we get only 3 percent of regeneration or reforestation of the land. This bill requires that, after the catastrophic event, we have to have 75 percent reforestation after a period of 5 years.

The 5-year timeframe gives foresters time to come in and assess the efforts that they put forth and to correct any problems that they have had in restoring these forests.

This bill, again, is very critical and very much needed. It has the support of, I believe, 117 different organizations, from wildlife groups, from environmental groups, many tribes across the country, many county governments. People recognize the benefits of this bill and the benefits that can come to our country if we enact this legislation.

Unfortunately, the bill is held up in the Senate right now, and as the fire season increases out West and we see more and more of our natural treasure and our Federal forests going up in flames, it should become more imperative for the Senate to take up this bill and pass it and for the President to sign it into law.

As I have stated in committee hearings when we were pushing this bill through, the forests don't really pay attention to what we legislate here in Washington, D.C.

□ 2000

They are dynamic, living organisms. They continue to grow. They continue to fill up the growing space. They are more reactive to what happens in nature.

We need to be proactive in managing these forests—managing them to be healthy, managing them to be more resistant to wildfire and inspects and diseases. I call on the Senate and the President to take up this legislation, to pass it, and to move America forward with healthy forests.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE).

RECOGNIZING MAKENNA SCHWAB

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I have got something I think is very important and something I think you are going to enjoy.

Sometimes we learn about some very remarkable people, individuals who, when we hear about them, make us pause, stop, and think about how much they inspire and really make a difference.

Today, I want to recognize one such person, a young lady of 12 years old by the name of Makenna Schwab. She lives in the community of East Wenatchee, Washington, which happens to be in my legislative district in the State of Washington.

Makenna was born with something called Larsen syndrome, which is a rare connective tissue disorder that causes bone dislocations. This affects her airway, spine, and joints. This remarkable young lady has already undergone 14 surgeries in her short life.

Four years ago, Makenna and her mother, Melissa, wanted to give something back to Seattle Children's Hospital, which over the course of her life has been their home away from home. She said she wanted to give something back because Seattle Children's has made it so that she can walk and live independently. So she decided to sell lemonade and cookies, a perfectly natural thing for a 12-year-old to decide. This young lady raised more than $6,700 that year for Children's Hospital.

The family knew they could do more. They wanted to do more. So the next year, she and her family collected over 650 new toys for the kids at the hospital. But even that wasn't enough. The following year, she wanted to do even more. So she sold 530 dozen donuts, raising more than $7,500 to go towards Seattle Children's Hospital.

This year, Mr. Speaker, she set her sights even higher. According to Seattle Children's Hospital's Kathryn Bluher, Makenna's goal was to give the kids at the hospital something that was very important, near and dear to her heart. She wanted to give them red Radio Flyer wagons.

I know you are smiling, Mr. Speaker, but that was an important thing because, in between her appointments throughout her young life, traveling between her room to the operating room to the playroom, the red Radio Flyer wagon was her ride. And she rode in style. She said that those wagons are a really good memory. They were less scary than a wheelchair.

The support that she got to reach her goal in this year's fundraising I think was nothing short of amazing. Makenna collected enough to purchase 33 wagons for the hospital. Friends, family, the mayor of the city, Wenatchee High School, a group of local dentists, even assisted living homes helped in the effort. The whole community pitched in. Actually, the hospital had to tell her that that was enough wagons.

She moved on to other things that were on the wish list. By the end of the drive, she had those 33 wagons, but she also had 36 DVD players, 12 headphones, five baby swings, 280 gift cards, 300 new toys, and many other things.

Makenna and her family have started a tradition that will live on, that has and will continue to make kids' stay at the Seattle Children's Hospital just a little less scary. As Makenna said, ''I want to give kids hope.''

Well, in May, and very deservedly so, Makenna received a national Make a Difference Day award for her volunteer project on behalf of the hospital.

As I told you before, sometimes you hear of remarkable people, and I am very proud to be able to share McKenna's story with you. I am proud to say that she is a fine citizen of my congressional district and my State of Washington.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 14 minutes remaining.

INCREASING VA ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR VETERANS

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to talk about some other positive things that this body has done here, as we approach the August break. This has to do with the VA.

Since the wait list manipulation scandal was brought to the public's attention last year, Americans have become all too familiar with incompetence and misconduct at the Federal agency charged with helping our veterans.

The House Veterans' Affairs Committee has held dozens of hearings; the head of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs resigned under congressional pressure; and Congress has enacted major reform legislation.

The Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act created a 3-year program to allow veterans to seek care from private providers if they live too far from a VA facility or cannot otherwise get an appointment within 14 days. It also gave the VA Secretary the authority to fire senior executives for poor performance and required a top-to-bottom study of the entire Department to be completed within 1 year of enactment.

However, even with this oversight, the Obama administration has failed to correct the problems. We continue to hear about unacceptable patient wait times, unanswered benefit inquiries, patient safety concerns, medical malpractice, flagrant mismanagement, infighting, corruption, and years of construction delays that total millions of dollars.

When government failure is exposed and legislation aimed at restoring accountability is enacted, it makes sense that action would be swift and immediate: people would be fired; wrongs would begin to be made right. Unfortunately, that has not been the case at the Department of Veterans Affairs. While there are as many as 1,000 employees that could potentially face disciplinary actions, the VA has only fired three people for involvement in the scandal.

Our veterans have earned our respect, and they shouldn't have to wait in line for months or years just to see a doctor. New documents show that one out of every three waiting for care at the VA has already died, and recent reports reveal there are now 50 percent more veterans on wait lists for a month or longer than last summer.

When our brave servicemembers come home, we have to keep our word to them by modernizing our VA system to deliver the best care in the world. In the 114th Congress, House Republicans have passed numerous pieces of legislation designed to help veterans and increase accountability at the VA.

In February, the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act was signed into law and provides veterans with access to the mental healthcare resources they need.

Last week, the House passed the Veterans Information Modernization Act, which would give Congress and the public access to key data regarding the delivery of health care, medical services, and nursing home care by the VA healthcare system.

Many veterans have contacted us expressing their frustration at having to carry official Department of Defense discharge papers to prove their military service, and last week, legislation was signed into law to create an official identification card for veterans.

Just this week, we have passed the VA Accountability Act, which would provide the VA Secretary with increased flexibility in removing employees who fail our veterans; the Hire More Heroes Act, which would make it

easier to hire veterans by exempting those who already have health insurance from being counted as full-time employees under ObamaCare; the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act, which would provide an annual cost-of-living adjustment for veterans receiving disability compensation; and the Ruth Moore Act, which would update regulations for veterans seeking financial compensation for mental health conditions linked to sexual assault while they were serving in the military.

The House also had to pass legislation that included provisions to allow the VA to transfer funds within its budget to cover an unexpected $2.5 billion shortfall in hospital and medical care accounts. Without this fix, the agency said it would start shutting down hospital operations in August.

It is critically important that we take care of those who have sacrificed so much in service to our country. This week, Congress has continued its efforts to meet our responsibility to America's veterans. However, we cannot transform the VA alone. It is the President's responsibility to ensure changes are made within the agency and employees are held accountable for their actions.

America's veterans deserve a meaningful, decisive plan to right the many wrongs that have been committed. It is past time for the Obama administration to change the culture at the VA and end this agencywide pattern of misconduct and neglect.

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

REPUBLICANS ARE DELIVERING RESULTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 30 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment my two colleagues who have just spoken on the floor. I compliment Mr. NEWHOUSE from the State of Washington for highlighting a very important event in his district involving a significant constituent of his.

I particularly would also like to recognize Mr. WESTERMAN from Arkansas for getting H.R. 2647 passed, the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2015. It is really a coup for a freshman to get such a significant bill passed so early in his or her career. It is a major bill, a significant bill, and I want to compliment him on bringing his expertise in forestry to the House of Representatives. We need people with all kinds of backgrounds here who can help get things that the American people need for us to do on their behalf, and certainly that bill is going to do a lot for American people all across this country.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that no one hears about the plane that landed safely. What that very apt adage suggests is that we are often unaware of good work being done every day, and it isn't until something goes wrong that people take notice. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to just highlight for a few minutes this evening the great work that this Congress has been doing in the past 4½ years, and particularly during the 114th Congress, which began in January.

Under the leadership of House Republicans, we have been doing very good work in tackling the difficult issues facing this Nation. We are advancing solutions that build a healthy economy, empowering every American to pursue his or her future, to reach his or her full potential and achieve a better life. Here, Mr. Speaker, are just a few specifics of what we have been accomplishing.

First, the House is more open. That may sound a little strange to people, but it is important that the American people understand that, under the majority leadership of Republicans, we have considered over 200 more amendments than the average over the last 25 years in the House of Representatives.

The House is more collaborative. House committees have passed 10.2 percent of bills out of committee compared to a 40-year average of only 6 percent of bills being passed.

The House is, overall, more productive. The House passed 193 bills in the first quarter, well above the 40-year average of 127. Of those, 32 have also passed the Senate—more than the 25-year average of 29.

□ 2015

The House is more effective. Over the last 30 years, only one other Republican-controlled House had more bills enacted in law to this point, and this Congress is above the 40-year average of 29 bills enacted with 32.

The American people want us to come to Washington, use our time well, and work on their behalf to get the things done that they see need to be done. We are working on our main focus, which are jobs and the economy.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow's good-paying jobs will come from the freedom to innovate from the bottom up, with organic growth, not from top-down bureaucracies in Washington, D.C., looking out for themselves and attempting, always, to control the American people.

Mr. Speaker, we have passed many bills, as I have said before. One is the Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act, H.R. 527, which was approved by the House by a vote of 260–163 in February of this year. That is a bipartisan vote, Mr. Speaker.

We passed the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, H.R. 50, by a bipartisan vote of 250–173.

We passed the Death Tax Repeal Act, H.R. 1105, by a vote of 240–179; this is often called the death tax; it is sometimes called the estate tax, but it hits, Mr. Speaker, not just wealthy people, but average people with huge, unfair taxes.

This bill would provide certainty for families and allow small businesses to focus on growing new jobs and is the smart thing to do for our economy.

Mr. Speaker, much of the economic turmoil that has gripped this Nation is the result of the Federal Government spending beyond its means. In North Carolina, I hear often from constituents who are worried about our ballooning national debt, which threatens economic stability and jeopardizes the American dream for our families.

Irresponsible spending isn't fair to our kids, who must repay the debt, and it is not good for the economy.

Unknown to many Americans, the House Republican majority has cut Federal spending 2 years in a row for the first time since the Korean war. We banned earmarks and achieved the most significant spending reductions in modern history. We have protected tax cuts for 99 percent of individuals and families.

We passed a balanced budget conference agreement which balances the budget within 10 years, without raising taxes, and achieves more than $5 trillion in savings. It is the first joint 10-year balanced budget resolution since 2001.

We have passed the Student Success Act, which replaces No Child Left Behind, by reducing the Federal footprint in education, restoring local control, and empowering parents and education leaders to hold schools accountable for effectively teaching students. It stops the Federal Government from coercing states into adopting Common Core.

We expanded and strengthened 529 college savings plans by a vote of 401–20, a very strong bipartisan vote.

We have passed an energy policy, the Keystone XL Pipeline Approval Act, the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act. We have passed the LNG Permitting Certainty and Transparency Act. We have passed Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2015.

Mr. Speaker, we are working on the economy, on bringing down the cost of energy, on providing for national security.

We have passed the National Defense Authorization Act, H.R. 1735, and are in conference now with the Senate on this bill.

We have passed the National Cybersecurity Protection Advancement Act, again, by a very large bipartisan vote, 355–63.

We have passed the Protecting Cyber Networks Act by a large bipartisan vote of 307–116.

We have passed a bill signed into law by the President in June, the USA Freedom Act, which ends the bulk collection of data at the National Security Agency, prevents government overreach, strengthens protections for Americans' civil liberties, and increases the transparency of certain national security authorities.

As my colleague from Arkansas talked about previous to my coming on

the floor, we have passed several bills to honor our veterans. They have earned our respect, and they shouldn't have to wait in line for months or years to see a doctor.

When our brave servicemembers come home, we have to keep our word to them by modernizing our VA system to deliver the best care in the world, and we have kept our promises to our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, we have focused also on the human side of what needs to be done in our society. We have passed the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. It was signed into law on May 29, 2015. Human trafficking is a major problem in our country, and we are doing all that we can to diminish it and eliminate it.

Mr. Speaker, we have passed the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act with a bipartisan vote, H.R. 36. We expect that bill to be passed in the Senate.

We have also passed the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act. It was approved by the House in January. This bill would permanently free taxpayers from subsidizing abortion or insurance coverage that includes abortion. Mr. Speaker, we care very much for the most vulnerable among us.

We are also doing everything we can through our hearings to hold President Obama and the executive branch accountable in conjunction with our constitutional duties. We continue to look for ways to improve what the Department of Veterans Affairs does.

We have witnessed the incompetence of the Office of Personnel Management, which allowed its records of Federal employees to be hacked.

We have held hearings on the Secret Service scandal.

We have done everything we can to stop the EPA from imposing its clean water rule, which is very tough on our farmers in particular, but on people all over this country.

We have challenged, again, ObamaCare in court with the U.S. House of Representatives vs. Burwell lawsuit; and we hope for a positive result from that.

We are also continuing our investigations into other scandals of this administration, including the situation in Benghazi. Last fall, House investigators learned that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton used a private email server located in her home, rather than an official email account, as required by administration policy. She also failed to preserve her official emails for government records as required by the Federal Records Act.

Without the diligent work of the Select Committee on Benghazi, this highly questionable email arrangement would have remained secret. Because of a select committee deposition of Sidney Blumenthal, a former aide to President Bill Clinton, the committee was able to demonstrate that, despite former Secretary Clinton's assertions to the contrary, she did not produce all of her official emails to the State Department.

The select committee is deposing senior State Department officials, including Clinton's closest aides, and will call former Secretary Clinton as a witness as soon as the State Department produces all of the records owed to the committee.

We are continuing our investigation of the IRS and its unlawful targeting of conservatives.

Mr. Speaker, this is the people's House, and we Republicans in the majority will continue to do the work of the American people by passing appropriate legislation and by holding this administration accountable for what it should be doing and what it has done that is inappropriate.

The Republican-led House, Mr. Speaker, in the past 7 months, has delivered real results that would solve many of the challenges that face our Nation, but there is still more to do to make the outdated models in Washington, D.C., more effective, efficient, and accountable.

As we go home to our districts for the August recess, not a vacation, but an opportunity for us to be in our districts, to be with our constituents, to hear from our constituents what their concerns are, we will be gathering more ideas for legislation and come back to Congress in September with a renewed commitment to do the people's business in the people's House.

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

SENATE BILL AND CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A bill and a concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 764. An act to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

S. Con. Res. 20. Concurrent resolution recognizing and honoring the 25th anniversary of the date of enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce; in addition, to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on July 27, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 2499. To amend the Small Business Act to increase access to capital for veteran entrepreneurs, to help create jobs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1626. To reduce duplication of information technology at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, July 31, 2015, at 1 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2318. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRA, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Loans in Areas Having Special Flood Hazards [Docket ID: OCC-2014-0016] (RIN: 1557-AD84) received July 22, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Financial Services.

2319. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the 2012 Progress Report on Understanding the Long-Term Health Effects of Living Organ Donation, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 273b, as added by the Charlie W. Norwood Living Organ Donation Act (Public Law 110-144); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2320. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2013 Report on the Preventive Medicine and Public Health Training Grant and Integrative Medicine Programs, pursuant to Sec. 768(d) of the Public Health Service Act, Pub. L. 78-410, as amended by Sec. 10501(m) of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. 111-148; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2321. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the FY 2013 and 2014 ''Report to Congress on the Nurse Education, Practice, Quality and Retention Program'', pursuant to Secs. 831 and 831A of Title VIII of the Public Health Service Act, Pub. L. 78-410, as amended by Sec. 5309 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. 111-148; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2322. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the report to Congress on the State Health Care Workforce Development Grant Program, pursuant to Sec. 5102 of the Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. 111-148; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

2323. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to terrorists who threatened to disrupt the Middle East peace process that was declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); and Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2324. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser, Office of Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements, other than treaties entered into by the United States, to be transmitted to the Congress within the sixty-day period specified in the Case-Zablocki Act, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2325. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State,

transmitting the 2015 Advancing Freedom and Democracy Report, pursuant to Sec. 2121 of Pub. L. 110-53; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2326. A letter from the Executive Analyst (Political), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277, 5 U.S.C. 3345-3349d; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2327. A letter from the Executive Analyst (Political), Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277 as codified in 5 U.S.C. 3345 et seq; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2328. A letter from the Executive Analyst (Political), Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277 as codified in 5 U.S.C. 3345 et seq; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2329. A letter from the Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President, transmitting the FY 2014 Accounting of Drug Control Funds Report and the FY 2014 Performance Summary Report, pursuant to Sec. 705(d) and Sec. 704(b)(14), respectively, of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Reauthorization Act of 1998, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 9. A bill to amend title 35, United States Code, and the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to make improvements and technical corrections, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–235). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 1992. A bill to reduce temporarily the royalty required to be paid for sodium produced on Federal lands, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–236). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 3116. A bill to extend by 15 years the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the quarterly financial report program (Rept. 114–237). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 1759. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the publication, by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, of information related to rulemakings, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–238, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1759. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the publication, by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, of information relating to rulemakings, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–238, Pt. 2). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 3273. A bill to prohibit assistance to Iran to develop, use, or protect any technology or other assets of Iran's nuclear program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia):

H.R. 3274. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4567 Rockbridge Road in Pine Lake, Georgia, as the ''Francis Manuel Ortega Post Office''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 3275. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to provide grants and loans to owners of dated manufactured homes for the replacement of such dated manufactured homes with Energy Star-qualified manufactured or modular homes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 3276. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require States to provide for same day registration; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 3277. A bill to prohibit election officials from requiring individuals to provide photo identification as a condition of obtaining or casting a ballot in an election for Federal office or registering to vote in elections for Federal office, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. COOK, Ms. HAHN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. PETERS):

H.R. 3278. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to ensure that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is informed of the interment of unclaimed deceased veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 3279. A bill to amend titles 5 and 28, United States Code, to require annual reports to Congress on, and the maintenance of databases on, awards of fees and other expenses to prevailing parties in certain administrative proceedings and court cases to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SWALWELL of California (for himself, Mr. HUDSON, and Ms. STEFANIK):

H.R. 3280. A bill to amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to require one-stop delivery systems under such Act to offer services through Internet websites and to direct the Secretary of Labor to develop standards and best practices for such websites, and other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 3281. A bill to authorize the purchase of a small parcel of Natural Resources Conservation Service property in Riverside, California, by the Riverside Corona Resource Conservation District, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD (for himself and Mr. LYNCH):

H.R. 3282. A bill to strengthen Federal consumer protection and product traceability with respect to commercially marketed seafood, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 3283. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to exempt from certain age-related restrictions in the labor laws 16- and 17-year-old individuals employed by their parents in certain logging activities, and to direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a program to allow States to enter into interstate compacts to standardize the age requirements for operators of commercial motor vehicles; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. LANCE):

H.R. 3284. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment of a mesothelioma patient registry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HONDA, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. POCAN, Ms. LEE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. ELLISON, and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 3285. A bill to provide for a study by the Institute of Medicine on health disparities, to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop guidelines on reducing health disparities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COOK (for himself and Ms. GABBARD):

H.R. 3286. A bill to encourage effective, voluntary private sector investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual presidential awards to private sector employers recognizing such efforts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MARCHANT (for himself and Mrs. BLACK):

H.R. 3287. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of banks organized as limited liability companies; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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

H.R. 3288. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to change the method of

determining disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. BEYER, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. TONKO, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. HONDA, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H.R. 3289. A bill to prevent the waste of gas produced under oil and gas leases on Federal land and to collect royalty on all gas production; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK):

H.R. 3290. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th President of the United States whose visionary leadership secured passage of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965, Social Security Amendments Act (Medicare) of 1965, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Higher Education Act of 1965, and Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin:

H.R. 3291. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to develop a crosswalk between HCPCS and MS-DRG codes for similar hospital services; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:

H.R. 3292. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to revise Medicare payment for indirect medical education (IME) costs in teaching hospitals; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SMITH of Texas (for himself, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. POSEY, Mr. PALMER, Mr. ABRAHAM, and Mr. NEWHOUSE):

H.R. 3293. A bill to provide for greater accountability in Federal funding for scientific research, to promote the progress of science in the United States that serves that national interest; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina (for herself, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. ROONEY of Florida):

H.R. 3294. A bill to establish a program to assist in the importation and care of abused, injured, or abandoned nonhuman primates; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 3295. A bill to make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BLACK (for herself, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. DONOVAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. OLSON, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. BABIN, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. HARPER, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. NUGENT):

H.R. 3296. A bill to clarify that the oath of allegiance to the United States administered in the naturalization process may not be altered; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRIFFITH:

H.R. 3297. A bill to reform the National Flood Insurance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas (for himself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 3298. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for value-based purchasing of post-acute care services under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself and Ms. ESHOO):

H.R. 3299. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to ensure preparedness for chemical, radiological, biological, and nuclear threats, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. PITTENGER (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 3300. A bill to reduce waste and implement cost savings and revenue enhancement for the Federal Government; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, Foreign Affairs, Financial Services, House Administration, and Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 3301. A bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. OLSON (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. BABIN):

H.R. 3302. A bill to sunset the authority exercised by the Secretary of Homeland Security through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 3303. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to improve coal royalties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. JONES, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POSEY, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. VELA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. TURNER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, and Mr. COHEN):

H.R. 3304. A bill to require foreign manufacturers of products imported into the United States to establish registered agents in the United States who are authorized to accept service of process against such manufacturers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HURD of Texas (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. RATCLIFFE):

H.R. 3305. A bill to help enhance American network security and mitigate cybersecurity risks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 3306. A bill to authorize the export of energy resources, energy technologies, and related services to Cuba, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. HARTZLER:

H.R. 3307. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act by repealing the paid lunch equity requirements; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GRAYSON (for himself, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. POCAN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FARR, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SIRES, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. VELA, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. BASS, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. LEE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H.R. 3308. A bill to expand Medicare coverage to include eyeglasses, hearing aids, and dental care; to the Committee on Energy and

Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:

H.R. 3309. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve the electronic health records meaningful use programs under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Ms. GRAHAM, Mr. YOHO, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. MICA, Mr. POSEY, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. NUGENT, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. ROSS, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. JONES, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. GROTHMAN):

H.R. 3310. A bill to preserve access to public waters and maintain the vital role of States in fisheries management decisions; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. POLIS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. POCAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. WELCH, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 3311. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal fossil fuel subsidies for oil companies; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. KATKO, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 3312. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants for establishing coordinated networks of services and resources for veterans and their families; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself and Mr. RATCLIFFE):

H.R. 3313. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to strengthen the ability of the Secretary of Homeland Security to detect and prevent intrusions against, and to use countermeasures to protect, agency information systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BABIN:

H.R. 3314. A bill to suspend the admission into the United States of refugees in order to examine the costs of providing benefits to such individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BABIN (for himself, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. POE of Texas):

H.R. 3315. A bill to amend the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 with respect to the maximum cost of projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Ms. PINGREE):

H.R. 3316. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to make loan guarantees and grants to finance certain improvements to school lunch facilities, to train school food service personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. JOLLY):

H.R. 3317. A bill to require the Government Accountability Office to conduct periodic reviews of the flood insurance rates and flood insurance rate maps under the national flood insurance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BLUM (for himself and Mr. CRAMER):

H.R. 3318. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to modify regulations to increase the amount of the de minimis safe harbor election for exemption from capital expenditures for taxpayers without certain financial statements; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 3319. A bill to direct the Postmaster General to conduct a pilot program to provide nonpostal services at certain post offices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 3320. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with administrative contractors for the processing of claims for hospital care and medical services furnished in non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 3321. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the volumetric excise tax credit for liquid fuel derived from natural gas through the Fischer-Tropsch process; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BUTTERFIELD:

H.R. 3322. A bill to establish a Residence Star program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 3323. A bill to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to improve health care coverage under vision and dental plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina):

H.R. 3324. A bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to submit to Congress a report regarding opportunities to equip certain foreign military entities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. HONDA, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 3325. A bill to establish the Azores Cooperative Initiative Program; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia (for himself, Mr. NADLER, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. HANNA, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. MARINO, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. REED, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 3326. A bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 3327. A bill to prohibit the awarding of Federal Pell Grants to incarcerated individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York (for himself, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 3328. A bill to require Federal agencies to review certain rules and regulations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Small Business, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 3329. A bill to increase the number of operational aircraft carriers; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. COOPER (for himself and Mr. MULVANEY):

H.R. 3330. A bill to prohibit the consideration in the House of Representatives of any legislation containing an earmark; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3331. A bill to amend the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act to include bullying and harassment prevention programs; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. RUSH):

H.R. 3332. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a criminal penalty for torture committed by law enforcement officers and others acting under color of law; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3333. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to restore the former system of good time allowances toward service of Federal prison terms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mr. NADLER):

H.R. 3334. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations with respect to ensuring families are able to sit together on flights, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Mr. BOST, and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 3335. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide certain employees of Members of Congress and certain employees of State or local governmental agencies with access to case-tracking information of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. DEGETTE:

H.R. 3336. A bill to designate certain lands in the State of Colorado as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK

of Massachusetts, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HIMES, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. LEE, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WALZ, Mr. WELCH, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 3337. A bill to facilitate efficient investments and financing of infrastructure projects and new job creation through the establishment of a National Infrastructure Development Bank, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Financial Services, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DUFFY (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. AMODEI, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. COLE, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. ASHFORD, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. POLIQUIN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. KILMER, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. WESTMORELAND, and Mr. KNIGHT):

H.R. 3338. A bill to establish a fund to make payments to the Americans held hostage in Iran and their immediate family members, who are identified as members of the proposed class in case number 1:00-CV-03110 (EGS) of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina (for herself, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

H.R. 3339. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect coverage for screening mamography; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota:

H.R. 3340. A bill to place the Financial Stability Oversight Council and the Office of Financial Research under the regular appropriations process, to provide for certain quarterly reporting and public notice and comment requirements for the Office of Financial Research, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 3341. A bill to designate the portion of Moffett Federal Airfield, California, containing the 129th Rescue Wing of the California Air National Guard as Moffett Air National Guard Base; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. FLEMING:

H.R. 3342. A bill to provide for stability of title to certain lands in the State of Louisiana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself and Mr. DEUTCH):

H.R. 3343. A bill to provide for improvements in the treatment of detainees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida (for herself, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. CICILLINE):

H.R. 3344. A bill to enhance the capabilities of metropolitan planning organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. AMODEI, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 3345. A bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act for purposes of making claims under such Act based on exposure to atmospheric nuclear testing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. GRAHAM:

H.R. 3346. A bill to provide support for the development of middle school career exploration programs linked to career and technical education programs of study; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BURGESS, and Mr. OLSON):

H.R. 3347. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide incentives for education on the risk of renal medullary carcinoma in individuals who are receiving medical assistance under such title and who have Sickle Cell Disease; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. DUFFY):

H.R. 3348. A bill to direct the Attorney General to create a special reward program for individuals providing information leading to the apprehension and conviction of persons committing offenses under section 1030 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER (for herself and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 3349. A bill to amend the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 to allow certain private entities to receive expedited permits; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. HIGGINS (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 3350. A bill to require a terrorism threat assessment regarding the transportation of chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological materials through United States land borders and within the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mrs. LAWRENCE, and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 3351. A bill to provide for cost-of-living increases for certain Federal benefits programs based on increases in the Consumer Price Index for the elderly; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs, Oversight and Government Reform, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HULTGREN:

H.R. 3352. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide greater flexibility with respect to waivers granted to States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. CALVERT):

H.R. 3353. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to limit attorney fees and penalties in citizen suits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself and Mr. CONYERS):

H.R. 3354. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide an alternate release date for certain nonviolent offenders, to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to the computation of the good time credit toward service of sentences of imprisonment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself and Mr. LEWIS):

H.R. 3355. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists to supervise cardiac, intensive cardiac, and pulmonary rehabilitation programs; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself and Mr. BLUMENAUER):

H.R. 3356. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act with respect to the qualification of the director of food services of a Medicare skilled nursing facility or a Medicaid nursing facility; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 3357. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to require payment to counties of a portion of revenues received by the United States under Federal oil and gas leases; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. KEATING (for himself and Mr. KATKO):

H.R. 3358. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to ensure that sex offenders to be released from the custody of Immigration and Customs Enforcement are registered on sex offender registry, and relevant State, tribal, and local authorities are notified of their release, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 3359. A bill to provide for loan repayment for teachers in high-need schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. KILMER (for himself and Mr. RIGELL):

H.R. 3360. A bill to provide for identity protection coverage and other services for individuals exposed to the OPM security breaches, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. KATKO, and Mr. DONOVAN):

H.R. 3361. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Insider Threat Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 3362. A bill to allow employers a credit against income tax as an incentive to partner with community colleges or other educational institutions to improve workforce development and job training for students; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LAMALFA (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. STEWART, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. DEGETTE, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 3363. A bill to implement reforms to the Federal land management agency fire programs in order to address the complexities of 21st century wildfires in a more cost-effective and efficient manner; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HIMES, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. FARR, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. KILMER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. ESTY, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. TITUS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. RUSH):

H.R. 3364. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to permit an individual who is subject to a requirement to present identification as a condition of voting in an election for Federal office to meet such requirement by presenting a sworn written statement attesting to the individual's identification, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. TITUS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. DELBENE):

H.R. 3365. A bill to improve the reproductive assistance provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their spouses or partners, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LAWRENCE:

H.R. 3366. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to allow an individual to qualify for both teacher loan forgiveness and public service loan forgiveness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 3367. A bill to reauthorize the Assets for Independence Act, to provide for the approval of applications to operate new demonstration programs and to renew existing programs, to enhance program flexibility, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 3368. A bill to amend title XX of the Social Security Act to provide grants to support job creation initiatives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 3369. A bill to establish an Office of Rural Education Policy in the Department of Education, make other modifications to Federal law to improve rural schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. LOFGREN (for herself and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ):

H.R. 3370. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to promote innovation, investment, and research in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LOUDERMILK (for himself, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. WESTMORELAND):

H.R. 3371. A bill to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. LOVE (for herself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. HUNTER, and Ms. FUDGE):

H.R. 3372. A bill to establish the Higher Education Regulatory Reform Task Force, to expand the experimental sites initiative under the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reduce college costs for students, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H.R. 3373. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to review certain whistleblower complaints; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H.R. 3374. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the payment of childcare assistance to certain single parents who are participating in a Department of Veterans Affairs vocational rehabilitation program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. LEE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. HONDA, Mr. BEYER, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. SERRANO):

H.R. 3375. A bill to amend chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code, to extend the period during which a firearms licensee is required to wait for a response from the national instant criminal background check system before being allowed to transfer a firearm to a prospective transferee; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 3376. A bill to authorize States to carry out bridge construction, maintenance, repair, and replacement projects using previously allocated surface transportation funds that are identified as being excess or inactive, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mrs. LOWEY (for herself, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. POCAN, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. NADLER, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. LEE, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. MOORE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. MENG, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. HONDA, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. TITUS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 3377. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to credit prospectively individuals serving as caregivers of dependent relatives with deemed wages for up to five years of such service; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. NORTON, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LEE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 3378. A bill to direct the Federal Trade Commission to prescribe rules prohibiting deceptive advertising of abortion services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 3379. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to initiate a rulemaking with respect to aircraft medical kits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MARINO (for himself and Mr. PIERLUISI):

H.R. 3380. A bill to provide the Department of Justice with additional tools to target extraterritorial drug trafficking activity, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCCAUL (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. FLORES, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. EDWARDS, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. HANNA, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. HIMES, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. SIRES, Ms. TITUS, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr.

RANGEL, and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida):

H.R. 3381. A bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK (for himself and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 3382. A bill to amend the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to enhance recreational opportunities, environmental restoration activities, and forest management activities in the Lake Tahoe Basin, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 3383. A bill to limit the number of hours that children may be employed as actors, performers, and models, to require blocked trust accounts for the financial protection of such children, to clarify the liability of employers, contractors, and other individuals for sexual harassment of such child performers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Mr. GALLEGO, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CROWLEY, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Miss RICE of New York, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 3384. A bill to reestablish the Office of Noise Abatement and Control in the Environmental Protection Agency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 3385. A bill to require pipelines regulated by the Secretary of Transportation to be made of steel that is produced in the United States and originates from iron ore and taconite mined and processed in the United States, for safety, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NORCROSS:

H.R. 3386. A bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a pilot competitive grant program for the development of a skilled energy workforce, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 3387. A bill to amend the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, and the Federal Advisory Committee Act to apply the requirements of such Acts to the Smithsonian Institution, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. NUGENT (for himself, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. BURGESS):

H.R. 3388. A bill to amend title 37, United States Code, to impose a statute of limitations on the ability of the Department of Defense to recover certain indebtedness owed to the United States by members of the uniformed services, including retired and former members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. NUNES (for himself, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. VALADAO, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. COOK):

H.R. 3389. A bill to amend section 320301 of title 54, United States Code, to require certain procedures for designating national monuments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. NEAL):

H.R. 3390. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide credits for the production of renewable chemicals and investments in renewable chemical production facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 3391. A bill to provide Governors of States with the authority to withhold Federal financial assistance from units of local government that do not comply with the immigration laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. SALMON, Mr. FARR, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 3392. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to require the Secretary of Energy to consider the objective of improving the conversion, use, and storage of carbon dioxide produced from fossil fuels in carrying out research and development programs under that Act; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. POSEY (for himself and Mr. ROSS):

H.R. 3393. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to clarify that the points and fees in connection with a mortgage loan do not include certain compensation amounts already taken into account in setting the interest rate on such loan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. POSEY (for himself, Mr. TROTT, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 3394. A bill to amend the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002 to allow for the use of certain assets of foreign persons and entities to satisfy certain judgments against terrorist parties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. QUIGLEY (for himself, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. LEE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 3395. A bill to prevent the illegal sale of firearms, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RANGEL (for himself, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. POCAN, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 3396. A bill to address the dramatic increase of HIV/AIDS in minority communities; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H.R. 3397. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for owning certain disaster resilient property; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER):

H.R. 3398. A bill to improve the condition and performance of the national multimodal freight network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. RICHMOND (for himself, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. CLYBURN):

H.R. 3399. A bill to develop and implement national standards for the use of solitary confinement in correctional facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER (for himself, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. GOHMERT):

H.R. 3400. A bill to authorize the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment (normal trade relations treatment) to the products of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida (for himself and Mr. RICHMOND):

H.R. 3401. A bill to reduce Federal overcriminalization, protect Americans from unjust punishment, and uphold the role of Congress by clarifying mens rea requirements for all Federal criminal offenses, creating an inventory of Federal offenses that carry a criminal penalty, and providing that no rule of the executive branch which may be enforced by criminal penalties can take effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER:

H.R. 3402. A bill to strengthen the ability of the Secretary of Homeland Security to detect and prevent intrusions against, and to use countermeasures to protect, government agency information systems and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, and Ms. GRANGER):

H.R. 3403. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to protect victims of sexual violence, to improve the adjudication of allegations related to sexual violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 3404. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax free distributions from health savings accounts for fitness facility membership and classes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 3405. A bill to prohibit the Department of Health and Human Services from obligating or expending any funds for grants for developing or evaluating a video game to train parents in food parenting practices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. FORBES, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MARINO, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. WALKER, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GUINTA, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. HARDY, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. RICHMOND):

H.R. 3406. A bill to reauthorize the Second Chance Act of 2007; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER (for himself, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 3407. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to remove the deduction for charitable contributions from the overall limitation on itemized deductions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana):

H.R. 3408. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to protect victims of sexual violence, to improve the adjudication by institutions of higher education of allegations related to sexual violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri (for himself, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BARR, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. LONG, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. WELCH):

H.R. 3409. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude payments received under the Work Colleges Program from gross income, including payments made from institutional funds; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. HECK of Washington):

H.R. 3410. A bill to authorize voluntary grazing permit retirement on Federal lands managed by the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior where livestock grazing is impractical, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. HAHN, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HIMES, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. FARR, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PALLONE, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 3411. A bill to ensure that all individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm are listed in the national instant criminal background check system and require a background check for every firearm sale; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COSTA, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JONES, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. POLIS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. VEASEY):

H.R. 3412. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, and title 39, United States Code, to provide the United States Postal Service the authority to mail alcoholic beverages, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STIVERS (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Ms. FUDGE):

H.R. 3413. A bill to require a report on requirements and risks in connection with the use of radioisotopic power systems for space exploration beyond low-Earth orbit; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. STIVERS (for himself, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 3414. A bill to improve the certification and licensing of employees and medical laboratories of the Department of Veterans Affairs that furnish prosthetic and orthotic services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3415. A bill to prohibit subsidiaries of foreign-owned corporations from obtaining contracts for the performance of passenger and baggage security screening at domestic commercial airports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3416. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to require that individuals seeking training in the operation of certain aircraft be checked against the terrorist watchlist to ensure that such individuals are non-threats to aviation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3417. A bill to amend title 14, United States Code, to modify the process for congressional nomination of individuals for appointment as cadets at the Coast Guard Academy, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Department of Homeland Security to establish a comprehensive recruitment and outreach plan for the Coast Guard Academy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3418. A bill to enhance homeland security, including domestic preparedness and the collective response to terrorism, by improving the Federal Protective Service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. TITUS (for herself, Mr. TAKANO, and Miss RICE of New York):

H.R. 3419. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants to eligible educational institutions to provide child care services on campus; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. TONKO (for himself, Mr. NADLER, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. NORTON, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. RUSH):

H.R. 3420. A bill to reauthorize the weatherization and State energy programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WALKER (for himself, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. YOHO, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. COOK, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BLUM, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. BRAT, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. STEWART, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. PALMER, Mr. BUCK, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. BABIN, Mr. SALMON, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. MESSER, and Mr. CONAWAY):

H.R. 3421. A bill to allow a State to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. WALORSKI (for herself and Mr. WALZ):

H.R. 3422. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish credentialing requirements for medical vendors; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WALZ (for himself, Mr. JONES, Mr. GIBSON, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. NOLAN, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 3423. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, and the Agent Orange Act of 1991 to extend the certain authorities of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs regarding associations between diseases and exposure to dioxin and other chemical compounds in herbicides; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (for herself and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H.R. 3424. A bill to provide for extension of agreements between the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and public housing agencies participating in the Moving to Work Demonstration Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. WEBER of Texas (for himself, Mr. BABIN, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. FLORES, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. CONAWAY):

H.R. 3425. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to give nationwide effect to the least restrictive State laws regarding the carrying of firearms that are concealed, or are partially or fully visible to the public; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico):

H.R. 3426. A bill to amend title VI of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to establish a Federal renewable electricity standard for retail electricity suppliers and a Federal energy efficiency resource standard for electricity and natural gas suppliers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida (for herself, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. PAYNE):

H.R. 3427. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to ensure that employees are not misclassified as non-employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WITTMAN (for himself, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. POMPEO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. FORBES):

H.R. 3428. A bill to require assurances that certain family planning service projects and

programs will provide pamphlets containing the contact information of adoption centers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. YODER (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. STEWART, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. JONES, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. BABIN, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BARTON, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 3429. A bill to amend title IV of the Public Health Service Act to prohibit sale or transactions relating to human fetal tissue; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:

H.R. 3430. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a reduction in improper claims of refundable credits by directing the Secretary of the Treasury to ensure consistency of requirements for self and paid tax return preparers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:

H.R. 3431. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an energy equivalent of a gallon of diesel in the case of liquefied natural gas for purposes of the Inland Waterways Trust Fund financing rate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana (for himself and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 3432. A bill to provide the legal framework and income tax treatment necessary for the growth of innovative private financing options for students to fund postsecondary education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.J. Res. 62. A joint resolution to authorize the use of the Armed Forces of the United States against Iran if Iran commits a serious violation of its commitments or obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BISHOP of Michigan (for himself, Mr. PETERSON, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. MOOLENAAR, and Mr. POLIQUIN):

H. Con. Res. 67. Concurrent resolution establishing a joint select committee to address regulatory reform; to the Committee on Rules.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. LOBIONDO):

H. Con. Res. 68. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the 225th anniversary of the establishment of the Coast Guard; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. WILLIAMS:

H. Con. Res. 69. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that any reform or repeal of the last-in, first-out method of accounting for inventories (LIFO) would cause irreparable and unnecessary damage to United States businesses; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. OLSON, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. SALMON, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. JORDAN, and Mr. NEWHOUSE):

H. Res. 392. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2009, Public Law 111-148, violated article I, section 7 of the United States Constitution because it was a bill for raising revenue that did not originate in the House of Representatives; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FARR, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HONDA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H. Res. 393. A resolution expressing support for policies to protect and expand Social Security and secure its long-term future in a fair and responsible manner; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCGOVERN (for himself, Mr. PITTS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. LEE, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, and Ms. NORTON):

H. Res. 394. A resolution condemning Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army for continuing to perpetrate crimes against humanity, war crimes, and mass atrocities, and supporting ongoing efforts by the United States Government, the African Union, and governments and regional organizations in central Africa to remove Joseph Kony and Lord's Resistance Army commanders from the battlefield and promote protection and recovery of affected communities; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BERA (for himself, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. COSTA, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. MENG, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. OLSON):

H. Res. 395. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives commemorating the Republic of India's Independence Day and recognizing United States-India relations on India's National Day; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself, Mr. SALMON, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. DOLD):

H. Res. 396. A resolution calling on the Government of Bangladesh to protect the human rights of all its citizens, particularly vulnerable minorities, strengthen democratic institutions and rule of law, and prevent the growth of extremist groups; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER (for herself, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, and Mr. NEWHOUSE):

H. Res. 397. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding preserving the rights of employers and employees regarding coverage through association health plans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself and Mr. WELCH):

H. Res. 398. A resolution recognizing that access to hospitals and other health care providers for patients in rural areas of the United States is essential to the survival and success of communities in the United States; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JONES:

H. Res. 399. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the House should consider legislation to protect traditional marriage and prevent taxpayer funding of abortion; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PALLONE (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. TONKO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. NADLER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. HAHN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. LEE, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. FARR, Mr. NEAL, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. COHEN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. BASS, Mr. NORCROSS, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. WELCH, Ms. ESTY, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HONDA, Mr.

TAKANO, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. SIRES, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. BEYER, Mr. CARNEY, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. KIND, Mr. POLIS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. CLAY, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. TITUS, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. COSTA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. WALZ, Mr. VELA, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. KILMER):

H. Res. 400. A resolution commemorating 50 years since the creation of the Medicare and Medicaid Programs; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PERRY:

H. Res. 401. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of ''Vietnam Veterans Day''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Res. 402. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding politically motivated acts of boycott, divestment from, and sanctions against Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

H. Res. 403. A resolution recognizing the campaign of genocide against the Kurdish people in Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. WITTMAN:

H. Res. 404. A resolution commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science of the College of William & Mary; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself and Mr. TAKAI):

H. Res. 405. A resolution calling on the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation to modify its accreditation standards to prevent the standards from negatively impacting Alaska Native and American Indian teacher candidates; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GARRETT:

H.R. 3273.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;'')

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or any Department or Officer thereof.'')

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 (''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.'')

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 3274.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7, ''The Congress shall have Power to . . . Establish Post Offices and post Roads . . .'' In the Constitution, the power possessed by Congress embraces the regulation of the Postal System in the country. Therefore, the proposed legislation in naming a post office would fall under the powers granted to Congress in the Constitution.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 3275.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 3276.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 3277.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 3278.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is Article 1 Section 8: to provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia:

H.R. 3279.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution, which states that ''No money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in consequence of Appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. SWALWELL of California:

H.R. 3280.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 3281.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 18, and Article IV, section 3, clause 2.

By Mr. FARENTHOLD:

H.R. 3282.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section, 8.

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 3283.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. KATKO:

H,R, 3284.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 3285.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution,

By Mr. COOK:

H.R. 3286.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. MARCHANT:

H.R. 3287.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution Art. I Sec. 8 cl. 1, under the ''Power To lay and collect Taxes'';

Amd. 16, under the ''power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration''; and

Art. I Sec. 8 cl. 18, under the power ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.''

By Mr. MARCHANT:

H.R. 3288.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I Sec. 8 cl. 1: ''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States [. . .]''

16th Amendment: ''The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.''

Art. I Sec. 8 cl. 18, ''To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof:''

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H.R. 3289.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 and Article IV, Section 3

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 3290.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 4, and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin:

H.R. 3291.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BRADY of Texas:
H.R. 3292.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. SMITH of Texas:
H.R. 3293.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18:
The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.
By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:
H.R. 3294.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The authority to enact this bill is derived from, but may not be limited to, Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.
''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;''
By Mr. CUMMINGS:
H.R. 3295.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: ''No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law'' and
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: ''The Congress shall have Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States''
By Mrs. BLACK:
H.R. 3296.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 which states: ''The Congress shall have the Power To . . . establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization . . .''
By Mr. GRIFFITH:
H.R. 3297.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. BRADY of Texas:
H.R. 3298.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 14 of the United States Constitution.
By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana:
H.R. 3299.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3
By Mr. PITTENGER:
H.R. 3300.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Sec. 8, Clauses 5 & 18, of the United States Constitution
By Mr. JOLLY:
H.R. 3301.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. OLSON:
H.R. 3302.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:
H.R. 3303.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)
Article I; Section 8; Clause 18
The Congress shall have Power To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.
By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:
H.R. 3304.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power of Congress to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.)
By Mr. HURD of Texas:
H.R. 3305.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8, Clause 1:
''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States . . .''
By Mr. RUSH:
H.R. 3306.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8
By Mrs. HARTZLER:
H.R. 3307.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I: Section 8: Clause 3 The United States Congress shall have power
''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''
By Mr. GRAYSON:
H.R. 3308.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.
By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:
H.R. 3309.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Commerce Clause: Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power ''to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''
By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:
H.R. 3310.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2
The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States
By Mr. BLUMENAUER:
H.R. 3311.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Constitution of the United States provides clear authority for Congress to pass legislation regarding income taxes. Article I of the Constitution, in detailing Congressional authority, provides that ''Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes . . .'' (Section 8, Clause 1). Further clarifying Congressional power to enact an income tax, voters amended the Constitution by popular vote to provide that ''Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived . . .'' (Sixteenth Amendment).
By Ms. ADAMS:
H.R. 3312.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, ''Congress shall have the Power...To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer Thereof''
By Mr. McCAUL:
H.R. 3313.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.
By Mr. BABIN:
H.R. 3314.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 4
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. BABIN:
H.R. 3315.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
Article I, Section 8, Clause 7
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. BARLETTA:
H.R. 3316.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 1; and Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. BILIRAKIS:
H.R. 3317.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution of the United States and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States.
By Mr. BLUM:
H.R. 3318.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause I
By Mr. BLUMENAUER:
H.R. 3319.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the U.S. Constitution
By Mr. BOUSTANY:
H.R. 3320.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. BOUSTANY:
H.R. 3321.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
U.S. Const. art. I, Sec. 8, cl. 1. Within the Enumerated Powers of the U.S. Constitution, Congress is granted the power to lay and collect taxes. This provision grants Congress the authority over this particular piece of legislation.
By Mr. BUTTERFIELD:
H.R. 3322.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution, Congress has the power to collect taxes and expend funds to provide for the general welfare of the United States.

Congress may also make laws that are necessary and proper for carrying into execution their powers enumerated under Article I.

By Mr. CARTER of Georgia:

H.R. 3323.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority in which this bill rests is the power of Congress to regulate commerce as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, as applied to healthcare.

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 3324.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 3325.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia:

H.R. 3326.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution; and, Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 3327.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 3328.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 3329.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 13:

To provide and maintain a Navy.

By Mr. COOPER:

H.R. 3330.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 5, Clause 2 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3331.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3332.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R 3333.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3334.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution and clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 3335.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Title I, Section 8

By Ms. DEGETTE:

H.R. 3336.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 and Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 3337.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 and 3

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 3338.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina:

H.R. 3339.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Commerce Clause: Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power ''to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. EMMER of Minnesota:

H.R. 3340.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress is empowered to regulate interstate commerce under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 3341.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18

By Mr. FLEMING:

H.R. 3342.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution, which states ''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.''

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 3343.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. FRANKEL of Florida:

H.R. 3344.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3, and 7 of the United States Constitution, granting Congress the power to tax and spend, the power to regulate interstate commerce, and the power to establish Post roads, respectively.

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 3345.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (Spending Clause): ''The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense . . .'' The United States has incurred legal liability for which it has waived its sovereign immunity for illnesses and deaths associated with its Nuclear Weapons testing programs during the 1950s and 1960s.

This bill is grounded in scientific principles, respresents an intent to apologize and offer compassionate compensation to an expanded list of individuals who were not included in the 1990 Act but who, nonetheless, deserve restitution.

By Ms. GRAHAM:

H.R. 3346.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 3347.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3)

Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 Sec 8. Cl. 18)

By Mr. AL GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 3348.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority to enact this legislation can be found in:

Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3)

Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 Sec 8. Cl. 18)

By Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER:

H.R. 3349.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. HIGGINS:

H.R. 3350.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 3351.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. HULTGREN:

H.R. 3352.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1, giving Congress the authority to lay and collect taxes, as misinterpreted by the United States Supreme Court in National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius, which resulted in dubious Court precedent.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, which gives Congress the authority to regulate commerce among the states.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, which gives Congress the authority to make all laws that are necessary and proper for carrying out the powers given it by the Constitution. The authority in this bill is necessary and proper for states to regain control over their respective health insurance markets and offer their residents real options at a reduced cost relative to plans allowed by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 3353.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 3354.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 3355.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises,

to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H.R. 3356.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 3357.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Article I,

Section 8, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. KEATING:

H.R. 3358.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3359.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 3360.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. KING of New York:

H.R. 3361.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18—To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. KUSTER:

H.R. 3362.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: ''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . .''

By Mr. LAMALFA:

H.R. 3363.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington:

H.R. 3364.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

As described in Article 1, Section 1 ''all legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.''

By Mr. LARSEN of Washington:

H.R. 3365.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

As described in Article 1, Section 1 ''all legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.''

By Mrs. LAWRENCE:

H.R. 3366.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 3367.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. LEWIS:

H.R. 3368.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. LOEBSACK:

H.R. 3369.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause I of the Constitution which grants Congress the power to provide for the general Welfare of the United States.

By Ms. LOFGREN:

H.R. 3370.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the Constitution.

By Mr. LOUDERMILK:

H.R. 3371.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mrs. LOVE:

H.R. 3372.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H.R. 3373.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives

Section 8

14: To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

By Mr. LOWENTHAL:

H.R. 3374.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives

Section 8

14: To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 3375.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 3376.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mrs. LOWEY:

H.R. 3377.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The General Welfare Clause of Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3378.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 3379.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. MARINO:

H.R. 3380.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1—The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Article 1, Section 9, Clause 3—To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 3381.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. MCCLINTOCK:

H.R. 3382.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (the Property Clause), which confers on Congress the power to make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the property belonging to the United States.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 3383.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 3384.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 3385.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3.

By Mr. NORCROSS:

H.R. 3386.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 3387.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

section 1 of article I, and clause 18, section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. NUGENT:

H.R. 3388.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution (clauses 1, 12, 13, 14, and 16), which grants Congress the power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; raise and support Armies; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; and to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia.

By Mr. NUNES:

H.R. 3389.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 3390.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PERRY:

H.R. 3391.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. PETERS:

H.R. 3392.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the US Constitution

By Mr. POSEY:

H.R. 3393.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: ''The Congress shall have power . . . To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.''

By Mr. POSEY:

H.R. 3394.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;

Article I, Section 8, Clause 9 of the Constitution of the United States: To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

Article I, Section 8, Clause 10 of the Constitution of the United States: To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offenses against the Law of Nations;

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the forgoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof;

Amendment V No person shall be . . . deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.

By Mr. QUIGLEY:

H.R. 3395.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution

Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 3396.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1

The Congress shall have Power * * * to provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 3397.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 3398.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 3399.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is introduced pursuant to the powers granted to Congress under the General Welfare Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 1), the Commerce Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 3), and the Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. 1 Sec. 8 Cl. 18).

Further, this statement of constitutional authority is made for the sole purpose of compliance with clause 7 of Rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and shall have no bearing on judicial review of the accompanying bill.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H.R. 3400.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. ROONEY of Florida:

H.R. 3401.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER:

H.R. 3402.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, §clause 3, the Commerce Clause.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 3403.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 3404.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1—The Congress shall have the Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 3405.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7—''No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 3406.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 3407.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SESSIONS:

H.R. 3408.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

5th Amendment to the Constitution

Sec. 1 and Sec. 5 of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 3409.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, which states ''The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes,'' and Article I, Section 7, which states ''All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives.''

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 3410.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV Section 3. ''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States . . .''

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 3411.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 3412.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 3413.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 3414.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3415.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3416.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3417.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 3418.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Ms. TITUS:

H.R. 3419.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Amendment XVI, of the United States Constitution

By Mr. TONKO:
H.R. 3420.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 1,
All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. WALKER:
H.R. 3421.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mrs. WALORSKI:
H.R. 3422.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. WALZ:
H.R. 3423.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California:
H.R. 3424.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause I of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. WEBER of Texas:
H.R. 3425.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3. The Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes. Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

By Mr. WELCH:
H.R. 3426.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. WILSON of Florida:
H.R. 3427.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is introduced under the powers granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. WITTMAN:
H.R. 3428.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

By Mr. YODER:
H.R. 3429.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of section 8 or Article 1 of the Constitution states that Congress has the authority to ''regulate Commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states.''

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:
H.R. 3430.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:
H.R. 3431.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1
The Congress shall have the Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debt and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. YOUNG of Indiana:
H.R. 3432.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 3

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:
H.J. Res. 62.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I Section 8, Clause 11

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 27: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 69: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. LEE, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. TITUS, Ms. ESTY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. HAHN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COHEN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mr. DONOVAN.
H.R. 114: Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 167: Mr. LOBIONDO and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 169: Mr. THORNBERRY and Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 217: Mr. KNIGHT and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H.R. 232: Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 304: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 333: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. LYNCH, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 358: Miss RICE of New York, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. WHITFIELD.
H.R. 381: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 414: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. STUTZMAN, and Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 483: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 523: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 539: Ms. MOORE, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 546: Mr. GOWDY and Mr. CLYBURN.
H.R. 556: Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 592: Mr. KATKO, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 624: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 625: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 662: Mr. REED and Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 664: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 676: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 699: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 702: Mr. BOST and Mr. THORNBERRY.
H.R. 711: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. SMITH of Texas, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 721: Ms. PINGREE, Mr. HUNTER, and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 727: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 759: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 766: Mr. HULTGREN and Mr. PEARCE.
H.R. 771: Mr. POMPEO.
H.R. 775: Mr. MESSER, Mr. AGUILAR, and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 785: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 814: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 816: Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. PALMER, Mr. KNIGHT, and Mr. ADERHOLT.
H.R. 822: Mr. MESSER and Mr. REED.
H.R. 828: Mr. REICHERT and Mr. HIMES.
H.R. 831: Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 836: Mr. KATKO and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 842: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 846: Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 863: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 879: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 885: Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 908: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. LEE, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 918: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 921: Mr. ROSKAM, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 928: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 932: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.
H.R. 969: Mr. BOST and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 985: Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. DOLD, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. REED.
H.R. 990: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 994: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1002: Mr. BARLETTA and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 1034: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 1061: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 1062: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 1073: Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 1086: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 1096: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 1100: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. WOMACK, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 1101: Mr. PETERS, Ms. ESTY, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 1114: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 1132: Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 1150: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 1197: Mr. AGUILAR and Mr. REED.
H.R. 1209: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia and Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 1211: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1215: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 1220: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.R. 1222: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1233: Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. BOST, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1247: Mr. ZINKE.
H.R. 1258: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 1266: Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 1270: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 1282: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 1287: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 1288: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 1309: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 1312: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 1342: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. GUINTA, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1343: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 1356: Mr. AMODEI, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. COHEN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. CALVERT, and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1369: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 1384: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. WOMACK, and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1399: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 1422: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 1424: Mr. JOYCE and Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1427: Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. FARR, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. ESTY, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 1434: Mr. RICHMOND and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.
H.R. 1460: Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 1462: Ms. ESTY and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 1475: Mr. MESSER, Mr. REED, and Mr. MACARTHUR.
H.R. 1482: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 1492: Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1523: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1534: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 1549: Mr. COLLINS of New York and Mr. KATKO.
H.R. 1559: Mr. LONG, Mr. AGUILAR, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. CLAY, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 1567: Mr. BOST, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. WAGNER, and Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 1571: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 1581: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1594: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. KILMER, Mr. REED, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. PITTENGER, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1595: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H.R. 1603: Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1608: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1610: Mr. PEARCE, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H.R. 1622: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 1624: Mr. FLEMING, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. VELA, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. WEBER of Texas.
H.R. 1627: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 1635: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 1653: Mr. ASHFORD and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 1670: Mr. GARRETT.
H.R. 1684: Mr. KATKO.
H.R. 1716: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1718: Mr. MESSER and Mr. HUDSON.
H.R. 1721: Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 1722: Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 1728: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 1736: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 1748: Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 1752: Mr. ROSS, Mr. FLEMING, and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 1763: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 1784: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 1786: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. BARLETTA, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, and Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 1801: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 1814: Mr. VELA, Mr. VARGAS, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 1818: Mr. NUGENT and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 1854: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 1859: Mr. MARCHANT and Mr. POMPEO.
H.R. 1877: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1886: Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 1901: Mr. BRAT, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 1920: Mr. WEBER of Texas and Mr. TROTT.
H.R. 1934: Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 1941: Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 1948: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 1969: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. POCAN, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 2017: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. CUELLAR.
H.R. 2043: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. WELCH, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 2050: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2061: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 2065: Mr. KATKO, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. TONKO, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 2072: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 2076: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 2083: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 2096: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2101: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 2121: Ms. MOORE, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 2123: Mr. COHEN, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 2124: Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. AGUILAR, and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 2142: Mr. TURNER and Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 2147: Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 2156: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 2170: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 2193: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2197: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. YOHO, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. FOSTER and Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 2205: Mrs. LUMMIS.
H.R. 2208: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 2229: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 2233: Mr. BABIN.
H.R. 2247: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 2292: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 2293: Mr. BEYER, Mr. LANCE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. POLIS, Mr. UPTON, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. LEE, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. KING of New York, and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.
H.R. 2300: Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 2304: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. HAHN, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. FARR, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. CROWLEY.
H.R. 2315: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 2320: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia and Mr. WOODALL.
H.R. 2369: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 2400: Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GUINTA, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 2403: Mr. PITTS, Mr. LANCE, and Mrs. ROBY.
H.R. 2404: Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. VELA.
H.R. 2405: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 2410: Mr. MEEKS and Mr. PIERLUISI.
H.R. 2434: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 2449: Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 2460: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 2461: Ms. PINGREE and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.
H.R. 2463: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 2473: Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. JONES, Mrs. TORRES, and Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2493: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 2513: Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina.
H.R. 2519: Mr. MEADOWS.
H.R. 2521: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. MEEKS, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.
H.R. 2536: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 2540: Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 2553: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. KILMER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 2568: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mrs. BLACK.
H.R. 2588: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
H.R. 2602: Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. KILMER, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. NADLER, Ms. DELAURO, and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 2607: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. ZELDIN, and Ms. STEFANIK.
H.R. 2609: Mr. CONAWAY.
H.R. 2624: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 2643: Mr. KILMER, and Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 2646: Mr. MESSER, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mrs. NOEM, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. MICA, Mr. COLE, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 2653: Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, and Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 2654: Mr. DELANEY, Miss RICE of New York, and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 2664: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2680: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 2689: Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California and Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 2698: Mr. VALADAO and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 2704: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2711: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 2713: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 2716: Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 2719: Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 2726: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2728: Mr. SWALWELL of California and Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 2737: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 2742: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 2744: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 2751: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 2752: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 2754: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 2759: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 2775: Mr. REED and Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 2799: Mr. KATKO, Mr. NUGENT, and Mr. BILIRAKIS.
H.R. 2805: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. ESTY, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 2812: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 2824: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 2849: Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 2852: Mr. SCALISE.
H.R. 2855: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 2858: Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. COHEN, Ms. TITUS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. HIMES, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. FARR, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. WELCH, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. POCAN, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. ESTY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. HONDA, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 2867: Mr. AGUILAR and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 2872: Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 2876: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 2893: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 2894: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 2895: Mr. WALDEN.
H.R. 2902: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 2903: Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. REED, Ms. ESTY, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. CONAWAY, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 2905: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina and Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H.R. 2911: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. SCHRADER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. LATTA, and Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 2912: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 2915: Mr. KILMER and Ms. GRANGER.
H.R. 2920: Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. ESTY and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 2932: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 2933: Mr. NOLAN and Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 2940: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. BOST.
H.R. 2942: Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 2944: Mr. JONES and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 2946: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 2948: Mr. ZINKE, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. PALAZZO.
H.R. 2949: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 2958: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 2962: Mr. AGUILAR, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 2978: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2979: Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 2987: Mr. ROSS, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 2991: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.
H.R. 2994: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 2998: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 2999: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 3007: Mr. COHEN, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3011: Mr. BOUSTANY.
H.R. 3017: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 3025: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. ROYCE.
H.R. 3026: Mrs. TORRES.
H.R. 3029: Mr. POCAN, Mr. COHEN, and Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 3033: Mrs. COMSTOCK, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 3037: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. GRIFFITH.
H.R. 3041: Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 3044: Miss RICE of New York.
H.R. 3051: Mr. POCAN, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3054: Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 3065: Ms. NORTON and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
H.R. 3067: Mr. GRIJALVA and Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 3080: Mr. COLE.
H.R. 3094: Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia.
H.R. 3095: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H.R. 3096: Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 3107: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
H.R. 3114: Mrs. DINGELL.
H.R. 3115: Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 3118: Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. BUCK, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BYRNE, and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 3119: Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 3126: Mr. MESSER and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 3129: Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H.R. 3134: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. TURNER, Mr. HARDY, Mr. SANFORD, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. LANCE, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. STEWART, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. TROTT, and Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 3136: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3137: Mr. CALVERT and Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 3138: Mr. BARTON.
H.R. 3139: Mr. RATCLIFFE.
H.R. 3142: Ms. TSONGAS.
H.R. 3150: Ms. ESTY, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. NADLER, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. TORRES, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. TONKO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. HONDA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SERRANO, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. CLAY, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. TAKAI.
H.R. 3151: Mr. BABIN and Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 3160: Mr. COHEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 3161: Mr. WOMACK.
H.R. 3166: Mr. SALMON.
H.R. 3167: Mr. BUCK, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mrs. LOVE, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. WALKER, Mr. JONES, Mr. MULVANEY, and Ms. MCSALLY.
H.R. 3171: Mr. POLIQUIN.
H.R. 3178: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 3179: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3180: Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. MACARTHUR, and Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 3187: Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 3189: Mr. ROTHFUS and Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 3197: Mr. GOWDY, Mr. BARR, and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 3199: Mr. CARTER of Georgia.
H.R. 3202: Mr. PIERLUISI.
H.R. 3209: Mr. TIBERI and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3213: Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 3215: Mr. PITTS, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. STEWART, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. JONES, and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 3216: Mr. GOODLATTE.
H.R. 3221: Mr. PETERS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CLAY, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 3222: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 3231: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3232: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3233: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 3245: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. BARTON, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. YOHO, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SALMON, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 3248: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 3268: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. TONKO, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.J. Res. 45: Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.J. Res. 51: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.J. Res. 54: Mr. POLIS.
H.J. Res. 59: Mr. PETERSON.
H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. LEWIS, and Mr. ROTHFUS.
H. Con. Res. 40: Ms. HAHN.
H. Con. Res. 50: Mr. ISRAEL and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H. Con. Res. 62: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina and Mr. GOODLATTE.
H. Con. Res. 63: Mr. JONES.
H. Con. Res. 66: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. KILMER, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H. Res. 12: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H. Res. 15: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H. Res. 28: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H. Res. 54: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H. Res. 130: Mr. PETERS and Ms. PLASKETT.
H. Res. 210: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. MOULTON.
H. Res. 230: Mr. BENISHEK, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H. Res. 294: Mr. KIND.
H. Res. 327: Mr. AGUILAR.
H. Res. 354: Mr. DESANTIS and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H. Res. 364: Mr. SWALWELL of California and Ms. BONAMICI.
H. Res. 367: Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. WITTMAN.
H. Res. 382: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. COHEN, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. RICHMOND.
H. Res. 385: Mr. MASSIE, Mr. JONES, and Mr. YOHO.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

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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.

Active and intervening God, we trust in You. Nothing can stop Your plan and Your purposes will prevail. Bless our lawmakers. Guide them on the right path so that they will be instruments of Your peace. Use them as salt and light to strengthen our Nation and world. Forgive them when they forget that You are still on Your throne and that the hearts of humanity are in Your hands. Help them to remember that Your power is far above any conceivable command, authority or control.

Lord, as our lawmakers strive to contribute to building a better world, bless those who support them in their work. Help us all to trust You without wavering.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1881 AND H.J. RES. 61

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill and a joint resolution due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the measures by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1881) to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 61) amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the measures on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the measures will be placed on the calendar.

THE HIGHWAY BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, late nights, vigorous legislating, and sometimes unpredictable outcomes may make some reach for the aspirin, but these are the hallmarks of a functioning Congress.

The push-and-pull between different parties, different Members, and different Chambers is all part of the democratic rhythm. That is especially true when you are talking about a measure as complicated and consequential as a multiyear highway bill.

I am pleased to see Republicans and Democrats continuing to hold together to pass the Senate's bipartisan highway legislation. We are on the verge of scoring another important victory for the American people.

Once the Senate completes its work on the bill, the House of Representatives will begin its work on a multiyear measure as well. A multiyear bill is now our joint goal. That is important for our country. We know it represents the best way to provide State and local governments with the kind of certainty they need to focus on longer term road and bridge projects.

Here is how Kentucky's main transportation advocacy group, Kentuckians for Better Transportation, put it: A longer term bill would ''provide an opportunity to plan for and implement projects that are important to Kentucky's citizens and Kentucky's economy—and to every other state in the nation.''

We will conference the legislation we pass with what the House passes and then send a unified bill to President Obama. In the meantime, we will work with our friends in the House to pass a measure that will give them the space they need to develop a multiyear highway bill. It is also a measure that would deliver some important relief to our veterans by covering unfunded requirements the administration failed to budget for. It would also extend a helping hand to heroes who need it.

I can't see a reason any Senator would vote against it. We will take up that bill once the House sends it to us. We will continue working in the interim to finish our own bipartisan, multiyear highway bill—a bill that is fiscally responsible and will not raise taxes by a penny.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, the ongoing revelations about Planned Parenthood are more than just disturbing. They literally shock the conscience. A Democratic colleague called them ''very troubling,'' ''extremely troubling,'' and ''highly troubling.''

Next week, every Member of his party will have a chance to join us in reaffirming the Senate's commitment to genuine compassion and to women's health. We introduced legislation last night that would ensure taxpayer dollars for women's health are spent on women's health, not a scandal-plagued political lobbying giant.

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

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It is a simple choice: Senators can either vote to protect women's health or they can vote to protect subsidies for a political group mired in scandal.

I know Planned Parenthood's entrenched lobbyists have been close allies of Democrats in recent years, but this moment calls for Senators to rise higher and to think bigger.

Let's not filibuster women's health in order to protect special subsidies for one scandal-plagued political organization. Why don't we join together instead to bring something positive to the American people from a terrible situation.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Republican legislation to attack women's health is disguised as a way to help women. We have to look long and hard to find those people who are being taken care of across the country today because of programs that allow them to go to someone who knows what they are talking about when they are concerned about their fertility, they are concerned about birth control, and a myriad of other problems that happen as women go through life.

The Republican bill pretends to be for women's health, but it would prohibit Federal funds to go to an organization that is the health care backbone for American women during their lives. In fact, it is the only health care that a significant number of women get. For about 30 percent of women, that is their health care. You can disguise this by giving fancy titles to the legislation any way you want. This is an attack on women's health.

It is stunning to me that the 16 people who are running for President are out there going after immigration. They are going after not only immigration generally but specifically. These young men and women who came to America—and the face of this picture in Nevada is a woman by the name of Astrid Silva, who came here as a little girl with her mother in a boat across the Rio Grande River with her little doll and her rosary beads that she didn't understand—a little, little girl. She knew no other country. What do the Republicans want to do? They want to deport Astrid Silva, a woman who finally because of the courageous action of President Obama—because Republicans refused do anything on immigration—was allowed to get her driver's license, to fly in an airplane for the first time, to be able to go to the airport without fear of being arrested, and they want to do away with that. But that is not enough.

Most of them want to privatize Social Security; they want to change it in some significant way. It is led by one President's son, one President's brother who basically said we have to change Medicare, as he was speaking to the Koch brothers.

We are working, trying to get the Ex-Im Bank that affects the lives of 165,000 working Americans. Most of the Republicans want to get rid of that. Now the program is out of sync. It has expired.

The environment. Don't worry about it; it is fine. The icecaps are melting in the Arctic. Don't worry about it. We have the worst fires in the history of Alaska because of climate change. Don't worry about it; it is only 5 million acres that burned this summer so far. The droughts are affecting all of America but especially the West. It is so bad in the West that in the Sierras there are bears that don't even hibernate anymore. It is not cold enough. In New Hampshire, moose are dying. About one-third of them are dead because of fleas and ticks. Why? Because it is not cold enough to kill them anymore. These little pests are ravaging these huge animals.

I could go on, but I am going to stop, other than to say, in addition to all of that, now they are after women's health.

I hope they understand the pretty posters and the fancy words—no matter how you package it—are an attack on women. Indirectly, it is an attack on my daughter, my wife, and my grandchildren directly. I should say my granddaughters directly. I have a few of them.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Constitution is very clear. It says the Government cannot spend a penny without an appropriations law—a law dealing with appropriations.

I am so fortunate, when I came to the Senate, I became a member of the Appropriations Committee. I loved working on the Appropriations Committee. Under John Stennis from Mississippi, Robert Byrd from West Virginia, and Dan Inouye from Hawaii, it was a wonderful process.

I have this job. I got off the committee, which was very hard for me to do because I loved that committee. We worked very hard every year to fund every one of those 12 appropriations bills. We did it because we were legislators. We compromised. We worked together to fund this government, but all of that is gone.

Republicans do not work with us on appropriations bills. We don't do them anymore. This season of Republicanism is more than I can hardly understand. I certainly don't appreciate it. No job is more important in the Constitution than exercising the power of the purse. That is our responsibility, but that has been taken away from us by convoluted methods.

I know my Republican colleagues will get up and say we have to do something about this terrible debt. Seated next to me in this august Chamber of the Senate is a man who is the senior Senator from Illinois. I have said this before, and I will say it again. The reason I mention his name is because I knew we needed to do something about the debt. I arranged a long trip—my first job as leader—to Central and South America, and I took Judd Gregg, a Republican from New Hampshire, who is an expert on the finances of this government, and a Democratic counterpart, Kent Conrad, who is just as good. They worked on that airplane side by side for 14 hours and worked up a plan. What they came up with was so brilliant. They said: What we are going to do is have a plan just like the base closings.

The base closing commissions that were set up—we did two rounds of them—got rid of military bases in the country that we were trying to get rid of prior to World War II. We were able to do that, and as a result, we saved the country billions and billions of dollars.

They introduced legislation that said that we are going to have a commission appointed. There will be legislators, and there will be people the President appoints and people from the outside. They will report to us, and there will be no filibusters, no amendments, and we will have an up-or-down vote. It was a great piece of legislation.

When I brought that legislation to the floor, seven Republican Senators who cosponsored the legislation refused to vote for it, and we weren't able to move forward on it. Now I get to my friend from Illinois. I had the ability to appoint three Members of my caucus to be on the Bowles-Simpson Commission. The President did that because what Judd Gregg and Kent Conrad tried to do failed. To his credit, he did that. I needed a liberal. My friend and I are not afraid to use that term—a progressive, if that makes people feel better. He didn't want to do that. He did it because it was the best thing for this institution. He sat through days and days of hearings and became a believer that we had to do something about the debt. He voted for something that Republicans didn't vote for—to do something about the debt.

I say to the Presiding Officer and to everybody within the sound of my voice: We have done something since then. We have reduced the debt of this country by $4 trillion. That doesn't mean we don't have a lot more to do. But what virtually all economists tell us is that we are at a point now where we have to start spending some money.

My friend from California has worked hard on this highway bill. It was hard for her to do that because the Republicans weren't allowing her to come up with any new revenue.

Anyway, my point is this: The Republicans are failing their most important job, and that is helping us come up with some spending programs. We called on the Republicans to get serious about budgeting. They have refused. We have pleaded with them to

sit down and negotiate a long-term bipartisan plan to avoid another shutdown. From the start, it has been clear that Republicans are not serious about governing.

A party that is serious about governing does not do the things they have done. For example, in the wake of mass shootings by individuals—it is in every newspaper in the country, and it has been for weeks. There were new deaths in Tennessee and Colorado. It doesn't matter. I am sorry to say that we have lost track of where they all are.

Even after these mass shootings, Republicans still want to cut our funding for mental health services. Gee-whiz—how could they do that? The Republican bill cuts funding for substance abuse and mental health services. They blocked research for funding for the Centers for Disease Control to study the cause and effect of gun violence. They are cutting funding for counseling programs in elementary and secondary schools. That is only on one subject. A party that is serious about governing doesn't cut critical funding to our Nation's security. They have cut funding for the Bureau of Tobacco, Alcohol and Firearms, they cut funding to vital cyber-security upgrades and financial agencies. They cut funding for U.S. marshals, the brave men and women who helped to catch those two murderers who escaped from the prison in New York.

A party that is serious about governing doesn't wage war against our Nation's infrastructure. They have cut funding for the Nation's electric grid by 40 percent, leaving our utilities susceptible to cyber attacks. Senate Republicans have cut transit projects all across this country. They have cut funding of the air traffic control system. The list is endless. There are cuts to education, women's health, agriculture, energy, and job training.

If the Republican leader and the Speaker wanted to get serious about governing, they would sit down with us and craft a bipartisan compromise to prevent another government shutdown.

On the bill before us, the Speaker of the House of Representatives has referred to that bill by using a very derogatory word which starts with the letter ''s.'' If the Republican leader and the Speaker want to get serious about governing, then they need to sit down with us so we can craft a bipartisan compromise to prevent another government shutdown. Instead they have already given up. Both the Speaker and the Republican leader have said that what we are going to do is abandon the appropriations process in favor of a continuing resolution, which is a buzzword for failure. Failure is another word for a government shutdown. It is another way to close our government.

By relying on a continuing resolution, it leaves in place sequester cuts and underfunds critical priorities for working American families. Republicans are neglecting their responsibilities. They are not showing up for work. It doesn't have to be this way. We have time to come up with a balanced solution to keep our government funded. We have 2 months to come together, but a CR will not work. Sequestration will kick in, and it will harm every agency in the government. It will especially hurt the middle class of our country. If they are serious about governing, they will work together with us on appropriations bills rather than ignore us.

Republicans need to sit down and get to work on their most important job, as is dictated by the Constitution.

I apologize to everyone for taking more time than I normally do, but it was brought about by my friend the Republican leader.

I ask the Chair to announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 22, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 22) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

McConnell modified amendment No. 2266, in the nature of a substitute.

McConnell amendment No. 2421 (to amendment No. 2266), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell (for Inhofe) amendment No. 2533 (to amendment No. 2421), relating to Federal-aid highways and highway safety construction programs.

McConnell amendment No. 2417 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 2266), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2418 (to amendment No. 2417), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 10 a.m. will be divided in the usual form.

Mr. REID. 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. INHOFE. 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. INHOFE. Mr. President, I had some time reserved, and I am halfway through that time now. So I will talk a little faster than usual because we have an Armed Services meeting right now, and we are trying get to the bottom of this side agreement that was apparently made with Iran.

I wish to applaud the Senate for taking another step, and that is what we are going to be doing in just a few minutes with the DRIVE Act in Congress with these votes, and tomorrow we expect to see a final vote for passage so we can send it to the House. This will be my sixth reauthorization over the past number of years. These bills are all about compromise. It is hard to do. There are a lot of Members of this body who didn't think they got what they wanted in this bill, and I have to say that I didn't get what I wanted. I suspect that the occupier of the chair didn't get what he wanted, and Senator BOXER didn't get what she wanted. That is not the way this works because this is a bill to get us away from the short-term extensions.

It has been obvious that Members of this body are opposed to moving to a 6-year reauthorization bill and are willing to use any procedural means to slow it down, and that is what happened. If we had not dragged on yesterday, and if we had yielded back some of the time, we could have had these votes that we are about to have now yesterday. If we had done that, we could have final passage today, and it would be sent over to the House before they leave. They are going to leave. That doesn't mean that this is not important. What we are doing today and tomorrow is passing this bill. Even though the House is going home, they all agree that we need a good, long-term bill as soon as they get back. That is why we have a motion before us for a short-term delay—so they will have time to do it.

We will have a good bill for them. We have worked on it for several months. It passed out of committee unanimously. Every Republican and every Democrat voted for it. We will have a chance to do that.

Also, I have State sheets on every State. I can read off how every State benefits from this 6-year reauthorization bill. All you have to do is talk to the Governors, mayors, and the departments of transportation across the country. They fully expected Congress only to deliver piecemeal extensions, as we have in the past.

We have to keep in mind that the last reauthorization bill that we had was in 2005. I remember that vividly because I was the author of the bill. When we passed it, everyone rejoiced. Yesterday the Senator from Minnesota was talking about the tragedy of the fallen bridge in Minnesota, where 13 people died. I told the story about how a bridge in Oklahoma City had a chunk of concrete fall off of it and hit a mother of three children and kill her. You don't want to wait until this happens.

We have bridges in this country—and we have talked about each one of them on the Senate floor during the discussion on this bill—that are deteriorating, and we have to do something about it.

If any Member or the staff of any Member—I know the staffs are all

watching right now. We have every State listed on these sheets, and it shows what they will have and how they will benefit from the DRIVE Act, which will be before us in a moment. If we don't do it, there are consequences, and I have to remind everyone of that today as we approach a shutdown of the transit programs. I urge my colleagues to join in voting yes on this procedural hurdle today. If you vote no, you are reinforcing current laws and extensions, which is the worst possible outcome.

One area deals with big projects. We cannot do big projects with 3-month, 4-month or even 1-year extensions. We have gone through 33 short-term extensions since the SAFETEA–LU bill was passed.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be given 5 additional minutes.

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

Mr. INHOFE. We have the problem of not having any of the big projects, and everyone knows that is a problem. The reason big projects can't be done is due to the costs. But a study has been done by Gary Ridley, who is one of the foremost authorities nationwide on this subject, and in that study he came to the conclusion that it costs an additional 30 percent off the top to do short-term extensions.

If there is anyone who is a conservative and wants to take the conservative position on this issue, the conservative position is to vote for a long-term reauthorization bill, and that is what is before us now. The current funding has no growth—not even for inflation. The DRIVE Act provides growth in the highway and transit systems in each State. For those who are interested, we have all of this listed State by State. The current law gives States and local governments no certainty. However, the certainty is there in the DRIVE Act. So we have every reason to do this.

Project delivery. We are going to be able to deliver the projects. We can't even start the projects on short-term extensions.

Freight. We have a freight section. We have never had a freight section before for moving freight across the country.

Transparency. Everything is there so that everyone can see every nickel that is used. This is the most transparent of all of the reauthorizations we have had.

Lastly, innovation. The DRIVE Act prepares our transportation system for the future. That is why it is so important that we get to it today.

I compliment the leaders for moving us forward and making every effort to get this done before the House goes home.

This will give them a good start on what to do during the recess.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2417

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to table amendment No. 2417.

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

The motion was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2533

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Inhofe amendment No. 2533.

The amendment (No. 2533) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2421, AS AMENDED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to vitiate the yeas and nays on amendment No. 2421.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2421, as amended.

The amendment (No. 2421), as amended, was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2266, AS MODIFIED, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2266, as modified, as amended.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 62, nays 38, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 258 Leg.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Feinstein	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Barrasso	Gardner	Nelson
Bennet	Graham	Peters
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Boxer	Heitkamp	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Sanders
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schatz
Capito	Inhofe	Sessions
Cassidy	Isakson	Shaheen
Coats	Johnson	Stabenow
Cochran	Kaine	Sullivan
Collins	King	Tester
Coons	Kirk	Thune
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Tillis
Daines	Leahy	Vitter
Durbin	Manchin	Whitehouse
Enzi	McCain	Wicker
Ernst	McCaskill	

NAYS—38

Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reid
Booker	Hirono	Risch
Brown	Lankford	Rubio
Cardin	Lee	Sasse
Carper	Markey	Schumer
Casey	Menendez	Scott
Corker	Merkley	Shelby
Cotton	Mikulski	Toomey
Crapo	Murkowski	Udall
Cruz	Murphy	Warner
Donnelly	Paul	Warren
Flake	Perdue	Wyden
Gillibrand	Reed	

The amendment (No. 2266), as modified, as amended, was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on H.R. 22, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Orrin G. Hatch, John Barrasso, Pat Roberts, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, David Vitter, Lindsey Graham, Kelly Ayotte, Lamar Alexander, Daniel Coats, John Hoeven, James M. Inhofe, Roger F. Wicker, Susan M. Collins, John Thune.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on H.R. 22, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as amended, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 65, nays 35, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 259 Leg.]

YEAS—65

Alexander	Fischer	McConnell
Ayotte	Flake	Moran
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Barrasso	Gardner	Nelson
Bennet	Graham	Peters
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Boxer	Heitkamp	Rounds
Burr	Heller	Sanders
Cantwell	Hoeven	Schatz
Capito	Inhofe	Scott
Cassidy	Isakson	Sessions
Coats	Johnson	Shaheen
Cochran	Kaine	Stabenow
Collins	King	Sullivan
Coons	Kirk	Tester
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Thune
Daines	Lankford	Tillis
Durbin	Leahy	Vitter
Enzi	Manchin	Whitehouse
Ernst	McCain	Wicker
Feinstein	McCaskill	

NAYS—35

Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reid
Booker	Hirono	Risch
Brown	Lee	Rubio
Cardin	Markey	Sasse
Carper	Menendez	Schumer
Casey	Merkley	Shelby
Corker	Mikulski	Toomey
Cotton	Murkowski	Udall
Crapo	Murphy	Warner
Cruz	Paul	Warren
Donnelly	Perdue	Wyden
Gillibrand	Reed	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 65, the nays are 35.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ALLISON BECK TO BE FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION DIRECTOR

NOMINATION OF JEFFREY MICHAEL PRIETO TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NOMINATION OF CAROL FORTINE OCHOA TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Allison Beck, of the District of Columbia, to be Federal Mediation and Conciliation Director; Jeffrey Michael Prieto, of California, to be General Counsel of the Department of Agriculture; and Carol Fortine Ochoa, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, General Services Administration.

VOTE ON BECK NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Allison Beck, of the District of Columbia, to be Federal Mediation and Conciliation Director?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON PRIETO NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Jeffrey Michael Prieto, of California, to be General Counsel of the Department of Agriculture?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON OCHOA NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Carol Fortine Ochoa, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, General Services Administration?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the next 40 minutes be under the control of the Democratic side and that the time be equally divided among the following Senators: REID, BOXER, WHITEHOUSE, MARKEY, SCHATZ, and SCHUMER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, at virtually every caucus we have, every Tuesday caucus, I have Senators report on what is going on in the world as it relates to climate change.

I wish these were fun-filled presentations where people laughed, clapped, and smiled, but they are not. They are very downbeat because each Senator who makes a presentation—whether it is the senior Senator from New Hampshire, who talks about moose dying in her State because the fleas and ticks no longer die in the cold weather, she explained how about one-third of the moose are dead in New Hampshire, or whether it is the junior Senator from the State of Michigan talking about what is going on in that beautiful State of Michigan.

Without going through the list of Senators who have reported what is going on as they see it with climate change, everyone within the sound of my voice should rest assured things are not good. Our world is changing and has already changed drastically.

The Earth is undergoing a shift, a manmade climate change shift. We don't need to travel to the polar icecaps for proof, although if we did, we would see that too. There is evidence all around. Talking about the polar icecap, think about Alaska. Millions of acres are on fire as we speak—not a fire as we see in the forest or the range lands of Nevada, where you see fire flames flip up into the sky so high it is hard to believe sometimes. But this is burning underground at the permafrost. It is awful what is happening in Alaska.

But let's talk about Nevada. Nevada is an unusual State in many different ways. We have over 32 mountains more than 11,000 feet high. We have one mountain we share with California that is 14,000 feet high. We have beautiful, beautiful wilderness.

I have had the good fortune during my time in the Senate to legislate. When I came here, we had about 60,000 acres of wilderness. We are now approaching about 4 million acres of wilderness, and it is beautiful, beautiful country. There are beautiful mountains, antelope, and mountain sheep, of course. We even have mountain goats. It is a beautiful, beautiful State.

We share Lake Tahoe with California—beautiful, beautiful Lake Tahoe that Mark Twain said is the fairest place on all the Earth. The water level this summer is at a record low. Water we used to take for granted that would come out of the lake isn't coming out anymore.

Snowpack in the Sierra Nevada Mountains is a fraction of normal levels. A few decades ago, we used to have piles of snow that were unbelievable, tens and tens of feet of snow every winter—no longer. In fact, this past March, World Cup ski cross and snowboardcross races had to be cancelled. Why? We had no snow—no snow at a place where we had the Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley—no snow. They cancelled the races.

As I have said on the floor, because it is so traumatic as far as I am concerned, many of our black bears aren't even hibernating. It is not cold enough. This past June, a few weeks ago—Lake Mead at one time was the largest manmade lake in America. It isn't anymore because of Lake Powell, which overtook Nevada for the largest manmade lake in America. Lake Powell is on the road to being eliminated. It is part of the great Colorado River program that allows the States of California—all the upper Colorado States—Arizona, and Nevada, to survive.

This past June, Lake Mead water levels sunk to record lows—record lows. Towns that were buried with the making of the Boulder, Hoover Dam, we can see them again. St. Thomas is an example. An early Mormon settlement there was buried in the water—no longer. Now they are doing archeological work on what was buried under Lake Mead previously.

Now, that is only Nevada, and that is only a touch of what is happening in Nevada. Wildfires are devastating our State, wiping out native grasses and plants, causing endangered species that need to be listed as threatened or going extinct because, for example, if you have birds survive in our sagebrush, sagebrush is burned and no longer exists, you get these foreign species that come in, mainly cheatgrass, and it is no good for anything other than more fires. That is what we have in Nevada, devastating wildfires.

Around the United States, massive floods are destroying life around the globe. The poles are melting. By the year 2050, scientists estimate the sea level will rise in the world by 16 feet.

What will that do to Florida? Of all the major cities in the world, with virtually no exception, they are all in coastal areas. What coastal city in the world is going to be hit hardest in the world by this climate change, the rising of the seas? Miami, FL, the State of Florida.

Massive floods are destroying life around the globe. Poles are melting. I repeat, ocean resources are being exhausted.

Stunningly, Republicans in Congress are ignoring changes to our environment that we are all witnessing. They are here. They are in denial. They are in what I refer to as Koch denial because, remember, everybody, the two Koch brothers don't want us to do anything on climate change. Why? No. 1, it may prevent them from making more billions. They are heavily invested in tar sands in Canada, and, of course, their original fortunes were made in

oil, gas, and coal in America. Republicans are in denial. They are in Koch denial.

Last month House Republicans passed legislation that would rescind President Obama's action addressing air pollution and climate change. That legislation is not going to happen over here, but that is the mindset of the Republicans. Not to be outdone, Republicans here in the Senate are trying the same thing with the Senate Interior and Environment appropriations bill, filling it with policy riders that are dangerous to the planet, dangerous to America.

Republicans all know the planet is changing—I hope they do, but they don't. If a Republican knows this, they are a rare Republican and I am still waiting for them to step forward. Republicans don't admit it is a problem. Where is their solution? Well, they have none. They have no solution because they refuse to acknowledge there is a problem.

Let's not fool ourselves as to why Republicans reject climate change. I have already said why. It is the Koch challenge they all have. Every Presidential candidate has to be very careful. There are certain things, and I don't know them all because I am not in attendance at the meetings, but No. 1 is that the Ex-Im Bank has to stay dead. Those 165,000 people working in America, get rid of them. It is a government program, get rid of it—even though, as we speak right now, 40 other countries have working ex-im bank programs that are taking business away from American exporters. My Republican friends are unwilling to stand up to the oil barons who bring their filthy tar sands from Canada.

Republicans have offered no legislation nor have they offered a single idea that would protect our world from climate change. The closest they came was to try to be funny here on the floor when it snowed and they brought a snowball into the Chamber, saying: It couldn't be climate change; we have some snow today. Well, we did get some snow, but that doesn't mean we don't have climate change.

It is shameful to turn our back on the biggest dilemma the Earth faces. We must come together to arrest climate change.

I am very happy that my friend the junior Senator from Rhode Island is here because he is focused on all kinds of issues relating to climate, and he has been the driving force in recognizing that one of the places climate change is devastating our world is our oceans. We can't see that very well because the oceans are so massive, but in places our oceans are already dead—not dying but dead.

So it is shameful, I repeat, to turn our backs on the biggest dilemma the Earth faces probably in the history of our world. We must come together to address climate change.

There are solutions that involve, among other things, clean energy. Just a few weeks ago, a solar company announced it would build a 100-megawatt solar farm and sell the power to Nevada's utility. The electricity generated by that solar farm was described by the press as ''not only the cheapest solar—it may be the least expensive electricity in the entire country.'' That is what solar does now. Think about that. The cheapest power being built in America today is solar and it is inexhaustible. It doesn't have to be in the desert, where the Sun shines all the time; it can be used where the Sun doesn't shine all the time, and used well.

Solutions to address climate change are here. They are right here. Nevada has seen $5 billion in development with solar and geothermal and a little bit of wind. Solutions to address climate change are here, and they are affordable and become more so every day. They have created thousands of jobs. And I misspoke earlier. It is $6 billion in Nevada—not $5 billion—that has now been invested in clean energy.

Republicans should stop denying climate change. If they want to keep complaining about the solutions, they should offer their own solutions. But there can't be a solution if they do not see a problem, so I am not going to hold my breath that Republicans are going to change their ways.

This is the No. 1 issue facing our world. The Defense Department is concerned about the resources they are going to get for manpower. If you ask the people who run the government's military, the Chiefs of Staff, they will tell you they are concerned about what this means for the security of this Nation.

We cannot ignore this issue any longer. It is affecting the security of this Nation for lots of other reasons—namely, what it does to other countries that puts pressure on us.

I appreciate very much my colleagues joining in this discussion we are going to have today because it is a discussion we have to have because the world is in trouble because of the climate change.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, let me take a moment to commend the leadership of our minority leader on this issue. He has made it a priority in the caucus. He has seen its effects at home in Nevada, and he is an outstanding voice in this area. I am very grateful to him.

I also thank and recognize my chairman on the Environment and Public Works Committee, BARBARA BOXER, and no one is more forceful than she on the need that we have to address climate change and the carbon pollution we are emitting that is causing this.

Mr. President, we are here just after the 6-month anniversary of an interesting statement that was made by the Republican chairman of the energy committee, the Senator from Alaska. Six months ago—January 22, to be exact—she said: What I am hoping that we can do now is get beyond the discussion as to whether climate change is real and talk about what do we do.

That was January 22 on the Senate floor, 6 months ago. What have we seen from the majority party in the 6 months since their energy chairman said that we need to get to this question, we need to concede climate change is real, and that we need to address what to do? We have seen exactly nothing—that is to say nothing but complaints: Oh, the President's Clean Power Plan is no good. Oh, we should have massive resistance to the President's Clean Power Plan. Oh, we should defund the EPA.

These are the thoughts the Republican majority brings as we face this question.

So it is worth looking at some of the folks who are very clear that climate change is a real problem. Here is one—NASA, our scientists from NASA. They couldn't be clearer about the importance of climate change and about the role of carbon pollution. How smart are NASA scientists? They are driving a rover around on the surface of Mars, folks. They just shot a spacecraft by Pluto close enough to take pictures of it and send back data.

What does the Republican majority have to say about NASA's position on climate change? That they are in on a hoax. They basically accuse NASA scientists of being dishonest, even though they are the ones who put our country on the surface of Mars and who put an American vehicle close enough to Pluto to take pictures of it.

Look at Walmart. Just a moment ago, the junior Senator from Arkansas was presiding. Walmart joined with a dozen other companies yesterday at the White House to say climate change is real. These aren't leftwing companies. This was Walmart. This was Alcoa. This was GM. This was Coke. This was Pepsi. This was UPS.

We have to start taking this seriously. But is there anything out of the State of Arkansas—Walmart's home State—on climate? Nope. Not a single thing.

There was recently an article in Forbes magazine titled ''Climate Change Will Cause Increased Flooding in Coastal Cities.'' The picture is a satellite picture of the State of Florida. The little caption under the picture says: ''Flooding from climate change is threatening much of the coastline, including major cities in Florida.'' Yet we have two Presidential candidates from Florida on the Republican side, and what do they have to say about climate change? Nothing—nothing other than ''I don't know, I am not a scientist'' and all the usual dodges.

Pope Francis wrote an encyclical—an extraordinarily important article in the Catholic faith—about the reality and the effect of climate change. What do our Catholic Republican Senators have to say about that? Nothing. We are not going to listen to him; he is not

a scientist. Well, actually, technically he is. He is a trained chemist. But that is the line—not a scientist.

What could possibly explain these strange anomalies? The biggest corporation in Arkansas knows climate change is a problem, and there is nothing from the Senators from Arkansas. The coastline of Florida is under immediate threat, according to Forbes magazine, the capitalist tool, and the Presidential candidates from Florida can't say a single thing about it. The Pope is calling on us——

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I ask unanimous consent for a closing minute.

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The last thing I will mention is that there is a common thread that links all of this, and it is money. The Koch brothers are putting hundreds of millions of dollars into this election. One of their organizations—one—said that it was going to spend $889 million in this election and that anybody who crossed them on climate change would be at ''a severe disadvantage.'' Nice little campaign you got here; I would hate to put it at a severe disadvantage with my $900 million. So what we have is secret money and we have threats related to it that are obliterating what had been a good Republican response on climate change and on other environmental issues.

We need to move on.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I want to talk a little about the particulars of the Clean Power Plan and address some of the questions that have been raised by some of the opponents.

I think the first premise has to be that carbon is an airborne pollutant; that the Clean Air Act doesn't just give the EPA the authority to regulate airborne pollutants, it actually requires that all airborne pollutants that can cause a public health risk get regulated. That is the basis of the Supreme Court decision. This doesn't give the EPA the discretion—this doesn't give the Obama administration the discretion to regulate carbon pollution, it requires that they do so. So the only question is not a legal one. The legal one has been settled. The EPA is required to regulate pollution under the Clean Air Act. The only question remaining is, Is carbon a pollutant? I don't think there is anybody credible in this Chamber who thinks carbon is not a pollutant.

Look, I think we are actually making progress. Over the last 6 to 12 months, we have seen a sea change among Republican Members of Congress who are increasingly concerned, I think, about being on the wrong side of history, about being on the wrong side of science, about being on the wrong side of a whole generation of young voters—Republican, Democratic, and Independent—who understands this is one of the great challenges of our generation. So we are seeing some movement. We are seeing some openness to at least concede that this problem, in fact, exists.

We have this incredible law in the Clean Air Act. We don't need to pass a new law. Of course, Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have been working very hard with Senator BOXER and others on a carbon fee, but we also have the tools at our disposal to regulate carbon pollution. Like methane and other airborne pollutants, it is causing environmental and health damage.

The Clean Power Plan is very simple. It is treating this as though it is the pollutant that it is. Originally, I think there were some legitimate concerns about how this thing was going to get administered. I will give a ''for example.''

If you are in a very small rural State and you are going to regulate not a State's total carbon emissions but an individual powerplant's carbon emissions, that is a very tough sell. There are instances where, because of legacy infrastructure, because of distance—for instance, in Hawaii we have remote and relatively small islands. So it is very difficult to ask the island of Lanai, which is running on diesel-fired generators, or the island of Molokai, to, at an individual powerplant level, reduce carbon emissions. That is tough. They can make improvements in efficiency, but they may not be able to meet the standard. So the idea is to allow all of it to aggregate.

What Hawaii did, we have a Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative, recognizing that there are going to be some places that will have incredible challenges economically and in terms of the financing of the projects, incredible challenges complying at the micro level, at the site level, at the power generation level, but if we provide flexibility to States—and I know in California with the Cap-and-Trade Program and the Northeast with the RGGI Program, there is a flexibility regionally or within States of energy systems to say that as long as you, in the aggregate, are making sufficient progress, we are going to allow you to figure out how to make that progress on your own. So we anticipate these rules will provide sufficient flexibility to allow economies to thrive.

I will make one final point on this before hearing from the great Senator from California; that is, all of the hue and cry, all of the panic, all of the heartburn about what is going to happen to our economy doesn't have to be an abstract question anymore. We have States currently exceeding the anticipated thresholds in the clean powerplants. So we don't have to imagine what is going to happen to various economies if we comply because we have States such as California, we have the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative.

Two years ago, I was on the floor talking about the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative with a 40-percent renewable portfolio standard, and the legislature in the last 3 or 4 months just passed the first 100 percent clean energy statute in the United States. Our unemployment rate is 4 percent, and we have exceeded our previous goals. California, with its Cap-and-Trade Program, and all the hue and cry and panic about what would happen to our economy—California is booming. Hawaii is doing well. People still have their economic challenges, but it is not because of our desire to drive an innovation economy and to try to solve this great challenge of our time.

We can create clean energy jobs. We can innovate into the future. America has an incredible opportunity to lead in this space. I am so pleased to be part of that innovation and part of that leadership. We are putting our marker down as a country. We understand this is going to take a global effort, but now America has the credibility to lead on climate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor to the great Senator from California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, before the Senator from Hawaii leaves the floor, I just want to say what a breath of fresh air he is. That is something we say to compliment somebody, but in this case he is fighting for clean air. He is fighting for his kids and his grandkids. It has been an honor to work with him.

The world understands this, Americans understand this; that we are facing a serious threat to our Nation—dangerous climate change. We absolutely need to act now. The evidence is all around us.

I will highlight, in the brief time I have, some of the facts. These cannot be refuted.

The evidence of climate change is around us. NASA and NOAA found that 2014 was the hottest year around the globe since recordkeeping began 134 years ago. How my colleagues could come to the floor and dispute this—if we were to ask people do you respect NASA, I would say everyone from our kids to our grandmas would say, absolutely, they are scientists.

The American Meteorological Association, the society, reported that numerous key climate change indicators were at or near record levels. They found 2014 was the hottest year since recordkeeping began in 1880—2014 was the hottest year since 1880—and sea surface temperatures and sea levels were at record highs.

This is the problem: When we have these kinds of record temperatures, they come with a cost—a cost to wildlife, a cost to human life.

I don't have time to go into what we are beginning to see, but about 8 years ago when I did take the gavel of the Environment and Public Works Committee, we held a hearing. Everything that was predicted by the scientists is coming true—everything.

Here is the good news. Here is the great news. My State of California is a true leader in this area. With the leadership of our State legislature, our Governor, Jerry Brown, and leading activists in our States, such as Tom Steyer and many others, we are seeing California stand up and address this issue. And what has happened? What has happened? All the gloom and doom: Oh, my God. If we try to move away from dirty energy, it is going to be terrible for everybody.

Let me tell you the good news. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2011 California had over 360,000 green jobs, the most of any State, and in 2014 there were more than 2,094 solar companies at work throughout the value chain in California, employing 54,700 people. Let me say there are some days in California where we get half of our energy from the Sun—half of our energy from the Sun.

Here is the other thing we have to know: California households pay the ninth lowest electricity bills in the country. So all the doom and gloom, we are going to have to pay more and all the rest, is so much talk.

A long time ago, when I became aware of climate change, I looked at it and thought: Oh, my gosh. What are we going to do? But the longer I looked at it and the longer I studied it, the faster I recognized that if we address climate change in the right way, it will be a boon to our economy and it will be a boon to our health because we know for sure that asthma and respiratory ailments and cardiovascular disease are threats to our families, and they will go down—the risks will go down because when we clean up the carbon pollution, we clean up all the other pollutants that go along with it.

Just this week one of our great leaders whom I mentioned, who was the leader of NextGen, the president and founder Tom Steyer, said the following: Our country needs bold leaders who will lay out a plan to achieve more than 50 percent clean energy by 2030, putting us on a pathway to a completely clean energy economy by 2050 and millions of new jobs.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the fact sheet from NextGen Climate be printed in the RECORD.

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

FACT SHEET: POWERING AMERICA WITH MORE THAN 50 PERCENT CLEAN ENERGY BY 2030

NextGen Climate is calling on candidates and elected officials to tackle climate change—the defining issue of our time—by producing a plan to power America with more than 50 percent clean and carbon-free energy by 2030, putting us on a pathway to 100% clean energy by 2050. The transition to clean electricity is urgently needed, technologically achievable, economically beneficial, and politically popular.

CLIMATE CHANGE PUTS AMERICA'S ECONOMY AND SECURITY AT RISK

Left unchecked, climate change will have devastating effects on America's economy and security.

The International Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) conservatively estimates that, without action, 1–5% percent of global mean Gross Domestic Product is at risk due to climate change, and in some localized places the risks even higher.

Intensifying seasonal weather patterns, extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and increased illness and disease will cost the U.S. economy billions of dollars a year in property damage, increased costs, and lost productivity.

We are already feeling the effects of climate change at home. From 2010 to 2014 the United States experienced nearly 50 climate-related disasters with costs in excess of $1 billion each, and in 2013 alone the United States experienced $125 billion in expenses from climate-related events.

Climate change poses a grave national security risk as well. Just last year, 16 retired three- and four-star generals and admirals issued a report, National Security and the Accelerating Risks of Climate Change, identifying climate change as a ''catalyst for conflict.'' Additionally, the Pentagon's 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review laid out that climate change poses a serious threat and will aggravate stressors abroad.

TRANSITIONING TO A CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY WILL PREVENT CLIMATE DISASTER

It is not too late to avoid the worst consequences of climate change—though time is running out. The longer the United States, and the global community, delay the transition to a clean energy economy the larger the economic impacts will be. In order to help prevent climate disaster, the United States must reduce carbon emissions by 83 percent economy-wide by 2050.

A plan to power America with more than 50 percent clean and carbon-free energy by 2030 will put us on the path to a 100 percent clean-energy economy by 2050, accomplishing the necessary carbon emissions reduction from the electricity sector.

MORE THAN 50 PERCENT CLEAN ENERGY BY 2030 IS A TECHNOLOGICALLY ACHIEVABLE GOAL

The transition to a clean energy economy is already underway. Clean energy technologies like wind and solar are increasingly competitive with outdated fossil fuels on cost, and are growing rapidly across America and around the world:

Installed solar capacity in the United States increased 34 percent between 2013 and 2014.

The U.S. has installed over 20,000 megawatts of solar enough to power more than 4 million average American homes—and that is expected to double in just the next two years.

Utility scale solar has reached cost parity with coal and gas in many regions and is projected to be cheaper than fossil fuels throughout most of the U.S. by 2017.

Combined with significant technological cost breakthroughs of clean energy technologies and the Obama Administration's historic steps to stop the unlimited dumping of carbon pollution into our air and water with the Clean Power Plan, the U.S. electricity sector is beginning to transform to one that is cleaner, cheaper, and more reliable.

The Energy Information Administration projects that the electricity mix in 2030 will be approximately 25% coal, 31% natural gas, 1% oil, 18% nuclear, 7% hydropower, 12% wind, 3+% solar, and 3% other renewable sources. This means that with no additional policies other than expected implementation of the Clean Power Plan, nearly 43% of the electricity produced is projected to be clean or carbon-free in 2030.

Though the transformation to a clean energy economy is already underway, and accomplishing more than 50 percent clean energy by 2030 is technologically possible, policymakers must do their part to push us over the top. The deck is currently stacked against clean energy, as subsidies and other preferential treatment prop up outdated fossil fuels, stifling American innovation and slowing the growth of modern renewable energy sources.

Our country needs bold leadership that accelerates the transition away from fossil fuels that cause climate change and towards America's clean energy future and the economic benefits it will bring. By fully implementing the Clean Power Plan and pursuing other policy solutions that will allow energy sources like solar and wind to compete against fossil fuels on a level playing field, our leaders can ensure we transition to clean energy in time to prevent climate disaster.

ACHIEVING MORE THAN 50 PERCENT CLEAN ENERGY BY 2030 WILL SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CREATE JOBS

Today, clean energy jobs are significantly outpacing fossil fuels jobs. In 2014, the number of people working in solar power surpassed the number of people employed as coal miners. As the technology landscape continues to change, clean energy has the opportunity to be a significant driver of employment in every city, state, and region. These jobs include installing and operating clean energy, performing energy retrofits, designing and researching new technologies, and operating the clean energy businesses of tomorrow.

Solar jobs are growing 20 times faster than the broader economy.

Solar energy creates eight times more jobs in construction, installation, operations, and maintenance, than coal and natural gas do across full project lifetimes.

There are more than 500 wind manufacturing facilities across the U.S. and there are currently more than 70,000 people employed in wind-related jobs.

In this global race for clean energy, the nation that leads on clean energy technology development will have a significant advantage in creating the millions of clean energy jobs that are up for grabs in this new energy revolution.

The United States is on the road to a clean energy economy. Technology and economics no longer limit our ability to realize this new energy system. With bold political leadership, we can accelerate America's transition to a clean energy economy, win this global clean energy race, strengthen our economy, and help mitigate potentially trillions of dollars of damages from climate change.

Mrs. BOXER. After stating their key findings, I will complete my presentation.

How many more minutes do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has consumed 5½ minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Here is what NextGen found: Achieving more than 50 percent clean energy by 2030 will spur economic growth and create jobs.

I agree.

Second, most Americans support a goal of more than 50 percent clean energy by 2050.

I think the polls bear that out.

Third, climate change puts America's economy and security at risk.

I absolutely agree with that. We have been told that by the defense establishment.

Next, transitioning to a clean energy economy will prevent climate disaster.

That is true.

Lastly, they say 50 percent clean energy by 2030 is feasible.

Although I haven't studied this myself, I can say the Energy Information Administration estimates that this can happen if we take the kind of steps President Obama is recommending and a lot of us in the Senate support, putting a price on carbon that will save us from devastating climate change. It will provide jobs and will make us a healthier nation.

As I said, I rise today to talk about one of the most serious threats facing our Nation—dangerous climate change. We need to act now, but the Republican majority in Congress has no plan to address the threat posed to the American people.

The evidence of climate change is all around us. NASA and NOAA found that 2014 was the hottest year around the globe since recordkeeping began 134 years ago.

Earlier this month, the American Meteorological Society reported that numerous key climate change indicators were at or near record levels last year. 2014 was the hottest year since recordkeeping began in 1880; and sea surface temperatures and sea levels were at record high levels.

And it is continuing—NOAA reported that January through June 2015 has been the hottest first half of any year on record.

We must act now to address climate change by reducing dangerous carbon pollution from the biggest source—power plants.

The President's Clean Power Plan will help America lead the way to avert the worst impacts of climate change—such as sea level rise, dangerous heat waves, and economic disruption.

By reducing carbon pollution, we can also cut many types of air pollutants that threaten human health.

I often say, if people can't breathe, they can't go to work or school. According to EPA, the powerplant proposal will avoid up to 150,000 asthma attacks in children, 3,300 heart attacks, 6,600 premature deaths, and 490,000 missed days at school and work in 2030.

The Obama administration clearly gets it, and so do the American people. A Stanford University poll from earlier this year found that 83 percent of Americans, including 61 percent of Republicans, say if nothing is done to reduce carbon pollution, climate change will be a problem in the future. And 74 percent of Americans say the Federal Government should take action to combat climate change.

Our businesses also get it. On Monday, 13 of the largest American businesses gathered at the White House to launch the American Business Act on Climate Pledge. These companies, including California-based Google and Apple, pledged to take steps to address climate change.

But climate deniers in Congress still don't get it—they have made repeated attempts to block the Clean Power Plan and other commonsense steps.

Last year, the EPW Committee heard from four former EPA administrators who served under Republican Presidents, from Richard Nixon to George W. Bush, and they all agreed that climate change requires action now. This should not be a partisan issue.

President Obama has a plan, the American people want us to act, so I ask my Republican colleagues, what is your plan?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, we are at a crossroads. We have a catastrophe that is looming for our planet. We have the world looking at the United States wondering if we are going to lead. We have the Pope coming to the United States and speaking out on this issue. We have the world gathering in Paris this November, this December, discussing this issue because it is now the focal point of the world; that is, the danger of ever-escalating, dangerous climate change, the warming of our planet, and the catastrophic consequences of the warming of our planet.

The tides are rising. Snows are melting. In other places, the snows are greater than they have ever been before. Climate change—dangerous climate change—that is what is happening.

What is the response from the Republican side of the aisle? We hear nothing. We hear denial. We hear essentially an argument that it is not our responsibility to deal with it, but the Pope is asking us to be the leader. The world is asking us to be the leader. The young people in our country, the green generation, are asking us to be the leader.

The United States is a technological giant. We have the capacity to invent the technologies that are going to radically reduce greenhouse gases, not only in our own country but around the world: new renewable energy technologies, new battery technologies, and new ways of generating electricity in the 21st century. We do not have to be tied to 19th century technologies—oil and coal. It is the 21st century.

In our country, in 2015 and 2016, we are going to generate 40,000 new megawatts of wind and solar. We ask, Well, what does that translate into? What are 40,000 megawatts? If we think of all the nuclear powerplants that have been constructed in our country over the last 70 years, we now have 100,000 megawatts of electricity coming from nuclear power. In these 2 years, 2015 to 2016, we are going to add 40,000 in wind and solar. The experts did not think this was possible 10 years ago. The experts would have said: Oh, wind and solar, that is nice, but it can't replace the coal that has always been relied upon to provide our electricity going back to the 19th century. Impossible, they said. No. This new generation is rising up. And what is doing it? Well, we have put tax breaks on the books now for wind and solar. We are giving them the same breaks we always gave oil, we always gave coal. But what do we hear from the Republican Party? Should we eliminate the coal and oil tax breaks? Oh, no. You can't touch those. But when we say, well, let's renew the tax breaks for wind and solar, they say it is time for us to now allow these new industries to go it alone. That has been the problem all along; there isn't a level playing field. What we have done over the last 7 years is create a level playing field, so the new energy technologies can compete against these old tax breaks for coal and oil that have been on the books for generations. We can do it. We can solve this problem, but we can't create an unlevel playing field.

The same thing is true with automotive technologies. All of that CO_2 coming out of automobiles, coming out of trucks, people said we just have to live with it. The average for vehicles that ordinary families drove in our country just 6 years ago was 25 miles a gallon, essentially the same as 1975. The green generation, the young people in our country, say let's do better, let's invent new technologies. Let's have electric cars. Let's have plug-in hybrids. Let's have a generation of hybrids. No, says the industry. It is too difficult. We can't figure it out. It will cripple our industry.

We pass new laws here on the Senate floor and on the House floor. What has happened? We have a revolution in automotive technology. We now have people driving around in computers on wheels. The dashboard looks like it is a spaceship. The cars are infinitely more efficient, and we are heading toward 54.5 miles per gallon. What did the experts say 10 years ago? Impossible. We cannot do it. These are the same people who said to President Kennedy that we cannot put a man on the moon in 8 years. President Kennedy said: ''We choose to go to the moon . . . and do other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.'' We are the United States of America. We will invent the new propulsion systems. We will invent the new methods. We will invent all of the things we need so that America dominates the Soviet Union and not the opposite.

The whole world is looking at this generation, this Senate. We have a plan. President Obama has a plan to control emissions coming out of the powerplants of our country. Our plan is one that moves toward renewable energy and away from these smokestacks of CO2 going up into the atmosphere and creating a blanket that holds in the heat and continues to dangerously warm the planet. That is what the greenhouse effect is. It holds in the heat, all of this pollution.

When we move toward solar, when we move toward wind, when we move toward geothermal, when we move toward all the new technologies, the CO2

is cut radically and the planet is able to breathe, and breathe in a way that says to generations to come that we will have left this planet better than it was before.

That is what the Pope is going to come and talk to us about—dangerous climate change. That is what the Pope is going to come and ask the United States—to be the leader and not the lagger, to not allow the deniers of climate change to dominate our debate in the United States of America, to not allow the technologies of the 19th century dictate to the 21st century.

Just 18 years ago, a small percentage of all Americans had a wireless device in their pocket. Do you want to know why? The experts said it was impossible; you can't do it. Today everyone is walking around with one of these in their pocket, including 700 million people in Africa. We can do it.

In Kenya and in Ethiopia, they are moving toward geothermal, solar, and wind. They are skipping the landline delivery of telecommunication service in favor of wireless, and they are also skipping the landline system of generational electricity and moving to renewables. They are not relying on coal. They are moving on to the new. You can't eliminate it totally. You need some coal. You need some oil. But we can continue to reduce it year after year.

What is the plan we hear from the Republican Party? How do we reduce the amount of greenhouse gases we are going to be sending into the atmosphere? What is their plan? They say they don't like President Obama's plan. Where is their plan? What are they going to do? What are they going to tell the green generation—all these pages on the floor representing tens of millions across our country? They are asking the question: Where is the plan? How do we do this? How do we solve the problem? How do we invent the new technologies, as we did with wireless technology, and spread it across the planet? How do we do it for climate change as well? That is going to be the essential debate.

Shruggy says: I am not happy; I am sad.

Where is the Republican emoji? Where is the one who says: We can do it; we are America.

We are not going to allow the rest of the world to have a problem from which the United States is going to exempt itself because it is the only country that is denying climate change. The Senate has a great responsibility. We have an opportunity to be the global leader. We can save all of creation while engaging in massive job creation here in America. We now have 100,000 clean energy jobs in Massachusetts. It is a big job creator. It is an employer of Americans all across our country.

We have a chance to do something special. We can begin this transition in a much more serious way—away from coal, away from oil, and toward this renewable solar era of the 21st century.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, man made climate change has evolved from a critical threat to an unavoidable reality. The reality of climate change has already shown its grim effects on our environment and our health.

Today, I would like to speak about the impacts of climate change on this country's economic engine: our businesses. As temperatures and sea levels rise and as weather patterns become more severe, the costs of doing business go up. Droughts and heat waves drive up energy costs and have put incredible pressure on global food production. On a warming planet, floods and other natural disasters damage infrastructure and private property, driving up insurance premiums and increasing the cost of doing business.

All of this creates uncertainty for investors, who increasingly want to know how climate change will affect the companies in which they invest. American companies are beginning to notice. General Mills' Chief Sustainability Officer Jerry Lynch said, ''The best available science tells us all the changes we are making to the planet as a human species are what's causing this.'' Last year, General Mills announced its commitment to increasing sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in its supply chains.

Even oil companies realize what is happening: ExxonMobil's William Colton, Vice President of Corporate Strategic Planning, said, ''The risk of climate change is clear and the risk warrants action.'' ExxonMobil officials subsequently announced the company would put $600 million into algae farms that would turn sunlight into automotive fuel. Its new focus shows that corporations across all economic sectors are realizing something vital: the negative effects of climate change hurt their bottom line.

This week, some of America's largest companies such as Apple, Coca-Cola, General Motors, Goldman Sachs, Google, PepsiCo, and Walmart are standing with the Obama Administration to launch the ''American Business Act on Climate Pledge''. By signing this pledge, companies demonstrate an ongoing commitment to having a climate action plan. The ongoing shift in official corporate climate policies from a burgeoning number of other large and small businesses demonstrates that taking action on climate makes strong economic sense. If these bastions of capitalism can develop and commit to climate action plans, why has not the Republican Party devised its own action plan? Denial simply will not cut it.

The involvement of American businesses in climate policy is a welcome development but they must move even further by disclosing the risks they face from climate change to investors. These risks, which are passed on to shareholders, hit nearly every industry imaginable, from obvious choices like the oil and gas sector, to healthcare and financial services and transportation and hospitality. Disclosing climate risk through the Securities & Exchange Commission's, SEC, corporate reporting measures enhances transparency and allows investors to make smarter decisions, ultimately protecting and increasing shareholder value.

As we continue to deplete our scarce natural resources and send their harmful byproducts back into our air, water and land, the cumulative impacts are changing the world. The rate of this change is accelerating; the status quo is untenable. By providing honest climate risk disclosure and establishing climate action policies to mitigate and reduce that risk, American companies are acting in everyone's best financial interests.

Profit-driven corporate superpowers like Apple, Coca-Cola, and Walmart are taking concrete steps to reduce the impact of climate change. The message they are sending is clear: adapt, or fall behind. Other companies now have the opportunity to join in what American businesses do best: innovating and leading the rest of the world by their example. It is increasingly obvious that taking action to combat climate change is economically prudent. But more important, it is also the morally correct thing to do. I encourage more in the business community to take a stand on the right side of human history.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we are continuing to make substantial progress on passing a multiyear highway bill. Thanks to the developments of the recent day—I guess it was yesterday—we learned that the House is open to a conference committee to reconcile an authorization bill that they will likely take up soon and then to have a conference committee to reconcile those differences. Previously we had been told that the House would not take up the Senate bill and was insisting on a short-term patch to the December timeframe. I can tell you that I, for one, was reluctant do that because without a clear path forward after December, we would be looking at perhaps not just the 34th patch but the 35th patch and on and on.

What this country needs is a long-term transportation bill, and that is what the Senate will likely pass tomorrow—our own 3-year bill—and then work with our colleagues in the House, as we usually do when the two bodies don't necessarily agree on everything, to work those out.

I am thankful that the Members of this Chamber recognize how important this legislation is. I have to tell you, coming from Texas—a big, fast-growing State that needs this investment in our infrastructure—this is important for my constituents.

The highway legislation we are putting forward is actually a 6-year authorization, and that is something to

be celebrated. As I mentioned, this avoids the sorts of temporary patches we have had in the past.

Although Chairman HATCH of the Senate Finance Committee came up with enough money—enough pay-fors in the jargon we use around here—to pay for this for 5 years, there was an attempt to work on a bipartisan consensus. Since all of those pay-fors were not acceptable to this consensus, we got enough pay-fors to pay for the first 3 years of this 6-year bill. But that doesn't mean the work will end on trying to find a way to, in a fiscally responsible way, pay for the back end of this 6-year bill.

There is a popular bumper sticker found on cars and trucks in Texas. I know people sometimes get a little tired of Texans who are so proud of their State, as I am. But one of those bumper stickers said: ''I wasn't born in Texas but I got here as fast as I could.'' Indeed, people have been voting with their feet, coming from parts of the country where, frankly, the policies—whether it is tax or regulatory policies—or just the lack of jobs have caused people to look elsewhere for jobs, for an opportunity to provide for their families and to pursue the American dream.

I have mentioned time and time again on this floor that our economy in Texas grew at a rate of 5.2 percent last year. Compare that to the national growth rate, which was 2.2 percent. So something is going on here, and I would argue that what is going on is that the policies that have been emanating from Washington, DC, have actually been a restraint or a wet blanket on job growth and economic growth. We ought to look to some of the States that have been successful laboratories of democracy for the kinds of policies that actually pay off. I am not just talking about for businesses; I am talking about for workers and families, particularly when it comes to wages and good jobs.

My State is a growing, diverse State. I know sometimes people are surprised. They know we have a large Hispanic population. Roughly 38 percent of Texas is Hispanic. But Vietnamese is the third most commonly spoken language in Texas. We have about a quarter of a million Vietnamese Americans. We are a very diverse State. Some estimates project our State to exceed 50 million people by the year 2050, potentially doubling our current population.

There is no time to lose when it comes to maintaining and expanding our transportation networks to meet the rising demands from more people and more vehicles on our roads. That is why this multiyear bill is so important.

For example, this legislation would help our State focus on improving roadways that impact the daily lives of Texans. That includes many of our interstates, such as Interstate 35. I don't know how many people in this Chamber have ever tried to drive down Interstate Highway 35 through Austin, but it is almost like a parking lot. It runs the length of our State, starting in Laredo, TX, which is the largest inland port in America, where we have a lot of trucks and a lot of commercial traffic coming across. It starts in Laredo, but it goes through multiple population centers, such as San Antonio—my hometown—Austin, and then Dallas and Fort Worth, which are some of the fastest growing cities in America, before going on to Oklahoma. The interstate is more than 400 miles long in Texas alone, and because of our growth, it is incredibly congested. In fact, 18 segments of the interstate rank in the top 100 most congested roadways across the State. That growth isn't projected to let up anytime soon. As a matter of fact, it is going to continue at high levels.

Employment levels in Central Texas alone—some of the fastest growing parts of the State—are projected to double or quadruple in the next 30 years.

We are not afraid of getting bigger. We are proud of our size, our growth, and the opportunity that provides to the people of Texas. But passing a long-term, well-funded highway bill becomes even more important when you come from a State such as mine with the sorts of transportation challenges we have now and will continue to have in the future.

Building a stronger transportation network for a stronger economy means strengthening not only Interstate Highway 35, which I mentioned a minute ago, but also the vast existing networks of other interstates and upgrading routes to higher standards. This is ultimately about public safety. We need to have transportation infrastructure, highways, and interstates that allow people to travel at relatively high speeds in a safe way. That is why this is important as well.

Because we understand the relationship between quality infrastructure and economic success, I introduced an amendment to the highway bill that would help our State connect more efficiently. I appreciate the bill managers for letting us take a close look at this and the potential benefit for my State and the transportation network as a whole.

This amendment will provide for much needed improvements to high priority corridors in Texas, such as Interstate Highway 69. Congress first designated future segments of I–69 in Texas nearly 25 years ago, after leaders from the gulf coast region and East Texas said the State needed a new route to increase connectivity between land and sea ports and our existing interstate system. Fortunately, this is also a route that improves emergency evacuation capabilities—something I know the Presiding Officer can appreciate coming from Louisiana—and one that delivers an interstate to the Rio Grande Valley, which is the largest population center in the country previously unserved by the Interstate Highway System.

Through years of outreach and public engagement—from Brownsville to Texarkana—we have identified upgrades and improvements to existing State corridors that could deliver a future I–69 throughout the State. We have made great progress since 2010. More than $1.3 billion has been expended toward corridor improvements throughout Texas, and since 2011, more than 200 miles of I–69 have been added to the Interstate Highway System, including the first segment in South Texas.

This is still a work in progress, and it costs money. Upgrades are needed for more than 1,000 miles of designated roadways to complete it. I am reminded of what the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator INHOFE, has said to me privately, which I know he has also said publicly as well, about the importance of infrastructure and the Federal Government's role. Now, I happen to be one who believes that the Federal Government needs to do a much better job when it comes to prioritizing Federal spending and spending within our means, which the Federal Government has not been doing. But when we talk about priorities and things that only the Federal Government can do that the States and local government cannot do, as Chairman INHOFE likes to say, there are two things that the Federal Government should do, and that is national defense and infrastructure. He said pretty much everything else is a lower priority item. I think that makes a lot of sense.

When it comes to spending money, that is something that my constituents in Texas are leery of when it comes to the Federal Government. They realize that spending money on our infrastructure and the highway system just makes common sense. So with a multiyear highway bill such as the one before us, we can complete our interstate, I–69, and that will move us one step closer to reality. As I mentioned a moment ago, these and other modernization efforts also make our roads safer and help with more efficient freight movement, which means our businesses can deliver goods to customers across the State and throughout the country in a more expeditious fashion.

I must also point out that this bipartisan bill is fiscally responsible and the pay-fors are not phony pay-fors, which sometimes occurs here in the Congress. It doesn't increase taxes or add to the deficit. So from my perspective, it is a win-win.

I encourage all of our colleagues to continue reviewing it and to keep in mind the essential role infrastructure plays in our country and in our economy. Our economy, of course, is what produces jobs, and it allows people to find good work and provide for their families and pursue their dreams.

So far 2015 has been marked by real steps forward in this Chamber, including essential legislation, such as the

Defense authorization bill and a bill that will combat human trafficking. This highway bill continues in the spirit of accomplishment. Perhaps it is not a grand-slam home run, but I would call them singles and doubles that we have been able to eke out so far this year. This bill will represent another solid accomplishment for the 114th Congress that we can be proud of on a bipartisan basis.

I encourage all of our colleagues to continue the momentum and to get this bill passed soon, hopefully no later than tomorrow.

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. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mr. CARPER. Madam President, colleagues, I want to hearken back to last November's election. I thought for some time—and the Presiding Officer has heard me say this once or twice—that for this Senator there are three takeaways from that election. No. 1, the American people want us to work together in the Senate here in Washington; the American people want us to get things done; and most especially, the American people want us to get things done that actually strengthen our economic recovery.

My own view is that one of the things we can do to strengthen our economic recovery is to increase exports. We work very hard in this Chamber, in the Senate and with the House and the President, to try to pave the way to create a large new trading block consisting of the United States and 11 other countries which, when put together, comprise about 40 percent of the world's customers. This is the trading block we call the Trans-Pacific Partnership. It is something that is sought by the President and is supported by myself, by Democrats, and by Republicans, and it is still being negotiated. But it is an important part in growing and strengthening our economic recovery.

One of the other related areas is how do we finance exports. One of the ways we have done that for years in this country is through the Export-Import Bank. We have reached a point where the authorization of the Export-Import Bank has expired. The legislation that has passed the Senate would renew that authorization, and my hope is that when we finally find our way through the transportation gauntlet, we will also reauthorize the Export-Import Bank to again make available financing for business—not for every business large and small, but for quite a few. Other nations with whom we compete help finance their exports, and for us not to do the same puts us at a competitive disadvantage.

Another thing we can do to strengthen our economic recovery is to better protect our international property—research and development—whether it is from cyber security attacks, data breaches, or whether it is through simply the way we combat patent trolling. Folks come up with ideas and they are delayed. They end up in court, and research and development is stymied in some cases as a result of all that.

We have worked in the Environment and Public Works Committee for years now on something called the Tax Exceptions Control Act which provides predictability and certainty for businesses, especially in the chemical industry, but also at the same time works to protect our health as human beings, especially among the most vulnerable—the young, the old—and at the same time it is good for the environment. That legislation may be coming before us as soon as next week.

Many of us have sought to provide some certainty for businesses on the tax side through international tax reform, which is an idea supported by the President, by the House Republican and Democratic leadership, and by the Finance Committee working group led by Senators PORTMAN and SCHUMER. It is not comprehensive tax reform, but it is a big piece of it that at least provides some certainty and predictability and would also provide, frankly, a couple hundred billion dollars over the next 10 years to be used for roads, highways, bridges, transit, rail, and so forth.

The last thing I will mention in terms of strengthening our economic recovery is transportation. There is an outfit called McKinsey which is a major consulting company. They have something called the McKinsey Global Institute. Not long ago they reported that if we were to make the kind of robust investment in infrastructure sought by the President and supported by House Republican and Democratic leadership, and supported by our bipartisan working group on the Finance Committee—if we were actually to do that, we would grow, according to McKinsey's employment estimates, by as much as 1.5 million jobs over the next several years. A lot of these jobs are for people who are either not working or are working part-time. They would like to build something or rebuild something, and they could work on highways, bridges, our transit systems, and so forth. The folks at the McKinsey Global Institute go even further to say that if we were to make this kind of robust investment in transportation at large, we would not only put a lot of people back to work, but we would grow our GDP by as much as 1.5 percent. That may not sound like a lot, but I think our GDP growth in the first quarter was zero. We struggled through a tough winter. It has bounced back nicely in the second quarter, but it is still only 2.5 percent. The idea of being able to add 1.5 percent to that would give us a 4-percent GDP growth, and that is as strong as we have seen in a while. It would translate into a lot more jobs for people other than just building highways, bridges, and roads in our country.

I have been asked, why would our GDP grow so much by making these investments in transportation? In one of several meetings I have had with industry groups, someone from a company said: We move a lot of our products overseas in order to sell our products. We don't export by air, but by ship. Most of the exports leaving this country go by way of ship. He went on to say: We send our products to ports and we have a narrow window of time. In his particular case it was a timeframe of 4 hours. The ships coming into this particular port needed to pick up their goods and products within 4 hours. He said if they met that window, they were good. If they missed that window, they were not good. As it turns out, there are enormous delays in moving not just people in this country but in moving products and freight.

One of the great things about the Environment and Public Works Committee's 6-year transportation reauthorization legislation was a freight provision. I give a lot of credit to Senators BOXER and INHOFE for including—we were among the people who strongly recommended it—a strong freight provision in the Transportation bill in order to help grow GDP to help grow jobs.

As it turns out, part of the reason why it is difficult to get anything done around here on transportation is the issue of how we are going to pay for all these investments, although I have referenced some pretty good ideas. I mentioned one. One of the reasons it is difficult to pass legislation through is that multiple committees have jurisdiction over transportation. The Environment and Public Works Committee in which I serve is led by Senators INHOFE and BOXER. We have jurisdiction over roads, highways, and bridges. That is a big piece of our transportation system, but it is not all of it. The Banking Committee has jurisdiction over transit, which is significant. The Commerce Committee has jurisdiction over freight rail and interstate passenger rail and jurisdiction over safety in a lot of instances. They also have jurisdiction over a fair amount of what happens in the air for our country. Then the Finance Committee, which I am also privileged to serve on—which is called the Ways and Means Committee in the House—is heavily involved in how to pay for all the improvements we need to make—and how badly we need to make them.

As it turns out, there are some folks who actually study the amount of time

that we are delayed either sitting in traffic or moving very slowly in this country. The folks at Texas A&M put out an annual report on congestion in our country. They found the average U.S. commuter wastes 38 hours every year because of traffic congestion. There is an industry group that has something called The Road Information Program. They estimate the average driver in the United States pays $377 each year in additional vehicle costs as a result of poor road conditions. The World Bank, in a related report, has found that when a road is allowed to deteriorate from good to poor, each dollar we fail to invest in road maintenance will increase vehicle operating costs by between $2 and $3. So among the many reasons we want to make these investments is No. 1, to grow employment for the many folks who are actually building and working on these projects—a lot of people. We want to grow our gross domestic product. We want to reduce the amount of time spent sitting in traffic or traveling very slowly in traffic. The 38 hours wasted in congestion are hours we lose in our lives every year. Lastly, we want to reduce the amount of money we spend on our own vehicles.

I know my own vehicle, my Chrysler Town and Country minivan, went over 400,000 miles this week as we were driving in from Delaware the day before last. We were coming across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge last week when it topped out at 400,000 miles. Along the way people have asked: How do you get a vehicle to go that many years and that far? I tell them that every other week we wash it. That is pretty much all I do. Well, I actually do a lot more than that. I have replaced a lot of tires. There are a lot of potholes, causing a lot of realignments, and it adds up. The average is almost $377 a year, but the money adds up for us as it does for other people as well.

I mentioned earlier that the Environment and Public Works Committee has jurisdiction over roads, highways, and bridges. The commerce committee has jurisdiction over ground transportation, including freight rail, passenger rail, and air; the banking committee has jurisdiction over transit; and the Finance Committee has jurisdiction over finance and how we actually finance these investments. That is one of the reasons it is difficult to put a package together with all the different pieces to find common ground and to come to an agreement on how to fund it.

One of the other difficulties is—and I am not a huge advocate of earmarks, but one of the reasons people were willing to vote year after year, decade after decade, for a 6-year transportation bill was because they could point to certain specific provisions in the Transportation bill which helped their congressional district or their State. It is more difficult now for a representative or Senator to say these are the specific provisions that are good for my State or my district, and this is one of the reasons why I am supporting this legislation. It doesn't mean we ought to go back to earmarks, but it is one of the reasons why it is harder to build a super majority to move legislation like this through the Senate.

So where are we? The House has passed legislation that says for the next 3 months we are going to fund transportation projects in this country—roads, highways, bridges, and transit. They have outlined a couple of ways to pay for that. They do not have enough money to pay for projects over the next 5 months. They have authorized the actual construction of those projects for the next 3 months. That is their bill, and I think they have pretty much passed it and said, kind of, take it or leave it. Previously, they said they wanted to extend for 5 months the authorization and the appropriations for roads, highways, bridges, and transit until sometime in December to give us time between now and December to come to agreement on the administration's earlier idea embraced by House Democratic and Republican leadership and embraced by the working group in the Senate Finance Committee about international tax reform, which some would deem repatriation.

We passed out of here today a different plan that I do not support but a plan that would appear to authorize projects for a 6-year transportation bill. As it turns out, the money is good for maybe 3 years, not for 6. It comes from a lot of different sources, some that I would deem inappropriate. Others may differ with that. It is not the way I think we should do business, but it is the way we have done business.

We passed a bill. We have different perspectives as to what we ought to do. My expectation is that the Senate will agree with the House-passed bill and we will, in the meantime, go back to the drawing board. One of the things that I think has value in the House-passed bill is it sets the stage for us to get serious about the administration's proposal, again embraced by the House Democratic and Republican leadership, and by our bipartisan working group in the Finance Committee. It gives us time to actually find out if we can do that.

There are some people who don't like that idea. Some people in pretty powerful positions around here don't like that idea, but there are others in equally high positions who think that is a very good idea. Among the benefits that it would provide—it doesn't address our transportation needs forever, but it certainly would provide a lot of money for the next 6 years.

Why might that be a good idea? I think ultimately—and while for years we have used user fees, gas taxes, diesel taxes, to fund most of our road construction at the national level and for our road repairs—to be honest with you, over time, our cars, trucks, and vans have been more energy efficient.

My Chrysler minivan that I mentioned earlier gets about 24 miles per gallon on the highway, but there are vehicles today, including minivans, including trucks, that do a whole lot better than that. We have smaller passenger cars that routinely get 40 and even 50 miles to the gallon. To say that the diesel tax and the gas tax are forever the sole solution is probably not realistic. We have some vehicles on the road that are pretty much all electric. They do not buy any gas. They do not buy any diesel fuel. When they need a refill, they pull up and recharge their batteries. We have some folks who buy vehicles that are powered by fuel cells. They run on hydrogen or natural gas, methane.

So given the changing mix in the way we move ourselves and goods and services around the country, that sole reliance on user fees, by a gas tax and diesel tax, forever is not a good idea.

Among the other ideas that are out there is tolling. People who come through my State on I–95 pay a toll. A lot of them use E-ZPass. They can go through our State on the highway using E-ZPass so they don't have to sit in line and wait. Their credit card accounts get charged for their travel. We have a similar kind of arrangement on State Route 1, where a lot of people come through our State from I–95 heading south to our beaches or to Dover Air Force Base. We have highway-speed E-ZPass there too. So tolling is part of the future.

Another idea that is being experimented with by the States—it is referred to in different ways—but I think of it as vehicle miles traveled. Is there a way we can actually figure out how much, in terms of a true user—how many miles we are actually traveling in our vehicles and assess some kind of fee at the Federal level or maybe at the State level on those who are driving cars, trucks, and vans.

Folks in Oregon have been working on this the longest. I think they started this effort about 10 years ago. They call it a road user charge. That is another way of saying vehicle miles traveled. I think at the end of the day—not the end of the day but in 10, 15, 20 years, we will have figured out how to actually do vehicle miles traveled/road user charges in a cost-effective way that is protective of people's rights to privacy.

The other area that I think we will do a better job in is tolling, moving to more things like the highway-speed E-ZPass, so people who want to use a particular road will pay a toll and do so in a way that still expedites movement of traffic as we do through highway-speed E-ZPass. Having said that, if we are unable to come to an agreement at the end of this year, if we are unable to come to an agreement on some kind of international tax reform, the idea of using a lot of cats and dogs to fund transportation improvements for the next 2 or 3 years—I don't think that is a good outcome.

I am not a Congress of one. If I were, I would go back and say we should look at—at least for the next 6 years—user fees. We have been using user fees or taxing gas and diesel for a long time to provide for most of the Federal share for these transportation construction projects and improvements. I think the last time we raised the Federal gas tax was 1993. We raised it to 18.3 cents per gallon. We raised, at the same time, the diesel taxes to 24.3 cents per gallon. We have not raised either of those for over 22 years. Since that time, the cost of asphalt, the cost of concrete, the cost of labor, the cost of steel have all gone up, but the user fees, the gas tax and diesel tax, have not gone up at all.

George Voinovich—former Governor, former U.S. Senator—and I worked together about 5 or 6 years on the Bowles-Simpson Commission to suggest an increase in the gas and diesel tax by a penny every quarter, by a penny every 3 months, for about 15 quarters. We were roughly saying 3 or 4 cents a year for 4 years and then index the gas tax after that to the rate of inflation so we did not have to come back and re-address it every year or every 2 or 3 or 4 years.

That is an idea that was actually adopted in the Bowles-Simpson report, but much of what the Bowles-Simpson report included has not been enacted. One of the things I am going to be doing—and I hope colleagues in the House as well as in the Senate—in the next day or two is introducing an increase in the gas and diesel tax of 4 cents a year for the next 4 years—that will be 16 cents over the next 4 years—and then indexing the gas tax and diesel tax to the rate of inflation.

What would that cost the average family, the average driver in this country? On a weekly basis, it would be about $2, actually less than $2. I don't know what people pay for a cup of coffee, but I am told you can buy—I bought a cup of coffee today for $1.70. Some people buy it for less. Some people buy it for $2 or more. But for roughly a cup of coffee a week, we could have better roads, highways, bridges—a whole lot better.

By doing that, we would raise, over the next 10 years, $180 billion, maybe even more, to be able to provide for our construction needs, roads, highways, bridges, and transit. We have the system in place. We know how to do it. The price of gasoline—I bought gas the other day in Central Delaware, in Dover. I paid $2.53 a gallon. It was down by about 20 cents over the last month. If the Iran deal actually goes through and is approved, the Iranians are expected to add to a world already awash in oil. So the price of oil is coming down. The Iranians would add, I am told, about another half billion barrels of oil to the marketplace and probably continue to push down the price of oil.

I ask us to keep that in mind. Some people say we will never be able to get the votes for an increase in the gas or diesel tax, even if it is phased in for 4 cents a year for 4 years. But there were six States last year across the country—most of them with Republican Governors and Republican legislatures—that did something like this. They did not raise the gas tax by $1 or 50 cents or even 25 cents, but they raised it, in some cases, over several years.

The question is, Can State legislators or Members of the Congress actually vote to meet our transportation needs? Can they actually vote for this stuff and get reelected? As it turns out, 95 percent of the Republicans in these six States and State legislatures—95 percent of the Republican legislators who voted for these user fee increases won their primaries last year and they won their generals. They were reelected.

Among the Democrats who voted in those six States last year to raise user fees, 90 percent of them won their primaries, they won the general election. They were reelected. For people who say you cannot vote to do a tough thing and still get reelected, I would just say look at those six States from last year. Other States are going to follow in those footsteps this year as well.

So the long term—I will wrap it up at this point in time. I see Senator GRASSLEY is on the floor. But long term, the worst option is to do nothing. The worst option is to do nothing. I have a glass of water here. I am going to ask the pages to bring me a couple more glasses, just empty glasses, if they will quickly. Senator GRASSLEY is waiting to talk. Bear with me. This is show-and-tell on the Senate floor. I don't think this is against the rules, but if it is, maybe the Presiding Officer will cut me a break.

We will say this glass of water that is sitting right here is world capital markets, a lot of money, trillions of dollars. Some of it is from sovereign nations, some of it is from trust funds, pension funds, and so forth. This glass is empty. This is the U.S. transportation trust fund. It is empty.

When we run out of money and we don't raise taxes or revenues to fill it, we turn to the general fund. We say let's take money out of the general fund and put some of it into the transportation trust fund. This glass is empty too. Our debt is down, our deficit is down—our debt is not down—our deficit is down, but we still are running a big deficit. There is no money in the general fund to refill the transportation trust fund these days.

So what we do is we go out into the world capital markets—here, where there is a lot of money—and we borrow. We sell Treasury securities. So as it turns out, one of the best buyers for those Treasury securities is China. So we ask China: How about buying some of our Treasury securities? They do. Then when the Chinese turn around and start pushing around the Vietnamese or the Filipinos in the South China Sea, around the Spratly Islands and places I used to fly as a naval flight officer years ago—when the Chinese—and I don't think they are doing this so much anymore, but they manipulate their currency.

When the Chinese are trying to maybe dump some of their products in this country illegally and we say you can't do that, China, you can't do that, for the Chinese, it is very easy to say I thought you wanted to borrow money, and it puts us in a very awkward position as a nation.

If things are worth having, they are worth paying for. I don't think the payfors that were used in the—not the 6-year authorization bill that passed here—the Transportation bill is really a 3-year. I don't think the idea of taking money away from Customs fees and different other sources to use for purposes for which it was never intended—for transportation purposes—I don't think that is the way to do this.

The good news is this: The House is in one place, the Senate is in another. We have several months to figure this out. I hope we use these several months to drill down real hard on the idea of international tax reform, the deemed repatriation, which will provide hundreds of millions of dollars for transportation over the next 6 years. If that does not work, I want us to look at some other alternatives. The worst alternative is to get to December and say: Well, let's just borrow some more money or let's come up with some cats and dogs and patch this and kick the can down the road again.

So I am going to work very hard as a member of the Finance Committee on the international tax reform piece. I know Senator GRASSLEY, if I am not mistaken, is the senior Republican on the Finance Committee and somebody who is a key participant in trying to find common ground. He is good at that. I look forward to working with him on that.

I will close with this. To me, the message from the American people in the elections from last November was threefold: People want us to work together. They want us to get important things done, and among the most important is to further strengthen an already strengthening economy. A big piece of that can be transportation. The American people expect us to make tough decisions. This is a tough negotiation, but it is one we have to have. We have to have a good outcome in the end.

With that, I thank my friend from Iowa for his patience.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

FALSE CLAIMS ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I often come to the floor to honor whistleblowers but more importantly to talk about their very important role in making government function.

On July 30, 1778, the Continental Congress passed the very first whistleblower law in the United States. It read:

> [I]t is the duty of all persons in the service of the United States . . . to give the earliest

information to Congress or other proper authority of any misconduct, frauds or misdemeanors committed by any officers or persons in the service of these states, which may come to their knowledge.

Probably for the last 6, 7 years, I have been referring to this around the time of July 30.

Going back to 1778, we have had recognition of the important role whistleblowers can play in making sure government is responsible. Whistleblowers have always been crucial in helping Congress and the Federal Government root out fraud and misconduct.

It is simple common sense to reward and protect whistleblowers who report waste of taxpayers' money, fraudulent use of taxpayers' money, and outright simple abuse. The False Claims Act does that. In fiscal year 2014 alone, the Federal Government recovered nearly $6 billion under the False Claims Act. That makes more than $22 billion since January 2009 and more than $42 billion since I got the legislation passed in 1986. These recoveries represent victories across a wide array of industries and government programs. Those programs include mortgage insurance, Federal student aid, Medicare and Medicaid, as well as defense contracts.

The Department of Justice credits whistleblowers for their important role in the success, for the money that has come back to the Federal Treasury, and for the carrying out of the False Claims Act. According to the Justice Department, whistleblowers accounted for $3 billion in recoveries under that act in just fiscal year 2014. In fact, over 80 percent of False Claims Act cases are initiated by whistleblowers.

Clearly, the False Claims Act is working very well. Of course, the act has no shortage of critics—typically in the groups where you find perpetrators of fraud. But we have learned our lesson that a weak False Claims Act is not in the taxpayers' best interests.

In 1943, Congress bowed to the pressure to undo the act's crucial qui tam provisions. Amendments passed in that era of World War II barred actions where the government already had knowledge of fraud. The result was to block nearly all private actions. Congress assumed—and now we can say assumed wrongly—that the Justice Department could do a good job prosecuting fraud all by itself. As I said, they were wrong. Between 1943 and 1986, when the False Claims Act was amended, fraud against the government skyrocketed. Most of those accused went unpunished.

A 1981 report by the Government Accountability Office said:

> For those who are caught committing fraud, the chances of being prosecuted and eventually going to jail are slim. . . . The sad truth is that crime against the Government often does pay.

So in 1986 I coauthored much needed amendments to the False Claims Act. The 1986 amendments once again gave citizens the ability to help the government go after fraud in a meaningful way. For example, the amendments provided protection for whistleblowers and eliminated the impossible government knowledge bar. Essentially, a relator's suit was only barred where the fraud had been publicly disclosed. The amendments also clarified that the act covers false claims made not just directly to a government agency; it also covers fraud against grantees, States, and other recipients of Federal funds, whether or not the fund obligation is fixed.

These provisions and others were intended to give the False Claims Act teeth again, and they did. However, as happens with a lot of legislation Congress passes, the courts chipped away at the heart of the False Claims Act and ignored the intent of Congress. The assault on the act came to a head in the Supreme Court's erroneous opinions in the well-known cases of Allison Engine and Totten. The Court held that the act required proof of intent that the government itself pay a claim and that a claim is presented directly to the government.

The problem with that logic is it creates a loophole big enough to drive a truck through. A third party paid with government money would get away with fraud because a contractor, not the government agency, paid the claim. So in 2009 we passed the Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act and made very clear that was not consistent with the original intent of the 1986 False Claims Act. The act reaches false claims for government money or property, whether or not the wrongdoer deals directly with the Federal Government. It was never the intent of Congress to give a free pass to subcontractors or other parties receiving government funds. In fact, those folks are some of the biggest perpetrators of fraud today.

The inspector general for the Department of Health and Human Services has reported a 134-percent increase in complaints against Medicare Part D in just the last 5 years. By not stopping fraud against programs such as Medicare Part D, the government is hemorrhaging funds. Taxpayer money is taxpayer money. Fraud does not magically become OK just because a third party is involved.

Of course, the issue of presentment to government officials is not the only sticking point. There has been pushback in courts and from lobbyists about all sorts of issues, such as the ''public disclosure bar,'' settlement practices, and award shares for relators. Through it all, Congress has had to stay vigilant in keeping courts and Federal agencies generally true to our original legislative intent.

As an example, just recently the Justice Department tried to minimize a relator award in a Medicare and Medicaid fraud case. The relator contributed significantly to the case. The judge recognized that Congress intended that ''the only measuring stick'' for an award is ''the contribution of the relator.'' Those are the words the judge use, and that judge was right.

Congress intended to empower, to protect, and to reward relators who identify fraud against the taxpayers. History teaches us that weakening the relator's rights weakens the government's ability to fight fraud. All that does is let wrongdoers off the hook, and it costs the taxpayers money. That is not the result we intended with the False Claims Act. And the Continental Congress, which was so concerned about identifying misconduct, fraud, and misdemeanors, would not have wanted those results I just talked about.

I want to remind my colleagues to stand strong for the effective tool that we have to combat fraud.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I remind my colleagues that tomorrow marks the 50th anniversary of President Johnson traveling to Independence, MO, to be with President Truman, who in the 1940s had attempted to push through Congress legislation to expand the Social Security Act to include what we now call Medicare. When President Johnson went to Independence, MO, he signed the legislation.

The one we pay the most attention to is Medicare, which is health care for the elderly, but probably equally important and certainly very significant is the creation of Medicaid. Medicaid came out of several years of congressional debate where Congress understood that low-income people—especially low-income people who were working—didn't have insurance. It was for people who were poor, people in nursing homes, and it evolved for elderly people. Most of the money in Medicaid goes to take care of the elderly in nursing homes, and it has had such an impact on their lives.

But think about what Medicare has done. Prior to 1965, this social insurance program—this program we call Medicare today—provided health care to almost every senior. Prior to 1965, only about half of the senior citizens in the United States of America had health insurance—only about half. Huge numbers of the elderly lived in poverty. They lived in poverty partly because for a whole host of reasons they couldn't save enough and Social Security wasn't quite enough. Many lived in poverty because of their health care costs. They would go to the doctor and have to pay out of pocket. They barely could afford that and sometimes couldn't afford that.

So what Medicare does is it provides 50 million seniors today with health insurance. It wasn't easy. A majority of Republicans in the House and the Senate opposed the creation of Medicare. The John Birch Society—we know it today as the tea party—the John Birch Society in those days opposed the creation of Medicare. Insurance interests and the medical interests opposed Medicare. It was a huge struggle. As I said, a majority of Republicans voted against the creation of Medicare. Just like the Affordable Care Act—Republicans didn't like the Affordable Care Act and don't like the Affordable Care Act today. Republicans didn't like Medicare a generation and a half ago and opposed it. Bob Dole—then Congressman Dole, later Senator Dole, later Presidential candidate, Republican nominee Dole—bragged about opposing Medicare, saying it wouldn't work. He bragged about that for a couple of decades after it took effect. But we know social insurance works.

What is social insurance? Social insurance is where everybody pays into something. Whether it is Social Security, whether it is unemployment insurance, whether it is Medicare, people pay into a government program of some kind, and then when they need it, they get assistance. You pay into Social Security. If you become disabled, you get a benefit. Once you retire, you get a benefit. You paid into it. It is called social insurance.

You pay into Medicare all your working life, but when you turn 65, you receive a Medicare benefit. You get health insurance; you get hospitalization; you get a doctor's benefit.

You pay into unemployment insurance, which is another kind of social insurance. When you get laid off, you get assistance so you can continue to feed your family and go on with not as good a lifestyle but at least you will have enough to get along. That is why social insurance matters.

What is troubling about all of this is there are still people in this country—particularly conservative Republicans—who just don't like social insurance. They don't like Social Security. They don't like unemployment insurance. They don't like Medicare. They will tell you they do. Very few politicians running for office say they don't like Medicare. But we know that because if, in fact, they get elected, we know what they do when they are in office. They try to privatize Social Security, as President Bush did. They try to voucherize Medicare, as the Republican Vice Presidential nominee in 2012, PAUL RYAN, tried to do. And we know what so many Republicans—conservatives, the most conservative Republicans—thought about unemployment insurance when they tried to cut it back, when they tried to weaken it, and when they tried to undercut it.

So while government isn't close to solving all of our problems, social insurance sets a safety net that protects the public. It protects you in your old age with Medicare. It protects you if you are disabled with Social Security. It protects you if you are laid off with unemployment insurance.

That is why, when people hear my colleagues—particularly, again, the most conservative Republicans, who have never supported these programs—go after these programs, understand what privatization means and understand what vouchers mean. It means shifting costs of health care to seniors instead of this program taking care of those seniors. It means privatizing Social Security.

In my State of Ohio, half of the senior citizens rely on Social Security for more than half of their income. So think what would have happened if a decade and a half ago President Bush had actually been successful in trying to turn Social Security over to Wall Street, which is what he wanted to do. If he had been successful in turning Social Security over to Wall Street, think what would have happened to people's Social Security checks in 2007, in 2008, in 2009, in 2010, and in 2011, when the bottom fell out of Wall Street and our financial systems. That is why these social systems are so important.

That is why tomorrow, when we commemorate the 50th anniversary of President Johnson traveling to Independence, MO, to the home of President Truman and his signing the Medicare bill, and how much it has meant to generation after generation—my parents, my grandparents, and the parents and grandparents of so many of us in this body and in the gallery—that matters so much to us.

So I wanted to stop by the floor to say happy birthday to Medicare—happy 50th birthday. We want to see another 50 years where Medicare makes a huge difference in the lives of so many Americans.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise in support of the multiyear surface transportation bill before the Senate. The current authorization is set to expire this Friday when the highway trust fund will be depleted to levels that can no longer fully reimburse States for construction that has already been completed. Unfortunately, it looks as though we are going to have yet another short-term extension, rather than immediately enacting a longer term bill, as the House of Representatives is preparing to send the Senate a 3-month extension.

This is a critical time of year for many States, particularly for my home State of Maine, where peak construction work occurs during a very short construction season. It would be irresponsible for Congress not to pass a bipartisan bill this week and keep those projects moving forward.

I hope this fall we will finally be able to come together with our colleagues in the House to send to the President a multiyear surface transportation bill.

The State of Maine currently receives $170 million of Federal highway funds annually, and the Maine Department of Transportation needs and obligates every single dollar. Under the multiyear bill before the Senate, Maine would do even better and would receive nearly $190 million the first year, increasing to nearly $215 million. The legislation before us also prioritizes bridge reconstruction and safety. This funding is critical, as 364 of Maine's bridges have been rated as structurally deficient.

The commissioner of Maine's Department of Transportation tells me that if the highway trust fund is not fixed by July 31, the department will have to stop construction projects midstream within weeks. This would be devastating for the State's economy, for the people employed in these well-paying construction jobs, and for the transportation infrastructure in desperate need of repair and rehabilitation.

The lack of consistent multiyear funding for the highway trust fund makes it so difficult for States to plan, causes construction companies to delay hiring workers, and costs the government more in the long run due to the uncertainty of funding. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the States of Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, Utah, and Wyoming are among those that have already postponed bidding on major transportation projects due to the uncertainty of Federal funding.

While I feel I have no choice but to support a short-term patch to prevent the highway trust fund from expiring later this week, this short-term approach is not the answer. It needs to stop being the norm. It epitomizes Congress's failure to govern sensibly—to govern in a cost-effective way, to govern in a way that allows for the creation of good jobs in this country, and the renovation, repair, and rehabilitation of our vital transportation system.

We in the Senate have the opportunity to pass a multiyear surface transportation bill that reauthorizes our highways, transit, rail, and safety programs, while keeping the highway trust fund solvent for the next 3 years. This legislation gives State departments of transportation the certainty they need to continue planning, investing, and constructing thousands of highway and infrastructure projects that the entire Nation relies upon. These investments create jobs, boost our Nation's economy, and keep us competitive in the global marketplace.

The legislation maintains the Federal-aid highway formula program

structure. This funding is not only crucial for building new highways and bridges but also to maintain and repair our Nation's crumbling infrastructure, including, as I mentioned, the thousands of deficient bridges across the Nation.

With the consideration of this important bill, we are one step further to responsible investments, steady investments in infrastructure that millions of Americans count on every day. That is why I am so disappointed that instead we will do yet another short-term patch. We need to get away from that method of funding the highway trust fund.

I also wish to highlight today the importance of the national infrastructure investment grants, otherwise known as the TIGER program. While this program was not included in the underlying bill, Senators MURRAY, REED, and I have filed an amendment, along with Senators COCHRAN, SHELBY, and others, that would authorize this highly successful TIGER grant program. This program has been such an effective initiative. It has helped to advance critical transportation infrastructure projects across our great country. It is one of the most flexible transportation programs in which State and local authorities can apply for funding. Every Senator here has seen firsthand how TIGER projects create good jobs and support economic growth in our home States. The program has supported highway, bridge, port, rail, and transit projects from this highly competitive program.

In fact, let me give my colleagues some idea of the demand for the TIGER grants. To date, the TIGER program has received a total of $4.6 billion through appropriations from fiscal year 2009 through 2015, awarding 342 projects in all 50 States. Here is how many applications were submitted. Remember that 342 projects were actually funded. There were 6,700 applications that were received by the Department, totaling nearly $134 billion in funding requests. So my colleagues can see that the pent-up demand is just enormous. This demonstrates how oversubscribed the TIGER program is and how much it is needed by our State and local governments. I have received numerous letters of support for our amendment, some of which include Transportation for America and more than 150 elected officials, State departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, and chambers of commerce. You name it; they have endorsed our amendment to authorize this important program.

This is just one of the many ways my colleagues and I would like to work to improve this bipartisan bill. Our TIGER grant amendment is widely supported on both sides of the aisle, and I believe it would pass were we able to get a vote.

It has been a privilege to work very closely with my colleagues, Senator MURRAY and Senator REED, both of whom I have worked with on the transportation-HUD subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, as well as Republicans such as Senator COCHRAN and Senator SHELBY at the full committee level on this program. But, most of all, it is important that we act and act quickly to pass a multiyear surface transportation bill that will create jobs and on which our country can depend.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN).

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am delighted to join the Senator from Maine on the floor today to speak about this critical infrastructure program called TIGER. She and I have worked together for many years on transportation infrastructure, and I so appreciate her leadership and her tremendous enthusiasm in making sure that our country does the right thing. It is a delight to be here today with her, as well as with my colleague from Rhode Island, who is now the ranking member on the transportation appropriations subcommittee. I thank them both for coming to the floor to speak about a program that we created several years ago and that has been so effective.

We all know that investing in our Nation's infrastructure is a critical part of broad-based and long-term economic growth. As we can see today, this is not a partisan issue. Democrats and Republicans agree that infrastructure investments get workers back on the job, help our economy grow in communities across this country, and make sure our transportation systems work in a 21st century economy. That is why I am so proud to be a strong supporter of this bipartisan amendment that we are offering today. It has 29 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle. What it does is it continues the popular competitive grant program known as TIGER.

TIGER grants have made an impact in every corner of this country, and they represent exactly the type of investment our country should be making—addressing our Nation's short-term and long-term transportation issues while creating good-paying jobs—American jobs, I would add—and working to grow our economy from the middle out, not just the top down.

We have all seen firsthand the difference the TIGER program can make in our States. So that is why I fought, along with my colleagues, to get this amendment included in the final Transportation bill.

Since its creation, TIGER has awarded $4.1 billion directly to communities to support more than 340 innovative, multimodal projects in every State. For example, TIGER grants are increasing the flow of commerce and trade between Maine and New Hampshire because of improvements to the Memorial Bridge. In New Mexico, TIGER grants are being used to make critical safety improvements to a major trucking route where the fatality rate has been more than three times the State average. In my home State of Washington, $204 million has gone to 13 critical infrastructure projects across my State, from Seattle to Spokane to Vancouver.

Demand for TIGER funding is intense. Applications always exceed the amount of funding available, sometimes by as much as 20 to 1. It is clear that we can and should be doing so much more to help communities carry out these projects that make our transportation system safer and more efficient.

Though we hit some unfortunate and unnecessary barriers in passing the TIGER amendment, I know that Senator COLLINS and Senator REED are going to continue fighting along with me to support this critical program. I hope more of our colleagues will join with us in boosting regional economies and in improving our Nation's infrastructure, because this type of program is so important to our States and our local agencies as they work to tackle the complex transportation needs of our communities.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, let me begin by commending Senator COLLINS and Senator MURRAY for their extraordinary leadership on this TIGER program in particular but in so many different aspects, particularly with respect to transportation policy. They have done an extraordinary job, and today is no exception. I am delighted to be able to join them on their amendment to increase resources for TIGER grants.

I am disappointed, as are my colleagues, that this is merely, in some respects, a discussion amendment—we can't bring it up for a vote—because I think this is an effort, as Senator COLLINS pointed out, that would be supported strongly by both sides of the aisle.

Since 2009, the TIGER program has helped State and local governments make critical investments in their infrastructure all across this country. In many respects, it is the final piece of a puzzle of how we get needed, necessary infrastructure in place. It has been that catalyst that has brought private funds and State funds and local funds together to accomplish something that makes sense to our economy and to the efficiency and productivity of our States.

TIGER is able to leverage additional resources. It is a program that has been wildly popular to construct roads and bridges, public transit, ports, and passenger and freight railroads. It is very flexible. Its flexibility, its adaptability, and its ability to coalesce other resources has been remarkable. As a result, it has been extraordinarily popular.

Through the TIGER program, the U.S. Department of Transportation has supported more than 340 different projects in all 50 States and in the District of Columbia. These projects have improved safety, they have connected workers to jobs, and they have supported economic development. By the way, they put people to work right away in an economy that needs people to be working right now.

As Senator COLLINS pointed out, the demand has far outstripped the resources: 6,700 applications for the roughly 300 grants. We can do more. The appetite is there, the need is there, and the competitive process ensures that these needed resources are targeted to extraordinarily important programs. So for many of these reasons this is one of those programs that is just win-win-win. Unfortunately, we cannot bring it forward on this legislation. This funding is absolutely necessary.

I have seen in my home State of Rhode Island that without the TIGER grant we would not have been able to jump-start a project which is the Interstate 95 viaduct. It sounds interesting, but it is actually critical. It is the center of I–95 in Providence, RI, which is the major north-south highway in New England. If this viaduct project could not be funded, then essentially there would be a roadblock on I–95. TIGER has helped this project move forward. We have to do more, but it has helped to move this project forward.

It has helped ports in Providence and at Quonset Point. All of these are so necessary because they improve our economic competitiveness globally, regionally, nationally; they put people to work, and they prepare us for much more complicated issues in the world economy. As I said before, we are all disappointed that because of this process we can't have a debate and have a vote. We are also disappointed because we bypassed in this process the committees that typically do these things—the Banking Committee for transit, the Finance Committee for the pay-fors for this legislation. Again, I am disappointed we could not have done it the old fashioned way, through the committees and bring it to the floor. If we had that approach, we could have improved the offsets that we are using to pay for these programs. We could have considered amendments like this. We could have done a lot of things.

Now we all have additional amendments that we are filing, but we won't be able to take them up. I have got one in terms of pay-fors that would produce $55 billion over 10 years—robust funding for a score of highway programs—and it is by capping the deduction of publicly traded corporations for employee salaries over $1 million. I think most Americans would say if someone is getting over $1 million we shouldn't be subsidizing that with tax reimbursement. They very well may be worth that money, but that is a judgment the corporation should make, and if they think it is worthwhile, they are the ones who should put the money up, not with a subsidy from the tax code. That is just an example of some of the ways we could generate real resources.

Again, let me say how strongly I support this amendment, how much we really owe the determination, the vision, and the thoughtfulness of Senator COLLINS and Senator MURRAY. I must also thank Senator INHOFE and Senator BOXER for their work on getting us at least this far. We have got to go further, but they have got us at least this far.

It looks as if, given that the House is leaving, this bill will not be enacted this week. Certainly, we have got a template which I hope we can improve on as we spend the few months' extension that will be the ultimate result of this week. In that time I think one of the measures that will be improved is the TIGER program and other things that we can and must do.

Let me conclude where I began and thank very sincerely Senator COLLINS and Senator MURRAY.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I will yield 5 minutes to Senator LEAHY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from California. I am sure I won't take that long.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. President, I will speak further on the efforts to defund health services for women later on, but I am concerned about those Senators who are attacking women's health with a renewed effort to eliminate health centers that thousands of Vermonters rely on every day. Across the country we have millions of low-income women who depend on Planned Parenthood health centers for lifesaving preventive treatments and care, including annual exams, cervical and breast cancer screenings, and HIV screenings and counseling. These clinics are the primary source of health services for many women. Eliminating Federal funding for Planned Parenthood health centers would deny women access to these critical services. They will force women to find medical care elsewhere or, more devastatingly—or more probable—to simply go without.

The partisan bill that was introduced yesterday in the Senate is the latest attempt to score political points. It is bumper sticker politics at its worst. Needlessly jeopardizing the health care of millions of Americans who depend on these preventive care services is a bid to rally a base that is as irresponsible as it is offensive to this Senator. I know women in Vermont who tell me they go for their health care, their cancer screening, to the Planned Parenthood centers because they feel they have people they feel comfortable with. They can bring their daughters, their children there. They know they are going to be cared for. They know people will care for them. They don't care whether they are Republicans or Democrats, they are women who need health care, and I will strongly oppose the effort that is going to be before us in this body to cut off health care for women.

I yield the floor, and I thank the Senator from California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Vermont, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, for his remarks. I agree with him, and I will be speaking later on today on the same topic.

I want to go back to speaking about the Transportation bill. I want to thank my colleagues for the strong show of support we had on this bill. We had 65 colleagues voting to end debate and get to a vote. We do expect a good vote tomorrow, but I have to say that the reaction of the House Speaker took me aback. Remember that the bill we passed was totally bipartisan, with a majority of Democrats and a strong majority of Republicans. Senators INHOFE, MCCONNELL, BOXER, DURBIN, and a host of others worked very hard on this bill. Why would the Speaker of the House be so negative about it? As a matter of fact, his comments that were reported in the Politico online version today were such that I can't repeat what was said on the floor of the Senate because I would be breaking the rules. I will leave it up to everybody to see exactly what he said about our bipartisan bill. Actually, the name on the bill is that of the Republican leader of the U.S. Senate. Yet the Speaker of the House demeans our bill.

I want to be clear that I defend freedom of speech and I defend the right of Speaker BOEHNER to say whatever he wants; therefore, I can say whatever I want. What I would like to ask is why on Earth would you oppose a bill that is so bipartisan, that received 65 votes, and that the Republican leader has put his name to? Why would you do that?

Another question is this—and I put up this chart. Where is the House bill? One could argue that you don't like our bill. Where is your bill? What have you done? Where have they been?

We have known about this transportation crisis for a long, long time. The Presiding Officer and I have worked hard together on getting a strong bill, even though we disagree on so many things. The bill was voted out of the Environment and Public Works Committee 20 to 0. Yet the Republican Speaker of the House condemns the bill. Where is the House bill?

We are about to pass the third extension since the last Transportation bill expired in 2014. There have been dozens and dozens of extensions—more than 30. We know that when the highway trust fund is extended for just a couple of months at a time—and Senator INHOFE has taught me this because I was not aware—it is administratively

very expensive to do, and on the ground what is happening is States are shutting down their projects.

Let's look at the seven States that have essentially canceled or delayed projects because there has been inaction. Arkansas has canceled or delayed highway projects, as well as Delaware, Georgia, Montana, Tennessee, Utah, and Wyoming. Why have these States done this? Because they are concerned that we don't have a long-term highway bill. That is why we are so excited about the bill that looks like it is on its way to passage because it is a 6-year authorization with a full 3 years of funding. Again, I ask the Speaker rhetorically what is it about the bill that he doesn't like?

Let's go to the highlights of the bipartisan Senate bill. I will discuss them. I would put up the chart which asks ''Where is the House bill?'' because that is the common question I want to ask today. It is easy to throw darts at someone else and say I don't like what you did. What you did wasn't good enough. Where is your answer? They have nothing—nothing but another paltry extension. Why did they do that? Either they don't have an idea in the world as to how to proceed or they want to go on a 5½-week break.

The American people—most of us—work. I ask rhetorically: How many people in America who hold down a job get a 5½-week break, which is called the August break, which begins in July, and they get that break without taking care of pressing business? I think your boss would say: You know what. You have a lot of problems here, so stay another couple of days. Oh, no, they want to get out of town. They originally were going to get out of town tomorrow. My understanding is they are trying to get out today. That gives them a 5½-week break without taking care of business.

I think anybody who is watching this who really cares about the highway trust fund, transportation, and bridges collapsing—let's look at this one that happened in California. This is a frightening view of a bridge that collapsed. We were so lucky. We thank God that nobody was killed. California now has a bridge that has collapsed, and people have to go 400 miles out of their way to go from California to Arizona or Arizona to California. We are hoping to fix it with emergency funds, but we can't rebuild the part that fell that quickly. We need a long-term bill.

I say to the Speaker: Don't go home. I say to the majority whip over there, my friend from California: Don't go home. Stay and do your job. The American people are not going to think very highly of you if you leave with this highway trust fund going broke on Friday.

The Senate has passed a bill. It is a good bill. The Speaker has used some words I cannot use on the floor to describe it.

I want to ask the Speaker what it is that he doesn't like. What is it that he doesn't like? Is it the $55 billion a year for 6 years, the first 3 years being fully paid for with every State getting more funding, including his State, for highways and transit? Does he not like that? Does he think we shouldn't spend funding on fixing up our bridges, roads, and highways? Does he not like the two new programs—the freight program, which would provide funds for States to improve the movement of goods? Does he not like the assistance for major projects, a program which is going to help our States when they know there is a real problem in their community and they want to build a project?

Does the Speaker not like the fact that we have tripled safety fines so when a Takata airbag problem happens the companies have to step up? Does he not like the fact that there is a new law in there that says consumers should be protected from renting a car that is under recall? We stopped that. Does he not like the first-ever commuter rail fund for positive train control, where we can actually help our computer railways put in positive train control so we will not have those tragedies that happened?

Why doesn't he like this bill? It has a long list of supporters. Let's look at the supporters. I guarantee you it is rare that you see the U.S. Chamber of Commerce agreeing with the International Union of Operating Engineers. It is rare that the Laborers' International Union of North America agrees with the AAA, which agrees with the Conference of Mayors, which agrees with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, which agrees with the Association of State Highway and Transit Officials, which agrees with the Mothers Against Drunk Driving, which agrees with the American Council of Engineering Companies. It goes on. It goes on. It is rare to see it. The American Highway Users Alliance, the American Public Transportation Association, the American Road & Transportation Builders, the Society of Civil Engineers, the trucking association, the equipment distributors, the general contractors, the equipment manufacturers, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the National Asphalt Pavement Association. It goes on and on and on. This is America.

The National Association of Counties—I used to serve as a county supervisor. It is hard to get us to agree. They agree. Pass the bill. The National Association of Manufacturers, I understand they scored this vote. The National Association Of Truck Stop Operators, the National Governors Association, the League of Cities, the ready mixed concrete people, the stone, sand, and gravel people, the owner-operator independent drivers, the Portland Cement Association, the retail industry leaders.

The AFL–CIO sent a statement yesterday to the House: Take up this issue. If they do not love our bill, I—it is fine. I do not expect them to, but I do say: Where is your bill? Where is it? You can stand on the Capitol steps and say: I don't like this about it. I don't like that about it. I don't like the payfors. I don't like what is on page 50 or page 150. That is your right and I respect it. I support your right to say this is not a good bill, if you don't think so.

Where is your bill? Where is the House bill? Get it together. Do not go on vacation. Wait until you finish this job because I will tell you what happens when you do go on vacation. The first person in your State to see you who was laid off—because States are cutting back. We know from the Association of General Contractors that these States lost construction jobs last month because we have not acted on a long-term bill: Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Just last month the General Contractors told us that construction workers were laid off because we have not acted. I want to say to the Speaker, Ohio is on the list. You lost jobs in Ohio. What are you doing by just saying you don't like this bill? Stay in. Do your work. You have terrific people on both sides of the aisle on your Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. I had the privilege of working on both sides of the aisle with Chairman SHUSTER, with Ranking Member DEFAZIO, and many other members of that committee. I know the Speaker has told me he wants a 6-year bill. I believe him, but why put it off?

We have the Inhofe-Boxer McConnell-Durbin product. It passed overwhelmingly. Take it up. Here is what the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget said: It is refreshing to see Congress focus on a multiyear solution instead of another short-term patch. They say of our bill: This is a fiscally responsible bill that relies on solid offsets.

Let me be clear. I did not love every offset. I see my friend from Maryland. He knows we tried desperately to get better offsets. There may be a lot of people in the House who don't like the offsets. Why don't you come together and figure out another way? Why don't you see if you can fully fund a 6-year bill? We fully funded a 3-year bill. So I ask the question of the Speaker: What is it about our bill that you don't like and where is your bill?

Yesterday Chairman SHUSTER over there issued a statement: The House also needs to make its voice heard and put forth its own priorities. He is right. So why are you going home for a 5½-week break when the Senate is going to be in session next week? Put off your little break here—or your long-term break here, 5½ weeks. I do not know too many American workers who get that kind of a break in the summer.

I say it is time to see your bill. I think we can get it done. I have a lot of faith in the people over there. I served in the House for 10 proud years. I know how things get done. It gets done a lot easier than over here because here we have rules that are very old, which can allow one person to hold up a bill for days and days, but they don't have it. They don't have that kind of situation. They can come together, go through the committee, come out with a rule, bring the bill to the floor, and get it done.

Let me quote from the Washington Post editorial:

> The Senate bill authorizes 6 years of spending on transportation projects under a sensible plan Senators Boxer and Inhofe worked out. The bill provides 3 years of guaranteed funding for the spending plan, raised from a variety of sources.

They basically say—they don't love the process, neither did any of us. But they say it is a ''significant improvement from what Congress has done for the past decade or so, as lawmakers fumbled from short-term funding patch to short-term funding patch, a nonstrategy that often relied on budget gimmicks and made it difficult for transportation officials to conduct long-term planning.''

So we have an opportunity. The Senate has worked its will. We have a good bill. Is it great? Is it perfect? No. Are the pay-fors great and perfect? No. Is every policy in it perfect? No. But as AMY KLOBUCHAR told me, we stood our ground, all of us, but we found common ground. That is important. We stood our ground, but we found common ground. That is how we are supposed to do things around here.

I look at my friend who is going to speak shortly from Maryland. I know he set the pace with Senator CORKER in working out some very difficult issues in the Foreign Relations Committee, on which I am so proud to serve and so proud of my leader on that committee, Senator CARDIN. They set the pace over there.

Then PATTY MURRAY, working with LAMAR ALEXANDER—they came out with an education bill. Then I worked with Senator INHOFE, and he worked with me. MITCH MCCONNELL worked with Senator DURBIN. We came out with a product that is supported by a majority of both caucuses. I am proud of the product. I know it is not perfect. I know if I had my way, I would have drawn up a very different bill. So would Senator INHOFE. So would Senator MCCONNELL. So would Senator DURBIN.

But here is what is at stake. I will show you the bridge again. This is what is at stake. This is the face of what we are doing. It is bigger than our egos. It is bigger than our taking a 5½-week break. I served as a county supervisor. We knew the building we were in was earthquake deficient. It is still beautiful, Frank Lloyd Wright's last built-out government building. I served in that gorgeous building. When I found out it could collapse in an earthquake and the five county supervisors found that out—we were told many, many years ago it was possible we could be held liable because we knew absolutely that this could crumble around us.

I am not saying for one second that any colleague is liable if something like this happens again, but I will tell you I think it is in fact a moral question for us. How long can we put this off? I guarantee you a 3-month patch is not going to give the States the confidence to enter into any long-term agreements to fix any of the 60,000-plus bridges that are deficient and 50 percent of the roads that are not up to par.

So I say to the House, if you don't stay here and you go home after passing a short-term extension and someone comes up to you and says, Congressman or Congresswoman, I just got laid off. I am a construction worker—I guarantee you are going to have a hard time explaining why you left and took a 5½-week break, August break, and you left before even August 1. It is the first time the House will have done that in 10 years. They have not left before August 1 in 10 years.

There is a lot on our plates. Instead, we are going to talk about Planned Parenthood. Fine. I welcome the argument because to me it is the same old, same old argument about interfering with women's health. I will go there with you. I will be there with you. I will fight that battle for the people of America, the women of America. I don't mind that, but we have to do this. We have to do this in the House. We have to pass a bill.

So I hope the House will change its mind. The Republican leadership, they know they control the schedule. They should cancel their recess and stay in an extra week. In that extra week, we can work together. If the Speaker does not like our bill, he can write his own bill. We will go to conference, we will start working on it, and we will get that bill. That is my ask today. My ask is, Where is the House bill? I am asking the House in the nicest way I know how: Please don't leave tonight or tomorrow on a 5½-week break with your desk a mess with this issue. It is a mess with this issue.

The highway trust fund is going bust on Friday. If the best you can do after knowing about this for months and months and months is give us a paltry 3-month extension, then shame on you. The Senate has proven, on a very bipartisan basis, that we can do better—not a 3-month extension but 3 years of a paid-for bill, 6 years of an authorized bill. Surely you can meet us and we can get this done together.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first I want to thank Senator BOXER. It is a privilege to serve on the Environment and Public Works Committee with Senator BOXER, under her and Senator INHOFE's leadership. The bill we reported out, a 6-year bill, is a bill that deals with the surface transportation needs in this country.

It was put together in a very bipartisan manner. It respected and reflected different views. I had certain views with regard to alternative transportation programs. Not everybody agreed, but we were able to come together on that issue so we can help local governments with their priorities.

We need a 6-year bill. The Senator is absolutely right. I must tell the Senator, I could not agree with her more. We have been talking since the last extension, the extension before that, and the extension before that, that we need to have a 6-year reauthorization. The Senator was able, working with Senator INHOFE, to deliver a bill that does that. We have yet to see a 6-year bill from the House of Representatives. We are prepared to make the hard decisions. We are prepared to sit down with our House colleagues and work out the differences, but we need a 6-year reauthorization, not another short-term extension. They are talking now about 3 months. Another short-term extension provides no predictability. I have programs in Maryland, and I know the Senator from California has programs in her State, that you cannot plan with a 3-month partnership with the Federal Government. You need to have the multiyear commitments.

What Senator BOXER was able to do in the Environment and Public Works Committee—we need to duplicate that and get this done and get a bill to the President's desk. It is more important than the recess. I thank my colleague for taking the floor and for her extraordinary work in that regard.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this week—tomorrow, to be precise—we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid, which then-President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed into law on July 30, 1965.

I take great pride in the Medicare and Medicaid Programs, which fall under the Social Security Act, because they are so successful, but also because—as I think most of my colleagues know—the headquarters for both the Social Security Administration (SSA) and for CMS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, are located in Maryland. The men and women who work at SSA and CMS are doing incredible service to carry out some of the most important programs in our country: Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

For the past 50 years, our seniors and our most vulnerable citizens have been able to rely upon Medicare to provide access to affordable, high-quality health care.

Let me underscore how important Medicare is to our country, to our seniors and those who suffer with disabilities. It allows them to be able to get quality health coverage, affordable care, without having to deal with the difficulties of obtaining and paying for private insurance. Private insurance makes money by insuring people who make fewer claims. As you get older, your health care needs become more intense. Therefore, private insurance companies aren't exactly excited to have people who make a lot of claims in their health insurance pool. That is why we developed Medicare. We developed it so our seniors would be able to have quality coverage.

Before we had Medicare, one out of every two seniors had no health insurance. Our seniors are now able to get health care coverage. Today, only 2 percent of adults aged 65 and older lack health insurance. Before we had Medicare, nearly 60 percent of seniors' health care costs came out of their pockets. Today, that is down to 13 percent. So we have seen significant improvement over time. Before we had Medicare, 1 out of every 3 women aged 65 or older lived in poverty. Today, that number is 1 out of 10.

All of the indicators that we have show that Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security have accomplished their objectives. Now we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid.

With regard to the Medicare Program, those seniors who have disabilities and who qualify are allowed to have full coverage—again without having to worry about being discriminated against in the private insurance marketplace. In Medicaid, 33 million children are covered, more than 1 out of every 3 in our Nation.

Over time we have improved these programs. The Medicaid program has been improved by the passage of the Children's Health Insurance Program, a bipartisan bill that was passed by this body. It significantly improved access to care for our children, particularly our low-income children.

We have also improved access to coverage through the passage of the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act has strengthened and improved Medicare and expanded Medicaid Programs to cover more low-income Americans. To date, thanks to the ACA, 9.4 million Medicare beneficiaries have saved more than $15 billion just on prescription drugs. In Maryland alone, our seniors have saved more than $230 million on their prescriptions.

I am particularly pleased that over the 50-year history of Medicare, we have changed the program, improved it, and built upon it over time. When it was first enacted, it was there mainly to cover seniors' needs when they were injured and ill. It was an insurance program for when they got sick or had an injury. Well, we have changed that focus to a wellness program to keep seniors healthy.

I am particularly proud that when I was in the House of Representatives, I authored the bill that expanded Medicare to cover preventive health care, including screenings for colorectal cancer, diabetes, and osteoporosis, and mammographies. Those tests were added in legislation that I authored in the House of Representatives. We have come a long way since then, culminating with the Affordable Care Act that eliminated all the copays for preventive health care.

Today, Medicare is keeping our senior population healthier. Seniors know that their preventive health care is covered and that they can detect diseases at an earlier stage and live healthier lives as a result.

Over the past five decades, our Nation has seen incredible, positive change as a result of the Medicare and Medicaid Programs. On the 50th anniversary of the passage of this landmark legislation, let us celebrate the progress we have made and work together to try to find ways to build upon that progress by further improving our Nation's health care system to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable, high-quality health care and are able to live healthy, productive lives.

This is particularly timely because I believe next week we are going to see an attack on women's health care. I urge my colleagues to recognize the historical discrimination we have had against women's health care in this country. We dealt with that in the Affordable Care Act, some of the historical discriminations against women. But we need to be very careful about this because there is going to be an attack on Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood is particularly important for women's health care needs. Yes, it does deal with contraceptive services—that is very important for women—but it also deals with preventive health care, screenings, and primary health care. So many women get their health care needs met through Planned Parenthood.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid, as we celebrate how we have been able to make progress in providing affordable, quality health care to all Americans—whether they are our seniors, our disabled population, our children, those of low income, those groups who have been historically discriminated against—I urge that we look to try to build upon those programs and make them even stronger and not weaken the programs that are available.

President Johnson's Vice President, Hubert H. Humphrey, famously said that ''the moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.'' While we still have work to do, we are closer to passing that moral test because of the creation of Medicare and Medicaid 50 years ago and, more recently, the enactment of the Affordable Care Act. Let's continue to make progress so that all Americans have accesses to affordable, quality health care.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise today to express my deep concerns with the nuclear agreement negotiated between the United States and other world powers and Iran.

In May, Congress acted in a bipartisan way to enact the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. The Senate passed the legislation 98 to 1, and the House passed it 400 to 25. The bill was signed into law by President Obama.

This critically important legislation provides Congress, as the representatives of the American people, the ability to examine and vote on an agreement that will have tremendous impact on the future security of the Middle East and the world.

When the Senate passed the legislation in May, I said the bill would allow Congress to hold the administration accountable for negotiating an enforceable and verifiable agreement that would stop Iran's progress toward a nuclear weapon.

Negotiators have completed their work. Review of the agreement is underway. Committees are holding important hearings. We had one this morning. After the August recess, Congress will have the opportunity to vote on a resolution that approves or disapproves of the deal reached with Iran.

I believe the agreement is flawed in several ways. First, the agreement fails to provide for an inspections regime that is strong enough to prevent Iran from fulfilling its nuclear ambitions. Any agreement with Iran should include rigorous and immediate inspections of suspected nuclear sites. There has been much talk and hope of an anywhere, anytime inspection regime, but anywhere, anytime inspections are not what this agreement provides. Instead, under this agreement, it could take 24 days, and potentially longer under the Joint Commission process, before inspectors have access to a suspected nuclear site. It is obvious Iran could hide elements of a nuclear program, such as the construction of centrifuges, before inspectors could ever gain access to a suspected nuclear site.

Iran has already failed to meet the transparency requirements of the interim Joint Plan of Action. The International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA, consistently warned of Iran's failure to meet those standards of full transparency and in its June 2015 report stated that ''the Agency remains

concerned about the possible existence in Iran of undisclosed nuclear-related activities involving military related organizations, including activities related to the development of a nuclear payload for a missile.''

Given Iran's lack of transparency, I believe the content of this agreement does not contain strong enough mechanisms to prevent Iran's clandestine development of a nuclear weapon.

Second, I find it more troubling that Congress—or even the administration—has not been given access to the understanding between Iran and the IAEA regarding how Iran's compliance with the agreement will be implemented. This has been the subject of great discussion.

Third, I am concerned the agreement will provide Iran with financial resources that they could use to continue to fund terrorist groups that put Americans and our allies at risk. We know they were doing it in the past. We know of their desire to do it in the future. It is troubling that when the sanctions against Iran are lifted, the nation will immediately receive approximately $150 billion in assets. As a designated state sponsor of terrorism for over 30 years, Iran has funded proxy wars across the region.

These wars range from Shia militias in Iraq to Houthis insurgents in Yemen. Iran further threatens our allies through funding Hezbollah and Hamas and propping up the regime of Bashar al-Assad, who continues to slaughter his own people.

While no one knows for sure how Iran will spend the signing bonus it receives from sanctions relief, the regime's prior behavior provides the best evidence of how it will act in the future. I hear the argument that the internal infrastructure of the country has fallen into disrepair because of the sanctions and because of the lack of the economic activities. Yet we have to look at Iran as still funding terrorist activity while allowing their own country's infrastructure to become failed and compromised.

What makes us think that with the new flush, $150 billion signing bonus, Iran is going to change their priorities all of a sudden? I personally have trouble with that.

Finally, I am worried the decision to lift the embargo on conventional arms and ballistic missiles sold to Iran will allow Iran to present a greater threat to its neighbors. In addition, it could precipitate a military buildup in the region, which will in turn increase volatility in an already volatile region. Despite these questions and concerns, the administration has argued that our only options are to accept the deal or to go forward with Iran.

To accept this binary choice is to say the American people should accept this deal, regardless of how one-sided it may be, in order to avoid a military conflict with Iran.

As a newspaper in my State, the Charleston Gazette-Mail, editorialized yesterday, this argument ''paint[s] a simplistic picture that allows [its proponents] to gloss over the very real problems with this deal.''

The Gazette-Mail continues:

> The deal's many critics have consistently made the case that there are other possible paths. The problem is that this administration doesn't want to take them.

Even the President's top general agrees that this is a false proposition. Just this morning, when asked if the choice was binary—accept the Iran agreement or go to war—GEN Martin Dempsey, Chair of the Joint Chiefs, said that ''we have a range of options and I always present them.''

All of us would prefer a diplomatic solution in Iran, but a good agreement with Iran is one that will truly cut off Iran's path to a nuclear weapon and improve the security situation in the Middle East.

The sanctions passed by this Congress, together with the sanctions that were built in concert with our foreign allies over the course of a decade, were what brought Iran to the negotiating tables in the first place. These sanctions should be kept in place and strengthened until Iran is forced to accept a deal that actually makes the region safer. I believe a better deal is possible than the leverage provided by sanctions, and I am not alone. A CNN poll released yesterday found that 52 percent of the American people want Congress to reject this deal, while only 44 percent believe the agreement should be approved.

A majority of Americans didn't say they oppose this agreement because they want war with Iran. Absolutely not. Instead, the poll reveals that a majority of Americans want a better deal, one that cuts off Iran's path to a nuclear weapon and makes the Middle East more secure.

There are legitimate arguments on both sides of the debate about the Iran deal. I accept that the President and his administration truly believe the deal they have negotiated is in America's best interest, but the claim that those who have a different view want war with Iran is an inappropriate attempt to short-circuit the legislative debate about this agreement.

Congress must stand up against a threat to national security and ensure that a monumental agreement contains the necessary verification and enforcement measures to protect future generations from a nuclear Iran. I stand with all of our allies in the region that have put their trust in America to negotiate a deal that will protect them indefinitely from the threat of Iranian nuclear weapons.

The posterity of our Nation and our allies depends on the critical policy decisions made by this Congress and this administration. Now is the time to carefully consider the nature of Iran's threat toward Israel and America, the history of Iranian-funded terrorism, and the consequences of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. America does not have to accept a bad deal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, once again, I am on the floor for the ''Waste of the Week.'' Each week since February, I have come to the floor to discuss an issue of waste, fraud, and abuse—misspent taxpayer money identified by neutral agencies of the Federal Government that didn't have a partisan bone to pick in this or by inspectors general of various agencies or by the agencies themselves.

In February, I said I am going to come here every week throughout the duration of this session, and I am going to try to achieve a goal of $100 billion of waste. I wasn't sure we could reach that goal, but today is a very special day because we are going to highlight by the end of my speech over $100 billion of waste, fraud, and abuse that the taxpayer is covering with hard-earned pay at home.

Over the past several months, I have highlighted a variety of examples from the serious, such as the illegal procurement practices at the Veterans' Administration, to the ridiculous: taxpayer funding, under grants, for massages of rabbits to determine whether a massage after strenuous exercise made them feel better. I don't think we needed to gather a bunch of rabbits and pay, with a $387,000 grant to an organization to mechanically massage the backs of rabbits.

I think if you stop anybody on the street and ask: Do you think a good massage would make you feel a little bit better, especially after a strenuous exercise—I think the answer would be yes. Actually, I thought I might want to sign up for this until I found out that when the experiment was over, they killed the rabbits. So I didn't want to put myself in that position.

Then, from the young taxpayers who receive (improper and fraudulent child tax credit refunds) to the old, the active Social Security numbers that were assigned to individuals over the age of 112. Obviously there aren't too many people in the country, if any, over that age. These people had obviously died many years before—on and on it goes.

We are deluged with examples of waste, fraud, and abuse, which brings some chuckles and brings some ''Can you believe we are actually doing that?'' But the bottom line is that people are working hard every day to make ends meet to pay the mortgage, to buy the groceries, to save money to send the kids to school, and they are sending taxes to Washington and the bureaucracy is doing stuff like this.

It is a bad break for taxpayers, and it is shameful for government not to take measures to stop this waste, fraud, and abuse from happening. I am trying to disclose to the public this is how your taxpayer money is being spent so they will put pressure on their Members and say clean it up. Fortunately, we have been able to do some of that, but there is a long way to go.

Today I want to discuss errors with payments under the earned-income tax credit. Let me go back and explain this. The earned-income tax credit is a refundable tax credit that offsets income tax owed by low-income taxpayers. Congress originally approved the earned-income tax credit in 1975 to offset the burden of Social Security taxes for low-income workers and provide an incentive for them to work. It is a good motive. To some extent, it has worked. The way it works is this: When the credit exceeds the amount of taxes due, it provides a lump-sum payment, after you file your taxes, to those who qualify for the program.

People who work and earn less than a certain income level qualify for this refund from the government. According to the Congressional Research Service, this tax credit is the largest need-tested, antipoverty cash assistance program the Federal Government runs. So whether you think this is a right program or not, the questions are: How is it being run? And is it efficient and effective or is it making mistakes?

We are talking about Big Government. Mistakes are usually big mistakes, if there are some. In 2011, the IRS identified more than 6.6 million potentially erroneous earned-income tax credit claims that went to households that didn't qualify. Individuals were telling the government they are working and earning and therefore eligible for the earned-income tax credit bonus check, but at the same time they were telling other agencies, such as the Supplemental Social Security Program, that they are not earning that much or not working or don't have income. Some are getting double checks—one for which they're qualified and one for which they're not.

When we add all of that—the latest year that has been identified is 2013, and the tax credit costs to taxpayers during that year amounted to $60 billion. Of those, $14.5 billion were erroneously sent out checks by the agency, the IRS. If we can put in place measures that can provide accountability and verification to this program, we could save the taxpayer up to $14.5 billion a year. So with that, we add to our gauge an additional $14.5 billion.

As everyone can see on this chart, this gauge is climbing up each week. This chart shows the amount of money saved through the various programs we have identified. We have now eclipsed the $100 billion level, and we are just a little ways past the middle of the year.

I could take the charts, stick them in the back closet, and say: Thank you. I made it to my $100 billion mark, and I have made my point. But I will keep on going. Every week the Senate is in session for the remainder of this year, I will be back down here for the latest ''Waste of the Week'' so we can embarrass, disclose, and let agencies know that they are wasting taxpayers' dollars, and we, as a Congress, need to do something about that.

Some people may say that $100 billion in comparison with the total Federal budget is a drop in the bucket, but $100 billion is almost incomprehensible. Maybe Donald Trump understands what $100 billion is, but I don't. In terms of that magnitude of money, it is a small portion of what we spend here.

We can do so much more in terms of identifying issues and programs that will save the taxpayer money. Federal spending is out of control. We know that, and this highlights some of that. The real issue is much worse. While States such as mine, the State of Indiana, have created balanced budgets, eliminated debt, and provided surpluses, which they can use to return to the taxpayers or save for a rainy day, the Federal Government has not done that. This is a huge challenge in front of us. This is just a small piece of trying to identify some of the problems and challenges that we have, and by identifying them, we can save the taxpayer money by making reforms to these various programs.

With that, I will yield back the floor, but you can count on me being here every week for the rest of this session with the ''Waste of the Week'' for as long as the Congress and Senate are in session.

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

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

TRAGEDY ON CROW RESERVATION

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to share some remarks on what is going on with Planned Parenthood. Prior to sharing those remarks, I wish to inform my colleagues that we received some tragic news that has come out of Montana. I literally just got off the phone with Chairman Darrin Old Coyote with the Crow Tribe in Montana. I wish to take a moment to discuss the reports of a tragic shooting that has occurred on the Crow Reservation in Montana.

This afternoon we received word of a shooting in the community of Pryor, MT, on the Crow Reservation. I literally just got off the phone with Chairman Darrin Old Coyote before I got to the floor just to see how things were going and to be informed of the latest developments. There are two confirmed fatalities and at least one other injured individual who has been life-flighted to Billings.

My wife Cindy and I are deeply saddened by the news of today's tragic shootings in Pryor. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Pryor community, and the families of all victims are in our prayers. I understand this was a couple who had children and grandchildren and are well known in Pryor.

I am staying in close contact with Crow leaders, with local law enforcement, Federal officials, and community leaders during this time. It is our understanding and it has been confirmed that the suspect has been apprehended and is in custody.

My staff and all of the staffs here in Washington stand ready to help those affected by this tragedy. Our hearts break for the victims and for their families.

I ask my Senate colleagues to join the Montana delegation and all Montanans in keeping the community, the victims, and their families in their thoughts and prayers.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. President, 655,306 kidneys is more than $49 million, which equates to 256 Lamborghinis; 327,653 hearts is more than $24.5 million, which equates to 128 Lamborghinis; 1,310,612 arms and legs is $98 million, which equates to 512 Lamborghinis—this is the envisioned price tag were every one of Planned Parenthood's 327,653 abortions performed last year to provide body parts and organs to harvest.

The utter callousness of Planned Parenthood in discussing the price of baby parts, as if handing over a menu, is clear evidence of the culture of an organization enriched through ghoulish and disturbing practices. This is a culture which protects tissue over life and lays out harvested organs as financial milestones toward a new car.

Planned Parenthood has worked its way into the American lexicon, becoming synonymous with women's health but hiding its abortion practices.

Planned Parenthood received $528 million of Federal taxpayer money last year alone. And when asked on the street, so few even know that Planned Parenthood does abortions. But now the veil has been lifted, exposing inexcusable and unconscionable behavior.

This organization, Planned Parenthood, performs more abortions than any other organization in our country. But now our own calloused hearts—the heart of our Nation—are shocked out of apathy, and we have a choice. We cannot accept the destruction and the selling of our children, to stare clearly into the face of the appalling and do nothing. We can allow our consciences to be moved and then remove the public endorsement of these actions. We can remove Federal taxpayer funding of the organization that has perpetuated such horrific actions.

I am proud to join Senator JONI ERNST and Leader MCCONNELL, as well as 23 of my Senate colleagues, in the introduction of legislation to protect women's access to health services and defund Planned Parenthood. This bill ensures that funds allocated to Planned Parenthood will be redirected to other eligible entities to provide women's health care services.

Let me be very clear, so the information is clear about what this bill does and what it doesn't do. This bill ensures there is no reduction—not $1 of reduction—in overall Federal funding available to support women's health. This bill ensures the preservation of Federal funding for women's health

services which include important services of relevant diagnostic, laboratory, and radiology services, for well-child care, for prenatal and post partum care, for immunization, for family planning services, including contraception, sexually transmitted disease testing, and cervical and breast cancer screenings. Let me say again, this bill ensures the preservation of Federal funding for these very important services for women. This bill does not reduce any funding for women's health services.

This bill does not allow any Federal funds to go toward Planned Parenthood to continue its practice of trafficking baby parts. We bristled when we heard of an abortion doctor that left babies born alive to die, and we sensed justice when that same doctor was sentenced in a court of law for his crimes. Similarly, we shuddered as parents. Cindy and I have been married for 29 years. We have four children, two boys and two girls. We shuddered as parents at the idea of baby parts being harvested and sold in the context of equating that value to purchasing a Lamborghini. Will we see this to the same end?

We are a society. We are a nation that values life so much that in our Declaration of Independence it is clearly articulated that all have the right to life. We Democrats, Republicans, and all Americans must stand strong in the defense of those who are most vulnerable. We must advocate and be a voice for those who do not have a voice, for the most vulnerable in our society, including the unborn.

Over the last year, we have cringed at terrible images coming out of the Middle East. We have seen horrible images coming across social media, and we have called loudly for action. That was on soil thousands and thousands of miles away from America.

Today we cringe at terrible images that have occurred on our own soil. Nothing, not even a Lamborghini, is worth the lives of our children. Planned Parenthood has clearly articulated the value they have placed on babies' organs and limbs, but what they have failed to acknowledge is the value the American people know full well, and that is the value of our children, which is priceless.

I yield the floor.

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

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, thank you very much. It is so interesting, coming away from the Transportation bill where we saw such cooperation between the two sides, and now we are headed back to our corners with the vast majority of Republicans attacking an organization that helps millions of Americans get fundamental health care. It is the same old sides again.

My friend from Montana may not like Planned Parenthood, and he can tell his family and his friends not to go there, but he doesn't speak for the American people. They trust Planned Parenthood, an organization that has been around since 1916. Its founder was thrown in jail because she wanted to give birth control to people.

Let's be clear. My friend and those who are writing this legislation state that they are not attacking health care. Yet they try to defund the one organization in the country that people trust to deliver that health care. It is interesting because it is part of the attack on health care that we see from my friends on the other side of the aisle.

We celebrate the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid which have provided millions of Americans with accessible, affordable health care. This week we heard one of the leading Republican Presidential candidates talk about how it is time to end Medicare. This isn't a fringe candidate. I heard Newt Gingrich say years ago that Medicare will wither on the vine. They have been after Medicare forever and ever and ever. They don't like Medicaid. Some Republican governors are not providing their poor people with health care because they don't like Medicaid. These are lifelines that from their start have been attacked by Republicans. I have proof. I have spoken many times and quoted Republicans from past years going after Medicare, going after Medicaid, and now again going after Planned Parenthood and women's health care. This is an ideological attack, and it would put women's health and women's lives at risk. It is attacking women's reproductive health care, an issue that was resolved in 1973.

I want to say to my friends on the other side—and they are my friends—why don't you just keep moving us forward like you did on the Transportation bill. We set aside our differences and we are moving forward. Now you are reopening, again, the attacks on health care. You tried to repeal ObamaCare more than 55 times now in the House. It didn't work. You tried it here the other day; it didn't work. You have attacked Medicare. You have attacked Medicaid, and now you want to take away women's health care provided by an organization that is chosen by millions of women and men every single year for lifesaving and preventive services.

This legislation is being driven by an outrageous and potentially illegal act of an extremist group. It is just the latest chapter in the long history of attacks on Planned Parenthood and their health care providers who work there, and on the women and the men they serve.

Again, one can go back to the beginning of Planned Parenthood, when America's first birth control clinic opened before women could vote. We forget that women got the vote in 1920. If we have a woman in the White House in 2020—something that I personally hope will happen—we will celebrate the fact that 100 years after women got the right to vote there is a woman in the White House. The point is that on the very day the clinic opened 100 years ago, dozens of women waited in line. Do you know what they wanted? Lifesaving birth control information. They wanted to plan their families. They wanted to avoid unplanned pregnancies and the options that they would face if they had an unplanned pregnancy. What was the response? The clinic was raided, the clinic was shut down, and nine days later its founder was thrown in jail. Planned Parenthood has been a target of attacks by extremists since 1916, and that attack continues on the floor today.

Despite the effort of extremists, our country has come a long way since the days when a woman could be jailed for advocating birth control. We can't go back. We can't turn back the clock on women's health, and we still have people that are saying women shouldn't get free birth control through ObamaCare. They want it to go over the counter. We can't turn back the clock on women's health, but that is what is about to come.

With all the problems facing us—we still have work to do on transportation, we still have work to do to avoid sequester and all the deep cuts to our military and to our domestic programs such as the FBI, Homeland Security, food inspection, and border patrol. All of that is going to be cut, but, oh no, we don't turn to that to fix that. What do we turn to? Another attack on Planned Parenthood, another attack on women's health.

We know this extremist group went undercover and secretly taped people. That is what they did. If you approve of those tactics that is fine, but what I approve of is women getting health care. I think that when you scratch the surface, what you will find is that a lot of my colleagues don't think women should be able to plan their families. We are still debating birth control. You have got to be kidding.

You have to look at the work Planned Parenthood does: cancer screening, STD tests, and other lifesaving health care. They want to deny women this health care.

Do you know what I really find extreme? So many of my Republican friends tell me day after day, keep Uncle Sam out of our private lives. How true. I agree. Some of them even call themselves Libertarians. When you look up the meaning of Libertarian in Wikipedia, it is defined as one who ''seeks to maximize the autonomy and freedom of choice, emphasizes political freedom, voluntary association, and the primacy of individual judgment.'' The primacy of individual judgment—that is the definition of Libertarian. Yet my colleagues decided they don't like a certain organization so they should say to everybody in the country follow us. No. No. It is not right. Planned Parenthood is the safety net for women's health care, and it has

been so. This attack on women's health care is the opposite of liberty.

I hope if this bill does come forward, we will debate it and debate it and debate it, because I don't think the people in this country want women's lives used as a political football. Women's health is not a game. It isn't something you should gain or lose votes on. Women's lives are not a game. We all have women in our lives, all of us, whom we adore regardless of our political party—our moms, our wives, our daughters, our sisters. Why would anyone in the Senate or anywhere else want to take away the health care that has benefitted one in five women in America, and more than 800,000 patients in my State every year? Why would anyone want to deny birth control to more than 600,000 Californians each year? Why would anyone want to deny women in my State 100,000 breast exams?

Instead of listening to these extreme voices, Republicans should listen to women in their States. I will tell you about a woman in my State, Nicole Sandoval of Pasadena, CA. Planned Parenthood was there for Nicole when she needed it most. When she was 23 years of age, she had no insurance before ObamaCare. Planned Parenthood caught her cervical cancer early enough to treat it and to save her life.

Instead of listening to these extreme voices, Republicans should listen to women such as Heather Penman of Concord, CA. Planned Parenthood was there for Heather when she needed it most, providing her with a cancer screening. They found precancerous cells, and it helped her get the life-saving surgery she needed. She didn't say what my colleague said, standing up and attacking an organization that saved her life. She said, ''I might not be alive today'' without their help. She told me that a few years ago. She said, ''Planned Parenthood is about taking care of women's health and it shouldn't be reduced to some political argument.''

Imagine what would have happened if Planned Parenthood hadn't been there for Nicole or Heather. That is what Planned Parenthood does. There are millions of Nicoles and Heathers across America, each with her own story of how Planned Parenthood has been there for her. We are not going to allow Republicans to take away their health care. No, we are not. We are not going to allow Republicans to undermine the vital research that is helping treatments for Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injuries, HIV, and birth defects.

The research has led to public health breakthroughs, including vaccines for polio, chickenpox, rubella and shingles. Instead of attacking this research, we should be supporting it. That is something we should all agree on. Republicans are pushing an extreme, dangerous agenda—an agenda that is out of touch with most Americans.

We had a breather from that agenda when we had that Transportation bill. How excited was I. Then we turn around, we do this bill, we work together, and we are back in our corners again, with Republicans attacking women's health and Democrats defending women's health. A new poll released this week shows that a strong majority of Americans opposes defunding Planned Parenthood, even after these videos—these edited videos—have been put out.

The American people are paying attention to this story. Women are paying attention to this story. We know this is a political attack on women's health. We know the group went in and secretly filmed people for 3 years. We knew what their objective was—to hurt women's health, women's reproductive health. We know because that is where they stand.

They want Uncle Sam to tell a woman what her rights are. Well, I have to say that I am a Senator. I have strong views. I do not impose these views on anyone. I want people to choose the way they feel and make decisions between themselves, their family, their doctor, their God. That is up to them. I do not want any Senator in this body telling my family what to do or your families what to do because it is up to them. I respect their families. They will discuss it with their families.

This is a political attack on women's health. We know it is an attack on a group that saves lives every day. This is a fight they have picked before. They come out here with this, as if this were the first time they have ever attacked Planned Parenthood. Well, we won it before, and we will win it again. I heard my colleague, Senator MURRAY, recall that in 2011—she thought it was 2011—the Republicans threatened to shut down the government because they wanted to defund Planned Parenthood. They were going to shut down the government. She said: You know what; we are not going do this to women's health. If that is what you want to do, shut it down. We will take this case to the American people. They backed off. We won that fight. We will win this fight as well.

We are going to fight. We are going to fight to make sure that Nicole and Heather and women across America can continue to get the services they need: the birth control, the cancer screenings, STD screenings. That is what we are fighting for. We are going to make sure that Planned Parenthood is still there for the millions of women and families who depend upon 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. 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.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I want to speak to the highway bill today, legislation before us that hopefully by tomorrow we will report out of the Senate favorably and send it to the House of Representatives. My understanding is that the House will, sometime in September, report out their own version of the highway bill, hopefully a multiyear bill, in which case we would go to conference with them and hopefully get something we can get to the President on his desk that would be more than a short-term extension, but instead be something that provides the certainty that those who are involved in building roads and bridges and making sure that freight and people move across this country will have the infrastructure in place to do that, and that we can get about the process of creating jobs and growing our economy, which is what infrastructure is all about.

I want to speak specifically to some of the rail provisions in the legislation. I want to say that thanks to the leadership of Senators Wicker and Booker and the bipartisan contributions of the members of the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, the legislation before the Senate today includes critically important provisions from the bipartisan Rail Reform, Enhancement, and Efficiency Act that our committee passed by voice vote last month.

This bill reauthorizes Amtrak through fiscal year 2019, while increasing rail safety, improving infrastructure, cutting redtape, and empowering local officials. Following the tragic May 12 derailment of Amtrak 188 in Philadelphia that resulted in eight fatalities, Senator WICKER and BOOKER added additional rail safety provisions that were approved by the committee.

The bipartisan rail bill that passed in committee and is included in the multiyear transportation bill before the Senate today would also advance the deployment of positive train control technology for averting accidents. I am proud to note that we recently amended the multiyear transportation legislation to expand this authorization. Never before has the Senate authorized robust, dedicated, and mandatory funding for positive train control implementation.

The amendment accepted by the Senate earlier today would authorize $199 million in PTC grants and loan financing for commuter railroads in fiscal year 2016. This is the highest single-year authorization for PTC ever. Using the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program, commuter railroads will be able to leverage this funding for $2 billion in loans, necessary to cover the PTC capital needs.

In addition to advancing the deployment of PTC, the Wicker-Booker bill would require speed limit action plans for all passenger railroads to address automatic train control modifications, crew communication practices, and other measures to prevent overspeed derailments while positive train control is being implemented. It would

also require grade crossing action plans to improve State grade crossing safety efforts, and it would consolidate grant programs to focus resources on critical safety and infrastructure needs.

Building on the work of the commerce committee's ranking member, Senator NELSON, the bill would increase the rail passenger liability cap for inflation from the $200 million level set in 1997 to $295 million, with inflation adjustments every 5 years. The bill applies a new higher cap retroactively to the date of the Amtrak accident in Philadelphia, thereby raising the potential compensation available to victims and their families.

This legislation also includes a measure from Senator PETERS to require a thorough examination of Amtrak's postaccident response following the Philadelphia derailment, ensuring a close look at whether Amtrak addressed the needs of families and passengers involved in tragedy.

Senator PETERS' work will make meaningful improvements to Amtrak's emergency preparedness going forward. As we worked on the legislation before our committee's adoption, I included a requirement for all passenger railroads in the Nation to install inward- and outward-facing cameras on their locomotives.

This fulfills an outstanding recommendation of the National Transportation Safety Board. These cameras will not only help with accident investigations, a need that we saw following the Philadelphia derailment, but they will help monitor each passenger railroad's compliance with critical safety requirements. Last week I received a letter from NTSB Chairman Christopher Hart stating:

> I applaud the recent passage of the passenger rail safety bill. I was pleased to see the inclusion of recommendations regarding inward and outward facing audio and image recorders. Thank you for your support of the NTSB.

The bill also includes extensive contributions from Senator BLUMENTHAL to improve passenger rail safety, including redundant signal protection to increase roadway worker safety, potentially preventing tragedies such as the one in West Haven, CT, in 2013.

Senator BLUMENTHAL also made important contributions on provisions covering alerters, signage, and track inspections. The bill includes his proposal for the Federal Railroad Administration to increase oversight of needed safety improvements at Metro-North.

I call my colleagues' attention to the following document: the Federal Railroad Administration's ''Operation Deep Dive Report'' outlining the safety concerns at Metro-North and setting forth specific directed actions. The bill before the Senate would require the FRA to follow up on that report and its recommendations.

I also call my colleagues' attention to Emergency Order No. 29, which was issued after terrible derailments in the Bronx, Bridgeport, CT, and West Haven, CT. This bill would apply the emergency order's speed limit action plan framework to the entire passenger rail network, reducing the risk of future overspeed derailments.

I would also like to include a statement from Senator BLUMENTHAL following the news that 13 current and former Metro-North employees had been accused of cheating on licensing exams. The statement reads: ''My amendment was accepted into the bill, which was voted out of the committee favorably, and I urge the Senate to take up the measure swiftly so we can ensure Metro-North is implementing true safety reforms.''

I echo Senator BLUMENTHAL's statement on Metro-North, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

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

JUNE 30, 2015.

BLUMENTHAL STATEMENT ON METRO-NORTH CHEATING SCANDAL

HARTFORD, CT.—U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) issued the following statement today regarding news that 13 current and former Metro-North employees have been accused of cheating on exams to become licensed conductors and engineers:

''The scale and scope of these revelations are sweeping and shocking—yet another searing indictment of Metro-North's safety training programs and procedures. Metro-North owes the public a better explanation to this apparent serious criminal conduct, and I will call for congressional hearings to compel them to do so.

Over a year ago, the Federal Railroad Administration conducted a Deep Dive investigation of Metro-North and found deeply disturbing flaws in Metro-North's training program. The news today that 13 employees have been indicted for cheating on a training exam raises more troubling questions about whether the training program at Metro-North remains weak, ineffective—or worse, susceptible to criminal conduct. These procedures must be improved and the flaws discovered by the FRA must be addressed. That is why I pushed last week for an amendment to a rail bill in the Commerce Committee that will require FRA to provide Congress with quarterly reports on the nearly 30 recommendations outlined in the Deep Dive report. My amendment was accepted into the bill, which was voted out of the committee favorably, and I urge the Senate to take up the measure swiftly so we can ensure Metro-North is implementing true safety reforms,'' Blumenthal said.

Mr. THUNE. I urge the Senate to ensure Metro-North and other railroads improve safety by voting in support of the bill before the Senate.

Working with Senator CANTWELL, who has been a strong advocate for crude-by-rail safety, we have also included in the bill new requirements for real-time train information to aid emergency response officials in the event of an accident. Senator BALDWIN worked last week to ensure emergency officials have advance notice of crude oil and ethanol unit trains traveling through their jurisdictions.

This bill also includes a provision for comprehensive oilspill response plans to ensure railroads are prepared and have resources positioned to respond to worst case scenarios, another priority from our colleague from Washington State, Senator CANTWELL.

Further, aiding emergency response efforts, Senators BOOKER and MENENDEZ included provisions that prohibit the withholding of train information from first responders. Their work will also examine the sufficiency of response information carried by train crews addressing issues raised in relation to the 2012 derailment in Paulsburo, NJ.

Senator MANCHIN worked to ensure tank car owners and shippers annually report on their compliance with the new tank requirements requiring stronger oversight for those important safety upgrades. In addition, Senator MANCHIN and I have agreed on the need for a real-world derailment test of electronically controlled pneumatic, or ECP, brakes. As this testing moves forward, the existing Department of Transportation requirements will be kept in place unless the real-world testing and evaluation show the requirement is not justified.

Enhancing the bill's grade crossing safety provisions, Senator GARDNER added stronger oversight of the Federal Railroad Administration's actions pertaining to the use of locomotive horns at highway-rail grade crossings.

Senator KLOBUCHAR included timely provisions to help address issues with the blocking of crossings as a result of idling trains. The bill also incorporates the work of Senator ROY BLUNT, whose TRAIN Act, cosponsored by Senators MANCHIN, HELLER, and myself, will streamline the permitting process for rail improvements, making our critical infrastructure dollars go even further.

Senator DAINES included provisions to improve Amtrak's operations through the study of new station development options where Amtrak would turn a profit, potentially increasing private sector investment in our Nation's passenger rail system. The reforms extend to project financing, and Senator BOOKER's embedded RRIF bill, cosponsored by Senators HELLER, CARPER, and KIRK, will create a faster and more flexible RRIF Program.

I also applaud Senator KIRK for his contributions to the RRIF reform bill, improving the loan process and facilitating more timely and transparent decisions. These RRIF loans can be used for safety improvements, including positive train control. It also explains why its inclusion in the broader surface transportation bill is strongly supported by Transportation for America, the States for Passenger Rail Coalition, the National Association of Railroad Passengers, the American Public Transportation Association, and the Southern Rail Commission.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the statement from Transportation for America.

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

TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA,
Washington, DC, July 14, 2015.

Hon. JOHN THUNE,
Chairman, Senate Commerce Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THUNE: We write to thank you for your leadership on the Comprehensive Transportation and Consumer Protection Act of 2015, which authorizes the federal passenger rail program with the transportation safety and freight provisions under the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee through 2021.

The Comprehensive Transportation and Consumer Protection Act of 2015 authorizes the passenger rail program as part of the broader surface transportation program for the first time. The bill incorporates the Railroad Reform, Enhancement, and Efficiency Act (S. 1626) that already received unanimous approval from the Commerce Committee on June 25, 2015. The passenger rail bill would provide sustainable funding and enhancement opportunities for a unified national passenger rail program, while also improving the safety of the rail system. This is an important step in supporting a truly multimodal approach to providing people improved mobility and access to destinations.

The Comprehensive Transportation and Consumer Protection Act of 2015 also makes progress to improve the movement of freight and enhance U.S. economic competitiveness by improving freight transportation serving agriculture, manufacturing, energy, retail and other sectors. Freight movement is inherently multimodal and multi-jurisdictional. It requires a program with broad eligibilities and a competitive approach to guarantee that limited funding is targeted to the projects with the greatest impact. This proposal moves the federal transportation program in the right direction in addressing the nation's freight needs.

We look forward to working with you and your committee to address remaining concerns with the bill, such as the future of the TIGER program; however it is clear that passage of the Comprehensive Transportation and Consumer Protection Act of 2015 would be an important step forward in creating a transportation program that will boost the nation's economy and ensure future prosperity.

Sincerely,

JAMES CORLESS,
Director.

Mr. THUNE. Transportation for America wrote that the committee-reported legislation would be an important step forward in creating a transportation program that will boost the Nation's economy and ensure future prosperity. It also stated that the bill would improve the safety of our Nation's rail system.

Building on the work of the commerce committee, the multiyear Transportation bill also includes a bipartisan extension to the PTC deadline. The bipartisan extension is a rigorous case-by-case approach, with enforceable milestones and metrics.

The Secretary of Transportation approves or disapproves of the dates in a railroad's updated implementation schedule, including the hard end date for implementation. Under no circumstances can the Secretary approve a date for full installation and activation that is later than 2018. The Secretary also has the authority to identify and require changes to deficient schedules that do not show safe and successful implementation as soon as practicable.

Multiple government reports, including from the Government Accountability Office, the DOT, and the FRA, have concluded that the vast majority of railroads will not meet the December 31, 2015, deadline for PTC implementation. This extension will not delay safe and successful implementation of positive train control technology. Rather, it offers a realistic approach to ensure this important technology is implemented as quickly as possible without risking shutdowns of rail service that will not meet the current deadline no matter what the law says. This proposal is not novel. Senate bill S. 1006, with original cosponsors BLUMENTHAL, SCHUMER, and GILLIBRAND, would extend the deadline to 2018 on a case-by-case basis in 1-year increments. Despite good-faith efforts from railroads, the Blumenthal extension recognizes the deadline in current law simply is not attainable.

Similarly, in its GROW AMERICA proposal, the administration requested giving the Secretary of Transportation discretion to extend the deadline on a case-by-case basis without any constraints on the dates the Secretary may approve.

We follow this model but add explicit constraints on installation and activation by 2018, while allowing the Secretary discretion in overseeing testing to ensure that PTC works as intended.

Recently, railroads from across the country explained the potential disruption caused by the current unattainable deadline. Virginia Railway Express, or VRE, wrote to me stating that ''VRE commuter rail operations could be suspended after December 31, 2015'' and has requested more time to ensure that PTC works as intended.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the July 28, 2015, letter from Virginia Railway Express.

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

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS,
Alexandria, VA, July 28, 2015.

Hon. JOHN THUNE,
Chair,
Hon. BILL NELSON,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Dear CHAIRMAN THUNE AND RANKING MEMBER NELSON: This letter supports the deadline extension for certification and interoperability of Positive Train Control (PTC) to December 31, 2018 being incorporated into the Surface Transportation Authorization bill (DRIVE Act) now being considered in the U.S. Senate. The Virginia Railway Express is concerned that without an extension to the PTC deadline, VRE commuter rail operations could be suspended after December 31, 2015 even though VRE has done everything in its control to comply with the requirements for PTC established in the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008.

The extension for PTC represents a common sense, bi-partisan approach and it allows sufficient time for VRE and it host railroads to test, commission and certify PTC for compliance. VRE is also supportive of the Rail Technical Grant program that provides $199 million to leverage financing and provide direct grants to install PTC or for interoperability between rail operators.

Approval of the PTC deadline extension to December 31, 2018 gives VRE assurance that commuter rail operations will not be disrupted. I ask that you please support its passage.

Sincerely,

DOUG ALLEN,
CEO.

Mr. THUNE. Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, one of the freight railroads that collectively have spent over $5 billion in private funds on implementation, recently sent a letter to the Surface Transportation Board that stated the possibility that ''if Congress has not extended the deadline for PTC operations, as of January 1, 2016, neither passenger nor freight traffic would operate on BNSF lines that are required by Federal law and regulation to have an interoperable PTC system as of that date.''

Critically, as I have noted, this extension is now paired with robust, dedicated, and mandatory funding for PTC implementation among commuter railroads. Recently, the American Public Transportation Association, or APTA, surveyed its commuter railroad members and found that over 50 percent were deferring maintenance to install PTC and only 29 percent had a shot at installation by the end of the year. That is why APTA, the National Association of Railroad Passengers, and rail labor support the inclusion of this critical funding in this underlying measure.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter from the American Public Transportation Association.

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

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, July 28, 2015.

Hon. JOHN THUNE,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Washington DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN THUNE: We understand that the manager's amendment on the Commerce Committee title of the bill authorizes $199 million in funding that can be used by public commuter railroads for grants, or to leverage financing, for the implementation of positive train control (PTC) systems. These funds are of critical importance as commuter railroads address the $3.5 billion in costs associated with installing PTC systems under the new deadline and process also included in the bill. APTA appreciates the committee's effort to support implementation.

APTA's commuter railroads support the implementation of PTC on all commuter and intercity passenger rail lines, but we do not believe that PTC can be implemented on the entire system by the current statutory deadline, despite good faith efforts. The funds provided in the bill, in conjunction with the authority for the Secretary to oversee implementation of PTC systems by the end of 2018, will help ensure that PTC is safely installed as quickly as possible. We do not think it makes sense for commuter railroads to cease operations on January 1, 2016 because they

were unable to install PTC by the current deadline, despite their best efforts to implement this new technology.

Thank you for consideration of our views. We remain committed to PTC implementation and we look forward to working with Congress as it advances this important transportation bill. If you have questions, please contact Brian Tynan of APTA's Government Affairs staff at btynan@apta.com or at (202) 496–4897.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL P. MELANIPHY,
President & CEO.

Mr. THUNE. APTA wrote: ''These funds are of critical importance as commuter railroads address the $3.5 billion in costs associated with installing PTC systems.''

The National Association of Railroad Passengers wrote: ''Just as important as the level of the authorization is the structure of the eligibility . . . RRIF could potentially be used to leverage the amount provided by the DRIVE Act by a factor of ten.''

The Senate has an important opportunity to advance deployment of positive train control and help commuter railroads get over the finish line.

In sum, this is a national rail safety and infrastructure improvement bill.

Amtrak provides service to over 30 million per year, with stops in over 500 communities and in 46 States. New York has about 6 million riders, Pennsylvania about 3 million, and States such as Florida, Virginia, and Washington all have over 1 million riders.

This bill also improves the safety of commuter railroads, which collectively have nearly 500 million boardings per year. Metro-North, serving New York, Connecticut, Long Island Railroad, and New Jersey Transit each have 80 million boardings per year. These passengers deserve the critical safety and infrastructure improvements put forward in this bipartisan legislation.

The failure to pass this bipartisan DRIVE Act, which includes these passenger rail investments and safety improvements, would be a significant loss to the traveling public who utilize passenger rail systems across the country.

I would simply conclude by adding that this is a copy of all the letters of support we have received regarding provisions in this legislation, regarding the legislation in its entirety, and I encourage Members of the Senate to support it.

In addition to the letters I have already included, there are literally probably hundreds of letters in here from organizations that are impacted, affected by, and benefit from provisions in the DRIVE Act.

So I hope when this comes to a final vote, which I believe it will sometime tomorrow, that we will demonstrate in a big bipartisan fashion our support for this legislation, not only for what it does for roads and bridges but what it does for freight transportation in this country and specifically many of the things I have just mentioned that we have included as part of the rail provisions in this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I am on the floor this afternoon to talk about something I have had to talk about far too many times—extreme Republicans pandering to their extreme base by attacking women's health.

My Republican colleagues have picked this fight over spending bills, over the debt ceiling, and the list goes on. In fact, they even tried last week to attach political riders attacking Planned Parenthood to a bill that was supposed to help seriously wounded veterans start families. So we know how far they are willing to go to appeal to the tea party, and what we are discussing today is more of the same.

Republicans are using undercover attack videos, produced by a radical, rightwing organization dedicated to taking away a woman's right to choose, to once again on the floor try to defund Planned Parenthood and take away critical health services from women.

As Republicans try once again to get in between a woman and her health care, my colleagues are on the floor today to make one thing very clear: This bill is a nonstarter. We are standing up to be the voices for millions of men and women across the country and to say we are not going to let Republicans hurt women and take away their health care—not on our watch.

Mr. President, 2.7 women and men visit Planned Parenthood each year for health care. One in five women will visit Planned Parenthood at some point in her life. These women and their families are looking for everything from cancer screenings to birth control, to basic primary care, and the bill some of my Republican colleagues have introduced would take all of that away. It would leave women without the providers they know and the providers they trust.

I don't think women want the tea party making their health care decisions for them, but under this bill that is exactly what would happen and that is why it is not going anywhere. Republicans can go ahead and try for the umpteenth time to turn back the clock on women's health and score political points with their extreme base. They can pander to the tea party instead of working with us on the real challenges this country faces. We need to be creating jobs, growing our economy, and actually expanding access to health care.

We want them to know we are going to be right there as this comes to the floor, fighting back to make sure women come before politics and not the other way around. We have fought this battle before and again and again and again. Battles we all thought were settled, that women across the country thought they had won decades ago keep coming back. And each time we have made it clear: We are not going away.

Republicans can keep trying to attack women's health care, they can put new spins on old ideas, they can try talking about it in a different way, and they can look for any opportunity they want to bring this back up, but they should know we are not going to be fooled and they will not fool women across the country. Women in this country should be able to make their own decision about their own health care. Our government should be investing in women's health, helping more women get access to care, not moving in the opposite direction.

I very much hope Republicans finally learn their lesson and move on to the other things, but, if not, we need them to know we are going to be here ready to stand and fight for women in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am proud to join my colleague from Washington State, a very distinguished and dedicated colleague, and others such as she who are championing this cause of defending Planned Parenthood. I am proud to stand with Planned Parenthood in advocating and championing the cause of women's health care in this country.

Planned Parenthood needs no defense and, indeed, this body should not be spending valuable time and energy in this attack on women's health care that is epitomized by an effort to defund Planned Parenthood.

Let's be very clear. Planned Parenthood provides countless women across this country with STD testing, breast cancer screening, funding research in strengthening women's health care, and contraception. None of these activities is involved in abortion. They are entirely unrelated to abortion. They are about women's health care. The effort to defund Planned Parenthood is, in fact, an attack on women's health care.

Planned Parenthood should need no defense from any of us because its activities immensely benefit women who depend on it and rely on its professionals for basic screening, testing, and other activities that protect them from the ravages of cancer and other kinds of diseases that will cost more to this Nation if we deny Planned Parenthood that funding.

Planned Parenthood is under attack. It is under siege from a sensationalistic and disingenuous kind of publicity that is based on undercover videos. People are offended by them, and Planned Parenthood has in fact spoken to the merits of them. I encourage Planned Parenthood to continue speaking to those videos. Another was released just yesterday.

Planned Parenthood needs no defense from us because the American people

support it. American women do because they know the reality, which is different from what is depicted in those videos. The reality is that Planned Parenthood provides funding for women's health care. So the funding of women's health care by defunding Planned Parenthood should not be the goal or the effect of anything we do in this body.

I am proud to stand and urge my colleagues to reject this attack from the most extreme members of the anti-choice movement, which seeks to undermine critical access to health care through Planned Parenthood. My hope is that congressional opinion, like American public opinion, will continue to be, as we are, on the side of Planned Parenthood.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I will be joined on the floor by the distinguished Senator from Connecticut, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, who is the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee; Senator MCCAIN of Arizona, who is the leader behind the Choice movement that took place last year in August; and Senator ROY BLUNT from Missouri.

As we speak, at this very moment the House is voting. They are voting on a 3-month extension of the highway bill. But more importantly to us on the Veterans' Affairs Committee and to our veterans, they are voting on a bill we have agreed to, to fix the problem at the VA with regard to the funding of our hospitals and health care, and to open up a new day in terms of Veterans Administration services to the veterans of our country.

I was pleased to be joined by Senator BLUMENTHAL at the VA a couple of weeks ago where we had a heart-to-heart, 4-hour meeting with Secretary McDonald, Sloan Gibson, and others about the false-intended press release that was sent out of the VA saying they were about to run out of money, health care was going to be stopped in certain places, and some hospitals might be closed. That was a misleading press release. It was meant to create a crisis that didn't really exist. The crisis was not in not having the money. The crisis was in addressing the money and having to organize it in such a way it could meet VA's needs. What is attached to the highway bill and coming over here is the following: redirection of $3.348 billion in the Choice money which was appropriated last year into a central fund for health care, just as the funds for non-VA health care and regular health care are. Now all of the money for veterans' benefits is in the same pie. And the limitations on the paying for benefits that were in the Choice bill are not going to be there any longer, so all the money can be used for what it was intended, and that is to pay for the benefits for our veterans who have earned them.

In addition, there will be an addition to the 40-mile rule to say that any veteran who lives further than 40 miles away, or inside of 40 miles but can't get the services they need for their health care, can use Choice to get to a health care provider of their choosing.

Choice was passed to react to the terrible crisis in the VA in Arizona when the Phoenix, AZ, hospital had veterans die because appointments weren't kept, veterans couldn't get services, and mental health issues couldn't be handled. The Choice Act was engineered by Senators Burr and McCain, who did a good job.

We are proud to be modifying it in this highway extension to be sure we do not run out of funding and not appropriate an additional dime other than what we already have. For Members who are listening to these remarks and will vote tomorrow, I want them to understand quite clearly that when they read the bill it will show money as emergency funding. That doesn't mean it is new or additional money. It just means the money that was appropriated last year as emergency funding for VA Choice will be able to be used only for benefits for veterans in terms of health care no matter what program they are in—non-VA, regular VA or VA Choice.

We want to see to it that Choice is a force multiplier, Choice is the way we get our veterans' timely appointments, Choice is the way we utilize and maximize the ability of our country to meet the needs of our veterans and bring private sector participation into service for our veterans without diminishing or taking away the services our veterans get from the VA.

I appreciate Senator BLUMENTHAL and the contributions he made in the meeting 2 weeks ago. I want to commend Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member BROWN in the House for all the work they did, and Speaker BOEHNER, who was instrumental in making this come about.

I now yield to Senator BLUMENTHAL, then Senator MCCAIN, and then Senator BLUNT.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank the chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, who has correctly and appropriately stated what our goal is in seeking the transfer of funding—a goal that will be fulfilled by the bill coming to us from the House. It is, in fact, coming to us from the House, but as Chairman ISAKSON has very correctly stated, it is the result of an initiative that he—and I have been very proud to join him in this effort—initiated with the VA Secretary at our meeting last week. And the leadership of the House has joined in that effort.

I am proud and honored to be his partner in this effort, which is absolutely necessary to continue the VA's health care programs. This transfer of $3.4 billion is required by the fact that the community and care programs of the VA will in effect exhaust their revenue streams unless we enable the VA to use some of this Choice funding in this effort. It is necessary to permit VA programs and veterans to have access to money that is there. It is for the same purpose as the community and care programs. They are, in fact, identical programs in terms of their basic efforts and goals.

The meeting we had—that Chairman ISAKSON had last week—was very productive and important in reaching a consensus, a bipartisan consensus, and I urge my Democratic colleagues on this side of the aisle to join this effort to enable VA programs to go forward and to make sure we continue to keep faith with our veterans. We should leave no veteran behind when it comes to health care. We must make sure that we fulfill our obligation to all of our veterans in mental health care, in physical health care, in primary health care, and all the specialties that are served by this program.

I thank my very good friend from Georgia for his leadership in this effort. I am proud to be his partner in serving this goal.

I yield the floor, and I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator BLUMENTHAL and also my friend from Georgia, the distinguished chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, who is ensuring we continue strong oversight and accountability at the VA. It is much needed.

There are a lot of problems, but what the Senator from Georgia has done on a bipartisan basis is to continue the funding to add billions of dollars on top of the VA's request. We have approved of every single increase for funding that has been requested, and yet I am disappointed the administration is seeking to use funds originally allocated for the VA Choice card to pay for hospital and medical treatment needs.

Thanks to the work, though, of the Senator from Georgia and our other colleagues, including Chairman MILLER in the House of Representatives, we will ensure the VA health care will continue without any funding interruptions through the summer and into the new fiscal year. We will do this to ensure that our disabled veterans do not suffer from the VA bureaucracies' mistakes and mismanagement.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a brief colloquy with the Senator from Georgia.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. I would ask the Senator from Georgia if he would agree the Choice card was really a major breakthrough in concept, in that at least a certain portion of our veteran population, rather than having to go a long distance in order to get VA care, would be able to go to a local provider?

I wonder if the Senator from Georgia would discuss for a moment, or comment on, whether that program has been viable, whether it is accepted or not accepted by our veterans population, and whether we need to make it permanent or not.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Arizona for his question. It was the Senator from Arizona who initiated the Choice Act movement in August of last year when we had the terrible crisis in Phoenix where appointments weren't made for veterans in trouble and, in some cases, some of them died.

We created Choice to be sure if a veteran needed an appointment within 30 days, or immediately, if it was mental health or other things, and the VA medical facility couldn't provide it, they could use Choice to go to a local provider, either because of distance or service offered. That was initiated in November of last year, and it has grown almost every single month in utility and use because it gives the VA a way, when they are backed up, to meet the needs of a veteran without just saying we cannot help. It is becoming more and more popular.

Not only is it helping veterans to get services on a timely basis, it is a force multiplier for the VA. Every time we can use a local Medicare-approved physician, which is what Choice does, we are saving the VA having to hire another physician, having to build another hospital room, and having to provide another service. Yet the VA has control of the services going to the veteran.

We have 6.5 million American veterans who have received Choice cards since November of last year. The numbers started out slow, but they are picking up every single month because veterans like the fact that they can go closer to home for what the VA can't offer, they can get the service they need if the VA can't offer it, and they can be served in a timely fashion.

I thank the Senator for his initiation of this whole movement last August and for being a part of getting this addition passed today.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Georgia, and I would ask two more questions.

One is, how important is it that we make it permanent, and maybe even look towards expansion of eligibility for the card; and second of all, I know the Senator from Georgia has already discussed it, but when we have a $1.7 billion cost overrun on the construction of one VA hospital—and we see cost overruns literally everywhere throughout the VA on their construction projects—how do we fix that?

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, we are fixing it, and I appreciate both questions.

On question No. 1, we need to repeal the sunset of Choice, which is in 2 years, and make it permanent. Choice is a force multiplier for the VA, which is good, and it is an added service for our veterans, which is also good. I commit to you as chairman that I am going to work towards eliminating the sunset so Choice is permanent in VA health services from now on.

As far as hospital cost overruns, the Senator is right. Denver was $1.732 billion—a 428-percent overrun—but look at Orlando, FL, and look at three other hospitals we have built, all of them being two or three times the original estimate. The VA needs to be taken out of the business of building hospitals, and we are doing that and transferring it to the Corps of Engineers, who are the people who know how to build something.

The VA needs to manage the health delivery system for our veterans. That is what they need to be providing. They do not need to be building buildings. They don't need to be keeping us out of their business. They need, instead, to find private sector solutions wherever they can and do what they were chartered to do, which is to provide services for veterans who fought and sacrificed for our country.

Mr. MCCAIN. In other words, from now on, if there is a new VA facility to be built, that will be supervised and constructed by the Corps of Engineers?

Mr. ISAKSON. Exactly. With one exception. If it is a modification to a CBOC or a clinic or something like that, that is a smaller allocation or a smaller appropriation. Maybe anything under $25 million, they might do, but anything over $25 million, such as a hospital, they won't do it. The Corps of Engineers will do it.

Mr. MCCAIN. Well, I am sure it is probably a dumb question, but has anybody been held accountable? I am sure that is a stupid question.

Mr. ISAKSON. It is the most intelligent question anybody can ask. The press questioned me in Denver, when I went there, along with Ranking Member BLUMENTHAL, and we looked at the situation firsthand. After looking at it and interviewing the VA people, we were asked by the Denver Post how we could explain this mess, and I asked them very simply if they knew what a camel was. They said no. I said that is a horse built by a committee. Well, the Denver hospital is a camel—a horse being built by a committee, most of whom have left and are not there to be held accountable anymore.

It is unconscionable and irresponsible for that hospital to be costing what it has cost. We have finally put our arms around it. We have finally put people in place with accountability, and the Corps of Engineers is now overseeing the completion of that hospital so we don't have more overruns like we had. It was a matter of nobody being in charge and everybody being in charge—too many chiefs and not enough Indians. We had people in charge of health care building buildings, and that wasn't what we needed.

Mr. MCCAIN. I think they must have gotten some of those bureaucrats from the Pentagon.

I want to thank both Senator BLUMENTHAL and you, Mr. Chairman, for the great work you are doing. As you know, this whole scandal began in Arizona at the Phoenix VA, where allegations remain that over 50 veterans died while awaiting care. Obviously all of us have an obligation to all of our veterans, but I know my colleagues can understand the special aspects of where this whole thing began.

I am very grateful, and on behalf of the veterans of my State, I thank both of you for your leadership and your commitment. I will be going back to my veterans community, and I will be having townhall meetings and meetings with them and ensuring them that at least we think we are taking measures that put us on the right track.

I thank the Senator from Missouri for his patience while we engaged in this colloquy.

Mr. ISAKSON. I want to acknowledge the fact that Choice would have never happened, and this would have never happened, had the Senator from Arizona not immediately responded when the crisis first started and fixed this. We appreciate his leadership, and we are glad to follow him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank our friend from Arizona, the distinguished cosponsor with me of the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act, for his great work in this area as well as on health care generally for our veterans. He has raised one of the most profoundly important as well as intelligent questions about accountability—accountability for the debacle and delays in health care and cooking the books that led to the Choice program, but also accountability for the cost overruns in the construction of the Aurora, CO, facility—$1 billion at least over budget, and months, if not years, of delays, as well as in other construction facilities.

I would just say to my friend from Arizona that the chairman and I are focused on the accountability issue, and we are working together in a bipartisan way on a legislative measure that will meet the test of constitutionality as well as effectiveness in holding accountable past and future officials at the VA for these kinds of mismanagement and in other areas. So I thank him for raising this issue.

I apologize to my colleague from Missouri for delaying him from taking the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I join Senator MCCAIN in thanking Senators ISAKSON and BLUMENTHAL for the package we are putting together and talking about. And I join them in thanking Senator MCCAIN for coming forward and giving reality to this idea that many of us have advocated for some time—more choices for veterans, more competition to see who serves veterans. I think the numbers Senator ISAKSON has used here today would indicate that every month veterans are embracing this idea of more choices.

It makes common sense that there are a few things the veterans health care system should be better at than anybody else. They should be better at

post-traumatic stress, dealing with that unique battle situation so many of our veterans are facing right now. It is not a disorder; it is a problem veterans have because of what we ask them to do and where we ask them to do it. They should be better at IEDs, the explosive devices, dealing with the injuries that come from those kinds of attacks, eye injuries and others. They should be better, in all likelihood, at dealing with prosthetics because in the history of military service, so many of our people who serve have lost arms and legs. The VA has been good at prosthetics because of that.

But, frankly, I don't know very much else we should argue that they should be better at than the place we probably drive by to get to their facility. There is absolutely no reason to think the Veterans' Administration should be a better place to get heart bypass surgery done or a better place to get renal cancer dealt with or a better place to do almost anything else. If, in fact, there is a unique VA location that has become better at those things than anybody else, that is a great place for veterans to go. But our goal should be to get veterans the choice they need to go to the location that works best for them.

In looking at veterans mental health, Senator STABENOW and I last year proposed the Excellence in Mental Health Act. Particularly young veterans want to have more choices. They want more choices that work better with work and work better with their families and let them access those kinds of facilities and that kind of assistance in an easier way.

Seeing the steps this bill begins to take is something we should all embrace.

We should also hold the VA accountable for doing everything they could—it appears to me—to resist the concept Congress wanted them to embrace. This bill addresses some of those obstacles.

I joined with Senator MORAN in a bill he had so the Veterans' Administration could no longer say: Well, the way we read the law, in the strictest possible sense, if you are within 40 miles of a facility—no matter whether your health care problem can be dealt with there or not—you don't meet the 40-mile criteria. Well, of course the intention of Congress wasn't that they meet a 40-mile criteria. This piece of legislation, with the help of Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator ISAKSON, and Chairman MILLER in the House, begins to clarify that.

I had a bill the House passed some time ago—Hire More Heroes—that allows veterans to have some advantage with companies that hiring that are right at 50 employees, and because of the difficulties of the new health care requirements for employers, those employers don't want to get to more than 50. The Hire More Heroes provision of this will let veterans who have TRICARE—who have veteran-provided care of one kind or another—be hired by an employer and not count toward the 50 because they don't need to be counted in terms of who needs health care because they already have it. That is what this does.

So I would like to see a better job done. The Cochran facility in St. Louis—I think one of the more troubled facilities in the country right now—the big VA hospital there is about to get its eighth Interim Director in 2 years. Now, there is some serious management problem when one of our major facilities with some significant problems as an agency is now looking forward to its eighth Interim Director in 2 years. No problems are going to be solved by half a dozen Interim Directors. The head of the VA needs to understand that just like everybody else does.

The waiting list for getting a VA appointment is longer than 30 days and is more than 50 percent bigger than it was a year ago.

So the choice aspect of this—looking for more flexibility in how to apply the ability of veterans to get their health care where they want to get their health care—is a good thing.

I am certainly disappointed that we are looking at another short-term extension of the highway bill, but if we have to put something with that short-term extension of the highway bill that moves veterans choice and competing for who can provide health care to veterans in the best way, as this addition does, I think it is a great step in the right direction.

I certainly want to work with Senator BLUMENTHAL, and the chairman's pledge to do everything he can to make this competitive environment, where veterans can get their health care where they want in the best way, a permanent part of veterans health care—that is something I want to do.

One of my good friends introduced me at a meeting at a VA hospital about a year ago. He said: Senator BLUNT has been telling me for about 10 years that we need to have more choice. I have been telling him the VA could do the job. I am now convinced that more choice is what we need.

Many of our veterans and their families have had great experiences at Veterans' Administration facilities, but every one of them should have a great experience, the best possible experience at whatever facility they go to in gratitude of the service they provided us.

I am glad these additions are in the bill. I look forward to working with my colleagues as we try to make competition work better, as we try to ensure that it is permanent, and as we try to make the Veterans' Administration work for the veterans instead of being focused on working for the Veterans' Administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for his support, and I appreciate the comments made by Senator ISAKSON and Senator MCCAIN. We had bipartisan support for this initiative to make sure our veterans continue to receive health care that is necessary because funds will be terminated at the end of August if we fail to act. It is, in effect, a short-term fix that is necessary because of the present structure of funding within the VA. I think we can take this step and leave for another day the question of how long the Choice Program should be extended, if it should be extended at all.

My hope is that accountability and funding will focus on making the VA even better than it is. The reason for accountability is to make sure VA hospitals and providers are giving our veterans world-class, first-class health care.

I welcome the focus of the Senator from Missouri on what the VA does well. I hope it does everything well that it is doing. From primary care, to women's health care, to all of the clinics that are, to the initiatives it is taking in telemedicine, the VA ought to be providing the best health care available in the world to our veterans. They need it and deserve it. We need to make sure we keep faith with those veterans.

I am proud we are taking this step on a bipartisan basis to address the short-term challenge of $3.4 billion that must be transferred from the Choice Program to other accounts in the VA and to make sure the money is available to provide this funding and keep health care going for our veterans.

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.

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

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

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, here we go again. Once again, Planned Parenthood is under attack. A bill is before the Senate that would once again attempt to defund Planned Parenthood. And once again, we are seeing the Republican majority putting their partisan agenda ahead of the health of women.

For 100 years, Planned Parenthood has been a trusted provider of health care services. Last year alone, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England served 12,000 women in New Hampshire. Most of them are low income. For many women in my State of New Hampshire, the full range of health services offered at Planned Parenthood is the most affordable and accessible way for them to get the care they need. Ninety-four percent of the services provided by Planned Parenthood in New Hampshire are prevention-related. We can see on this chart that it is well-women visits, cancer screenings, vaccinations, birth control, breast exams,

and HIV tests. Planned Parenthood provides the health care so many women need to ensure that they can live their lives in a way that gives them opportunities and gives them reassurance that they are going to have their health.

I oppose the legislation that has been introduced to defund Planned Parenthood. It would make it harder for millions of women—as I said, 12,000 in New Hampshire last year alone—to get the high-quality, affordable care they need.

This attack on women's health is politically motivated. It holds hostage the millions of women and families who depend on Planned Parenthood.

The highly edited videos that have been circulated are disturbing. Planned Parenthood has apologized, and the secretly taped videos and Planned Parenthood's practices are under review by the Department of Justice. That is appropriate. But make no mistake about it—the group who is responsible for theses deceptive videos is motivated by a single purpose: to limit access to abortion services. Its three officers are prominent in the anti-abortion movement. They have ties to many other politically motivated groups who are working to take away a woman's right to choose. They have been tied to organizations that harass medical providers, doctors, and patients, try to limit access to women's health care clinics, and they actively work to limit the reproductive health care decisions a woman can make.

Federal dollars are already prohibited from being used to pay for abortion under the Hyde amendment except in cases of rape, incest, or when the health of the mother is threatened.

This is not a vote to defund abortion; this is a vote to defund preventive health care for women, the kinds of things that are outlined on this chart—the cancer screenings, the vaccinations, the breast exams, HIV tests, and birth control.

If you don't like abortion, then you should support family planning, which is one of the things Planned Parenthood does.

By targeting Planned Parenthood, this politically motivated attack on women's health will limit access to health care services that I think we all agree should be available, the kinds of services that are listed on this chart.

On behalf of the millions of women who are served by Planned Parenthood, and the thousands of women in New Hampshire, I oppose and I will continue to oppose any attempt to defund Planned Parenthood, an organization that is absolutely a critical component of women's health care.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, the United States is a world leader in new technological advancements, and in no sector is that better illustrated than the auto industry.

We find ourselves at a critical juncture in terms of vehicle technology. Advancements such as super-lightweight materials and vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communications are rapidly coming to market and changing the way Americans get to work, travel on vacation, and move goods and services across the country. With a shared goal in maximizing the potential of these technologies, we must get ahead of the curve and think strategically about how to seamlessly weave them together in a way that will best increase public safety, fuel efficiency, and vehicle performance. That is why I am excited to be leading two bills that will provide the tools researchers, engineers, manufacturers, and others need to create the next generation of cars and trucks built in Michigan and in States all across the country.

The Vehicle Innovation Act builds on the Department of Energy's innovative work to improve vehicle fuel economy and minimize petroleum use. The Vehicle Innovation Act is bipartisan, with strong support from my lead cosponsors, Senator ALEXANDER and Senator STABENOW. Thanks to a team effort, it passed as an amendment to a bipartisan energy bill in the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources yesterday by a vote of 20 to 2.

The need for this legislation is clear. Oil dependency is driven by transportation, particularly cars and trucks. Transportation is responsible for 66 percent of U.S. petroleum usage and 27 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. America's dependence on oil poses significant economic, energy, and environmental risks to the United States, and the Department of Defense has recognized that our reliance on oil puts our men and women in uniform at greater risk.

We have 240 million light-duty vehicles on the roads in the United States, and it will take decades of sustained effort to turn over that fleet.

It is absolutely critical that we develop the advanced technologies now in order to achieve fuel savings in the future and become truly energy independent. The Vehicle Innovation Act establishes a consistent and consolidated authority for the Department of Energy's Vehicle Technologies Program, which promotes partnerships with the public and private sector to improve fuel efficiency in vehicles. Through this program, the DOE will collaborate with light-duty automobile and medium- and heavy-duty commercial truck engineers, manufacturers, and suppliers to conduct cutting-edge research that will help us advance the future of fuel-efficient cars and trucks.

DOE's sustainable transportation initiatives are already making great strides in vehicle efficiency, and VIA will continue to strengthen those activities while providing new authorities to expand their work.

The SuperTruck Initiative is a great example of this. Industry partners have achieved and exceeded the program goal of a 50-percent improvement in overall freight efficiency on a heavy-duty, class 8 tractor-trailer. Some have even reached over a 100-percent improvement. My bill ensures that the DOE will be able to continue working with the industry on supertrucks.

Another example that the Vehicle Innovation Act will build on is the work on multimaterial, lightweight vehicles. Holistic vehicle and manufacturing design improvements for reducing vehicle weight can result in weight reduction and fuel economy gains of over 20 percent.

The Vehicle Innovation Act is technology neutral. It develops and strengthens the toolbox for auto experts without picking winners and losers. It also directs the Department of Energy to continue its investment into multiple transformational technologies, such as hydrogen and batteries. DOE research and development has cut costs for fuel cell systems by 50 percent since 2006. My bill will build on this success and expand DOE's focus into the near-term deployments that will result in major savings for the national fleet.

The Vehicle Innovation Act also includes new research authorities on vehicle-to-vehicle—or V2V—communications systems. This technology allows cars to talk to one another and recognize dangers that a vehicle's radar, cameras, and other sensors can't detect.

As we are working to develop these features in new vehicles, we must also ensure that we are keeping pace with technologies in our infrastructure.

Vehicle-to-vehicle infrastructure—or V2I—technology allows vehicles to communicate with the road and has the ability to help prevent collisions, relieve traffic congestion, and reduce unnecessary energy consumption. That is why I introduced another bill to promote investments in V2I technology by authorizing States to use existing surface and highway transportation funding to invest in V2I projects as they upgrade highway infrastructure.

An example of V2I in action is a monitor on a bridge that will tell approaching drivers if there is a dangerous ice buildup on it. Other examples include traffic signals that warn vehicles of stopped traffic or sensors that warn of nearby emergency vehicles for work zones.

In 2013 the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that more than 32,000 people were killed in vehicle crashes. According to NTHSA, V2V and V2I—the two technologies being developed—will be able to eliminate up

to 80 percent of vehicle accidents involving nonimpaired drivers once they are fully deployed.

I am pleased that my V2I legislation is included in the overall highway bill the Senate is considering this week, and I look forward to working in the fall during the conference to make sure this funding eligibility language remains in the bill.

V2V and V2I technologies are part of the auto industry's future, and these technologies will be readily available in the near term. That is why it is so important that we make these investments in our infrastructure now to ensure that we can start using these lifesaving technologies as they become available.

Taken together, these two bills represent the type of forward-thinking policymaking that Congress should be focused on every day. Investments in research and development have demonstrated the ability to transform our society for the better, and I am determined to make sure the United States is the country that is driving forward advanced technology instead of putting on the brakes and being left behind.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor to speak about the importance of protecting women's health and protecting their access to their health care, in other words, their choice. I strongly oppose what is becoming a major effort to defund Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood has ensured women receive the health care they need for almost 100 years now. That was before women even had the right to vote. Its founder was thrown in jail for making birth control available, and it has been under near-constant attack since then.

I think the Senate needs to stand up on behalf of millions of women across this country and vote no on any amendment that would defund Planned Parenthood. This organization is the primary health care provider for millions of American women. One in five women in this country has been to Planned Parenthood.

I have received hundreds of emails and calls from women in California about their support for and experiences at Planned Parenthood. They told me that doctors there listened to them, the nurses became their friends, and they felt valued as patients. Before they went to Planned Parenthood, they were worried about their health. They didn't know if they would be able to get the care they need, and they didn't have the information to make smart, healthy lifestyle choices.

One young woman from Santa Barbara told me about a health care scare she had when she was 20. Precancerous cells were discovered during her annual exam. Planned Parenthood didn't have the equipment to perform the followup procedure she needed, but that didn't keep the clinic staff from helping her. They connected her to the only OB/GYN in the city who accepted low-income patients, and she got the care she needed.

She said: ''Since that early detection and intervention, I've been healthy and would not be where I am today without Planned Parenthood.''

Another young woman from Victorville, CA, told me it was hard to get information about how to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases and access contraception. Three girls she knew in high school became pregnant. It wasn't until she visited Planned Parenthood in college that she felt she could make responsible health care decisions.

Another young woman shared her abortion story. She was 19 when she became pregnant. She felt scared and alone. She said: ''During a time when a tough decision had been made and a million thoughts were running through my mind, it was relieving to know that I was in the hands of people whose only goal was to help me.'' And 4 years later, she still uses Planned Parenthood as her primary health care provider and encourages her friends and family to also use them.

I want to say just a little bit about the services Planned Parenthood provides and how it uses Federal funds. Nearly 80 percent of its patients are low income, making less than $18,000 a year. Without Planned Parenthood, many of these women could not access the most basic health care services. That bears repeating. Planned Parenthood is often the only option for women to get their annual checkup. It provides breast exams, contraception, prenatal care, cancer screenings, and testing for sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. It also runs teen pregnancy prevention and health education programs that reach more than 1 million young people per year. This is what the Federal funding Planned Parenthood receives goes toward.

In 2013, Planned Parenthood used Federal funds to provide the following: nearly half a million breast exams, nearly 400,000 cervical cancer screenings, contraception for 2.2 million patients, and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections for 4.5 million patients.

In addition to serving predominately low-income women, Planned Parenthood operates in some of the most underserved communities in this country. For example, without Planned Parenthood, 13 of California's 58 counties would not have a single clinic to provide family planning services to low-income women through title X programs.

Attacks on Planned Parenthood are a concerted attack on access to safe, legal abortion services in this country. Make no mistake about it. The group behind this latest attack, the Center for Medical Progress, has longstanding ties to the anti-choice movement, including Operation Rescue, which is closely associated with clinic violence.

While abortion accounts for only 3 percent of the health care services provided by Planned Parenthood, it is often one of the only abortion providers in a State or a region. For example, there are 10 abortion clinics in Texas. Just a few years ago, there were 36 abortion clinics. Twenty-six clinics were forced to close after Texas passed a law aimed at ending abortion in the State. The Supreme Court has put some provisions of that law on hold pending further review. But the point is that laws such as the one in Texas force much-needed facilities to close. Just 10 clinics in Texas have met the unnecessary and burdensome new requirements, and 5 of those 10 clinics are Planned Parenthood clinics. If Planned Parenthood closes, Texas loses half of its remaining abortion providers in one fell swoop.

The goal of the groups pushing this effort is clear. It is to chip away bit by bit at a woman's ability to make her own health care decisions in consultation with her family and her doctor. That is their goal—no matter the cost to women across the country who rely on Planned Parenthood for cancer screenings, annual checkups, and other essential services—and in my view, this is simply wrong.

I am really troubled by the aggressive tactics used by anti-choice groups, such as the illegal filming of a medical procedure and the hacking of Planned Parenthood's records. This is disturbing. We all know the danger of leaking confidential information. We know the potential for serious violence.

In 1994, shortly after I came to the Senate, we passed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act in response to a spate of violent episodes targeting women's health clinics. Two doctors, a clinic escort, and two receptionists at a Planned Parenthood facility in Boston were killed by anti-abortion activists during three separate attacks in 1993 and 1994.

This week, upon learning that her name and email address had been published, one Planned Parenthood staffer in California told my office that she refused to be intimidated because she knows that is the whole point.

I am concerned that the message being sent is that it is OK to commit crimes against Planned Parenthood, its employees, and its patients; and it is not. That sort of message can be taken up by extremists and become very dangerous for women and doctors across the country.

Whether you support the right to choose or not—and I very much do—we should all be very careful here. Doctors and clinic staff who provide constitutionally protected health care services and women who access these services should not be terrorized and threatened.

In closing, I will return to where I started. I believe that if there is a movement to withhold funding from Planned Parenthood, that movement

will not be successful. I believe that will be defeated right here in the Senate. I do not understand why anyone would even try to do this at this time. This country has so many problems, not the least of which are things that I deal with every day in the intelligence community—the fear of extremists, the attacks by terrorists and those who want to strike our homeland. It seems to me that we do not need this fight now, particularly a fight where those who oppose Planned Parenthood, I believe, will be seriously defeated.

If a bill does come before us, I believe it is a mistake, and I would urge my colleagues to oppose it.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, we know that our generation, people in the Senate and in the House—people in their forties, fifties, and sixties—inherited from their parents and grandparents the greatest infrastructure in the history of the world. From the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s into the Reagan years, when we decided we should invest less in infrastructure, we had this incredible infrastructure we inherited from our parents and grandparents. Yet, for whatever reason, we have allowed it to crumble. We haven't invested. We haven't modernized. We haven't even maintained it as well as we should.

The dismal state of our Nation's outdated roads and bridges and railways cost Ohioans and North Carolinians valuable time and money and energy.

The State legislature in my State and I know the State legislature in the Presiding Officer's State have been on a budget-cutting tear. My State legislature has decided to slice in half, and then some, local funding for many things, including infrastructure. As a result, the streets in any town in Ohio, virtually—not just big cities, not just suburbs, but more affluent communities, small towns, and rural areas—the streets and highways continue to crumble. It is because this body has been far too dysfunctional because of the pledges that many elected officials have made to a Washington lobbyist that they will never close tax loopholes and will continue to fail to fund infrastructure because of what State government has done in my State.

But instead of debating a long-term bill with that funding, we debate a hastily assembled bill, without an open process, without amendments, that no one expects will even be considered by the House of Representatives. The Speaker of the House, a fellow Ohioan, used a four-letter word to describe this legislation when or if—I assume when—it goes over to the House.

The Senate is considering a bill that doesn't do enough for infrastructure. It makes bad choices about how to pay for these investments. Yet, at the same time, President Obama proposed a 6-year, $478 billion transportation package that would provide a major expansion in investment. It is supported by all kinds of organizations—business, labor, contractors, AFL–CIO, manufacturers, steelmakers, concrete makers—businesses that want to have good infrastructure to get their goods to market and want their employees to be able to drive to work or take the bus to work without major damage to the axles of their cars when they hit the potholes on too many city streets. Instead, we are looking at a bill that pays for just 3 years and offers small increases over current spending levels.

Think about how we are doing this. This is a 6-year authorization, with funding for slightly less than 3 years but collecting the money by budget gimmicks over 10 years. What kind of game is this? Instead of funding infrastructure the way we used to when we would come together bipartisanly and fund infrastructure with real dollars and real investments, we are now playing games. That is why in the House of Representatives the Speaker of the House used a four-letter word to describe this bill. It is why so many are so dissatisfied in the House of Representatives.

It will pass with a majority. It will pass with cloture. It has already gotten 60 votes. But they are 60 pretty unhappy votes because nobody I know in this body thinks we are doing this anything close to the right way.

If we had considered amendments in the regular order as the majority leader promised, I would have offered a fully paid for proposal to boost the bill's investments and expand the major projects program. Let me talk about that for a second.

This amendment would fund projects such as the Brent Spence Bridge between Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. The Brent Spence Bridge, built in 1959, 1960, connects Cincinnati with northern Kentucky. I–75 running north and south goes from Cincinnati to Dayton. The Brent Spence Bridge includes I–75 and runs from Cincinnati, to Dayton, to Lima, to Toledo, to Detroit. I–71 also comes together right at the Brent Spence Bridge as it crosses into Ohio—Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland, not far from Akron.

So my colleague, the senior Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. INHOFE, who has played a major role in transportation and would like to do it right, has pointed out several times during this debate, the equivalent—get this—that one bridge—4 percent of our Nation's GDP crosses that bridge every day, every week, every month, every year. Four percent of our gross domestic product moves back and forth across that bridge; yet that bridge is about 55 years old. There has never been a serious accident with that bridge. There have been problems. There have been some safety issues. I don't think anybody expects it to fall down next year—I am not being an alarmist—but when are we going to do something to fix that bridge?

Senator MCCONNELL, the majority leader—that bridge, for curious historical reasons—the Ohio River, which separates there Ohio and Kentucky—almost the entire Ohio River is considered to be in Kentucky. So this bridge, which covers 4 percent of GDP, is in the home State of the majority leader, and yet the majority leader did not allow another Senator to offer an amendment that actually would take care of rebuilding and fixing up that historic bridge that is very crucial to our economy. Without the Federal Government, that bridge won't get replaced. The State government of Kentucky is not going to do it. Ohio is not going to do it. They should play a role. They could toll that bridge. Who knows. They should play a role.

Federal investment in highways was mapped out by President Roosevelt and started by President Eisenhower with the interstates. It was always bipartisan until the pledge by far too many Members of this body to special interest lobbyists who said we can't do that, we can't fund this infrastructure.

On the transit side, I would have sought to strike a pilot program that allows pilot projects with any private investment to ''skip the line'' of Federal funding, meaning these projects, which are often bad for workers that operate the new line, would have been in a special category that they surely didn't earn because they haven't served the same public purpose and gone through the same justification process, if you will, as a normal public transportation project.

When the majority leader brought a combined transportation bill to the floor last Tuesday, he used his privileged position to prevent any Senator from offering amendments. I remember the elections last fall when Senator MCCONNELL—then the minority leader—said that things will be different in the Senate. It didn't take long for Senator MCCONNELL to sort of trump his predecessor by doing it even worse—pardon the play on words with the verb there. This matters because bad process can lead to bad outcomes.

The Senate, given the opportunity to have a full debate on transportation, would be voting on a much stronger proposal. As the Presiding Officer knows, this bill has improved over the last couple of weeks.

They have taken out—this bill originally was going to slice money out of the Social Security fund to pay for highways and bridges and transit. We have never done that before in this body.

We were going to take money out of money that was already promised and dedicated and about to be spent to help cities that have been particularly devastated by foreclosures. They were going to use money from that.

They were going to use money from community banks—they still are—in this proposal.

They are going to charge everybody who is getting a mortgage $50, $100, $300 at closing to help pay for transportation—what is that about?—instead of

doing it right and funding transportation the way we used to, bipartisanly, back when Senate candidates and House candidates didn't sign pledges from special interest lobbyists where they tie their hands and are not able to come up with revenue for a transportation bill. If all the committees of jurisdiction over this bill held markups to actually discuss the bill, had hearings for the bill, had been able to amend the bill, it would have been a much stronger bill.

The chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee did good bipartisan work on highways. I commend Senator INHOFE and Senator BOXER—one Republican and one Democrat—but their work is the exception. The banking committee, on which I serve as ranking member, traditionally developed the public transportation portion of this bill. It is done bipartisanly through the regular committee process. Not even a hint of that happened this year.

The Finance Committee, of which I am a member, has jurisdiction over much of the revenue that is used to offset funds going into the highway trust fund—no markups there either. As introduced, this bill would have robbed Social Security, as I said, taken money from the Hardest Hit Fund, as I said, for communities devastated by foreclosure crisis.

I invite the majority leader to come to Cleveland—I know he comes to Cleveland to fund-raise—but come to Cleveland and look at the neighborhood I live in. I live in ZIP Code 44105. My wife and I have lived there for a couple of years. In 2007, that ZIP Code had the highest number of foreclosures in the United States of America. That happened because of Wall Street greed, in large part, but the fact that it did happen means there is far too much blight in this neighborhood. The Hardest Hit Fund matters to clean up some of this neighborhood and enable people to get back on their feet.

The commerce committee, the third committee—first, there was banking and then Finance. Then there is the EPW that did it mostly right. The banking committee was excluded, the Finance Committee was excluded. The commerce committee, which is responsible for highway safety and rail safety, held a markup but not a single Democrat on the committee supported the language in the legislation because they did nothing about public safety. If my recollection is right, younger people are allowed to drive trucks—as if we want less truck safety. I say ''young people'' meaning 18-year-olds. I know I am getting older, but I don't really want 18-year-olds driving these rigs when they clearly don't have much experience and less training. It also did not fix some of the rail issues we should fix, having seen some of these terrible accidents. It was one thing after another.

For the past 2 weeks, a large part of the legislation was written in the Republican offices with little input from Democratic Senators. Even though the majority leader has said that times have changed, we are going to have a full committee process, an open amendment process, debate, and all of that, this didn't happen.

The greatest barrier of this bill, aside from the limited growth in investment, is this bill makes choices about revenue that this Senator thinks the Congress and the American people will regret. I have mentioned a couple of them. Let me talk about those that were a part of the banking committee, on which I sit, which I think I probably know the most about.

Despite opposition from consumer advocates and participants in the housing market, including bankers and realtors, the bill would increase the guaranty fees paid by homeowners that are charged to protect against losses to Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. That means when going to a closing, you are going to be assessed a fee. It would increase the cost of homeownership by $4,000 for borrowers who have a 20-percent downpayment for the median home price and would increase even more for those who put less down. That is why a vote for this bill is a vote to increase the cost of homeownership for families across the country and puts taxpayers at greater risk. There is a history of opposition to the use of this fee for purposes other than housing. More recently, Senator CRAPO, a Republican, and Senator WARNER, a Democrat from Virginia, wrote a provision in this year's budget resolution to prevent this fee from being misused, and of course they are right.

This bill requires the IRS to use private debt collection agencies to collect taxes because the majority leader was looking for anything he could find that might produce revenue—it has nothing to do with transportation—but anyplace he could find in the government funds to produce revenue that then could be used to pay for a highway bill. Again, it is smoke and mirrors and just sort of funny money.

One of the ways he did this was to take money from the IRS—even as we cut the budget for IRS debt collection—to take some more of that money and give it to a private debt collection company to collect this debt. That was considered to be approximately a $2 billion revenue generator for reasons that aren't quite clear. It has been tried before and each time it has lost money and it has been repealed. The companies hired for these efforts were found to have frequently harassed low-income families and they violated the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, but the majority leader needed that billion-plus dollars for his highway bill. People here didn't have the guts to stand up and say, no, we may have made this pledge to the special interest lobbyists and we can't come up with revenue, but instead let's actually do this right. No, they aren't going to do that. They take money from the Hardest Hit Fund, Social Security money, increase costs to middle-class people at a closing who are trying to get a mortgage, and privatize debt collection.

It is hard to see how these programs that hurt families—the Hardest Hit Fund, the debt collection, the Social Security money—how this makes sense to pay for investments for bridges and roads.

This bill would reduce the dividends paid to banks with over $1 billion in total assets that are members of the Federal Reserve System. That raises $17 billion. While it might make sense to reduce the dividend—you can argue that—I have heard people on both sides of that debate. If we exempted the smallest banks under $1 billion, there are plenty of community banks that are $2 to $3 billion in size. Most are smaller, but they will be paying more—hundreds of thousands of dollars—millions in some cases. All of the people who voted for this bill—voted for cloture, voted for this highway bill—are assessing a number of community banks in their States for this money. We don't know if the new rate of 1.5 percent that Senator MCCONNELL has decided on is fair. I appreciate the cutoff of the lower rate of $1 billion, but we should be working this out in committee, discussing it and hearing people on both sides. They started with every bank and arbitrarily cut it to set the $1 billion threshold. They arbitrarily dropped the percentage from 6 to 1.5. Nobody truly knows what I am talking about when I talk about this because nobody truly understands this program. Even people who are on the banking committee don't know it very well. Maybe we should have researched and discussed it and had hearings on it. Instead, the majority leader came around to these banks and to this committee and they thought, hey, we can get $16 billion there by changing a program and nobody knows what it is anyway. Well, he has taken that money from a lot of community banks. More power to him. It is another reason I am not going to support this bill. It is ironic that on the fifth anniversary of Wall Street's Dodd-Frank reform this bill would undercut rules to help small banks.

Before I close I want to be fair and point out some of the good provisions in this bill. First, the Senate voted on a strong bipartisan basis to add an amendment to renew the U.S. Export-Import Bank. This Bank has helped 350 businesses in my home State, two-thirds of which are small businesses. It doesn't cost taxpayers a cent. Interestingly, the Export-Import Bank, begun by President Roosevelt in the 1930s, was always bipartisan. Its reauthorization, continuation, renewal, and update was always done by Congress on a bipartisan basis. My recollection—I am not quite sure this is precise, but my recollection is that only once was there ever a vote in the Senate for the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank because there was no need to because

everybody agreed with it. Yet because of the far right, the tea party—we used to call them the John Birch Society when they opposed Medicare and now they are called the tea party when they oppose the Affordable Care Act—has decided this Export-Import Bank, which helps businesses and companies, particularly small companies in Dayton, Toledo, Cleveland, Charlotte, Asheville, and Durham—helps small businesses export their products. They need some help sometimes.

Every other country in the world—every other major country, we think, has some kind of an export financing agency such as this, but we are not able, for political reasons, call it crony capitalism—the tea party weighed in and convinced a lot of Senate and House Republicans that it is not such a good idea. Right now the Ex-Im Bank is in this bill. Hopefully it will stay in over the process. I am hopeful. Because the Speaker used a four-letter word to describe this bill, I am hopeful when we get a short-term extension—I hate clichés but this is such a good one—when we kick this can down the road again for another 2 or 3 months, whatever it is going to be, I am hopeful the majority leader and the Speaker will include the Export-Import Bank reauthorization and make it long term, but it is not clear if they will.

I want to also point out that Chairman SHELBY, the chairman of my committee in banking, with whom I have a good relationship, included a number of proposals for transit policy that I think make good sense.

The mass transit account was created in 1983 under President Reagan. It was done right. Public transit has always received around 20 percent, sometimes a little more, of any new revenue that is dedicated to growth. We have a tradition in this country that for every $100 we are spending on the Transportation bill, $20 of that goes to small bus systems in Lorain, OH, it goes to RTA for trains and rail in Cleveland, it goes to major transit systems in New York or anywhere around the country. This bill initially was less than 20 percent. I appreciate Chairman SHELBY and the majority leader getting it back up to 20 percent.

There is a new program for competitive bus grants. It is underfunded at $190 million a year. This bill increases the amount of American-made steel and other components. That is a good thing.

With all my criticism on this bill in the way it was handled by the leadership in this House, there are some good things in this bill. I hope the Senate will move forward after today with a desire to revive the bipartisan process based on regular order when we address transportation issues.

I stand ready to work with my colleagues in both parties to deliver a robust 6-year transportation bill.

I yield the floor.

FOIA PROVISIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with Senator THUNE, chairman of the commerce committee, regarding the DRIVE Act and the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA.

I want to thank Chairman THUNE for working with me to remove four provisions in the DRIVE Act aimed at carving out information from disclosure under FOIA, three of which were in titles of the bill falling under the commerce committee's jurisdiction. The removal of these four provisions is reflected in the second-degree amendment filed by Senator INHOFE, amendment No. 2533, to the McConnell substitute amendment. FOIA is our Nation's premier open government law and the foundation on which all our sunshine and transparency policies rest. It remains an indispensable tool for Americans to obtain information affecting public policy, consumer safety, the environment, and public health. The Freedom of Information Act falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and changes affecting this law should not be enacted without full and careful consideration by the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. THUNE. I thank Senator LEAHY for his interest in these matters, and I am pleased we were able to work out an agreement to strike these provisions and move forward with consideration of the DRIVE Act. I look forward to working with you and Senator GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, on any future proposals to amend the Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. LEAHY. I also want to draw particular attention to Section 32003, related to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's, FMCSA's, compliance, safety, and accountability system, CSA. The CSA system is designed to evaluate the safety and compliance performance of motor carriers by using data from inspections, crashes, compliance reviews, and the Federal motor carrier census to come up with a safety measurement system, SMS, score for each motor carrier in seven behavior analysis and safety improvement categories, BASICs. It is my understanding that these scores are currently available to the public via FMCSA's Web site. It is also my understanding that, as originally drafted, this bill would have prohibited FMCSA from making these scores available to the general public via its Web site or via a FOIA request while FMCSA evaluates and reforms the methodology underlying these scores.

I have serious concerns about removing this information from public view, even for a short period of time. The safety score is one of the tools we give consumers and other stakeholders to help fully evaluate motor carriers. While I prefer that these scores remain easily accessible on FMSCA's Web site for the general public while the methodology is reviewed, it is critical that the scores remain available under FOIA. Even if the scores are removed from the Web site while the methodology is reviewed, under the provision, they will remain available to law enforcement and regulators for use in overseeing the industry. For this reason alone, as well as many others, we should not withhold that information from public scrutiny. Moreover, the Judiciary Committee did not review this new proposed exemption and has not had time to fully consider the potential effects of this exclusion.

I thank Senator THUNE for working with me to remove this FOIA exemption. Originally the bill language stated that none of the score information ''may be made available to the general public (including through requests under Section 552 of title 5, United States Code [the FOIA statute]).'' The Inhofe second degree amendment strikes the phrase ''including through requests under Section 552 of title 5, United States Code'' in its entirety. Under the OPEN FOIA Act of 2009, no new FOIA exemption under 5 U.S.C 552(b)(3), is effective unless it specifically cites to 5 U.S.C 552(b)(3). Removing the citation to the FOIA statute makes clear that, while the scores may no longer be routinely published and easily accessible to the general public via FMSCA's Web site until they have been reviewed and reformed, the scores are still subject to disclosure pursuant to a FOIA request, unless an existing exemption is found to apply.

Mr. THUNE. For the reasons you stated, I agree that if enacted into law, nothing in Section 32003 exempts or is intended to exempt information under the Freedom of Information Act. I would, however, just offer two comments to explain to my colleague the rationale for and limits of the modified provision. First, the commerce committee has received information from several objective sources, including the Government Accountability Office, the Department of Transportation's Office of Inspector General, and the law enforcement community, identifying concerns with the accuracy of the scoring analysis performed by FMCSA as part of the CSA program. As noted by GAO, the manner in which scores are calculated under the program ''creates the likelihood that many SMS scores do not represent an accurate or precise safety assessment for a carrier.'' Accordingly, the bill proposes to withdraw this potentially misleading analysis from public review temporarily, until the program is reviewed and corrected. Nevertheless, as underscored by subsection 32003(c), the underlying ''[i]nspection and violation information'' submitted to FMCSA under the program ''shall remain available for public viewing.''

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF GERTRUDE SILVIA RUDIAK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the 100th birthday of an incredible Nevadan, Gertrude Silvia Rudiak. For more than 70 years, Gertrude has been a leader in southern Nevada and has remained committed to her family, community, and faith.

Nearly a century ago, on August 2, 1915, Gertrude was born to Jewish immigrant parents in Dickinson, ND. As a child, her family moved from place to place across the country, but it was her parents' understanding of the value of higher education that brought them to the west coast. In California, she attended the University of California, Berkeley, where she received her bachelor's degree in music. Later, Gertrude built upon her skill set and earned credentials from the Business College of Oakland in office procedure. With undeniable tenacity and the knowledge she gained, she was able to work through the Great Depression.

In 1942, Gertrude met the love of her life, George Rudiak, and they married in September the same year. George was born in Moscow, Russia, and the experiences he and his family endured as they immigrated to the United States greatly shaped the man he became and the civil work he pursued later in his life.

George had received a law degree from the Boalt Hall School of Jurisprudence at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1940, but finding a job was a challenge. He was able to do some work for the State of California and the U.S. Employment Services; and in the midst of World War II, George enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. The first place he was assigned was the Western Flying Training Command at Santa Ana. George was later transferred to the Las Vegas Gunnery School, which is now Nellis Air Force Base. Though the young couple was only stationed in Las Vegas for a short time, they fell in love with the city and moved back to plant their roots in the desert sand as soon as George was honorably discharged in 1946.

The Las Vegas of the 1940s was quite different from the Las Vegas of today. Approximately 21,000 people called the city home, and there was racial segregation. Some even referred to Las Vegas as the ''Mississippi of the West.'' As the first city attorney of North Las Vegas, a Nevada Legislator, and chairman of the Nevada Equal Rights Commission, George was committed to bringing equality to Nevada. Gertrude supported his efforts; and for more than 70 years, has made civic, religious, and humanitarian contributions of her own that have shaped our community. Today, all Las Vegans benefit from the compassionate work of Gertrude and George to make our community a better and more just place.

George Rudiak was a lawyer's lawyer. He was the lawyer we all looked to as the gold standard for an ethical, competent, experienced trial lawyer.

There are truly selfless people in the world, and Gertrude is one of these people. She is dedicated to her five children, their children, and their children's children and still finds time to improve her community. Over the past seven decades, she has filled traditionally male-held positions on community boards, including becoming the first female to serve on the board of Temple Beth Sholom, and has been a champion of secular and Jewish education in Las Vegas and Israel. Her efforts have been recognized by the Jewish National Fund, the United Jewish Appeal, and the Anti-Defamation League. Additionally, Mayor Carolyn Goodman presented Gertrude with the rare honor of a key to the city of Las Vegas in 2014. On more than one occasion, the city has declared August 2, Gertrude's birthday, Gertrude Rudiak Day in recognition of her long-standing commitment to Las Vegas.

I am grateful for Gertrude's contributions to our State, and I wish her a happy 100th birthday. May this year bring Gertrude and her family much health and happiness.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in 1965, millions of Americans and nearly half the country's seniors couldn't afford basic health care. But that began to change 50 years ago today. President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Medicare program for the elderly and the Medicaid program for low-income adults, children, pregnant women, and people with disabilities.

Although it was signed by President Johnson, it ''started with the man from Independence,'' . . . Harry S. Truman. In 1949, Truman became the first President to publically support a national health insurance program and sent a bill to Congress that would give health insurance to everyone age 65 and older. Critics called the idea ''socialized medicine,'' and the effort failed.

Sixteen years later, President Johnson believed ''the times had caught up with the idea.'' And he was right. Today, 46 million older adults and 9 million people with disabilities depend on Medicare for health care and economic security. In Illinois, 1.9 million people are enrolled in Medicare.

And because of the Affordable Care Act, the program has grown stronger. The Medicare Part A trust fund is now expected to be solvent for an additional 13 years because of the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act is also helping seniors with the cost of their prescription drugs. Since the passage of the ACA, people with Medicare in Illinois have saved over $554 million on prescription drugs, because we closed the donut hole. That is an average savings of $925 for each Illinois senior. The Affordable Care Act also expanded Medicare coverage of certain preventive services, such as mammograms or colonoscopies, without any cost sharing.

Let's not forget this is also the 50th Anniversary of Medicaid. Medicaid has been a lifeline for millions of people, especially children. My friends on the other side of the aisle find it easy to discredit a government program, but this isn't about a program. It is about the people who benefit from them.

Over 54 million people benefit from Medicaid. Before the Affordable Care Act, two out of three people on Medicaid were pregnant women and children. That is 36 million of our most vulnerable citizens. Medicaid also serves people with disabilities, including many low-income Americans with disabilities who would have nowhere else to turn.

Before the Affordable Care Act, almost 3 million people were covered by Medicaid in Illinois and more than half of all births were covered by Medicaid. Now, anyone living below 133 percent of poverty can join Medicaid. That's a single person earning less than $15,654 a year, or a family of three bringing in $26,720. And for this population, the Federal Government picks up 100% of the cost. Because of the Affordable Care Act, more than 570,000 people in Illinois are now covered by Medicaid. I call that a success.

Just ask Christopher Greenwood if this law is making a difference. Christopher Greenwood is a community health and prevention coordinator for the City of Rockford working to help people sign up for health insurance. He helped a 50-year-old woman enroll in Medicaid, and she was excited to have coverage for preventive services like a mammogram.

According to Christopher:

> People aren't realizing the benefits of the Affordable Care Act. It's all about prevention services. When we tell people they need to sign up, they think they don't need it. But when we start telling them the benefits, to see the looks on their faces, it's all really cool.

You know who else benefits from Medicaid? Providers, hospitals and doctors. Ask a provider back home: What would you prefer? Reimbursement by Medicaid or not be paid at all? The answer is obvious.

Medicare and Medicaid save lives. The programs provide high quality health care to millions of people. Yes, we owe something to Truman for this idea. We owe something to Johnson for signing it into law. And today, we should focus on further strengthening these programs so they can serve future generations.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, this week, we commemorate the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid, programs that have made such a difference in the lives of so many.

Upon signing these programs into law 50 years ago, then-President Lyndon Johnson reminded us of a shared tradition within our great Nation—one that ''calls upon us never to be indifferent toward despair . . . commands us never to turn away from helplessness . . . directs us never to ignore or to spurn those who suffer untended in a land that is bursting with abundance.''

That deep-seated tradition—to lend a hand to our neighbors and friends and to honor our mothers and fathers—is what guided Congress and country to do the right thing so many years ago. With the stroke of his pen, President Johnson, and all those who fought before and alongside him, made sure that there would be care for the sick and serenity for the fearful.

I know just how important Medicare and Medicaid are for the people who rely upon them. In the 1960s, I was a young social worker in Baltimore for ''Operation REASON'' (Responding to the Elderly's Abilities & Sickness Otherwise Neglected). Our goal was to help Maryland seniors get the health care they needed. You have to remember, in those days, when you retired, you usually lost your health insurance, which meant that many seniors also lost access to their doctors and health care.

More than half of America's seniors had no health insurance. This meant that middle-class seniors were a heart attack away from bankruptcy, a cancer diagnosis away from destitution. It didn't matter if you were a senior of modest means or middle-class. Everyone was vulnerable.

But our job was to help. So, with teams led by social workers and nurses, we worked to help sick elderly people get health coverage and get to their doctor's office. We were focused on helping seniors who had neglected their chronic conditions because of inability to travel, ignorance of services available to them, fear of asserting their right to such services, or other barriers placed in their way.

I saw firsthand how hard Baltimore's seniors were struggling. They were foregoing medical care because they didn't have insurance, because they couldn't afford the bills, or simply because they didn't have transportation to get to doctor's office or hospital. I knew Medicare and Medicaid could help these seniors and all seniors.

So every single day I would go out to churches and senior citizen centers. I would inform people about their options, organize transportation for them, and help them fill out complicated forms. In those days, we didn't have computers or cell phones. We had to physically go meet seniors where they were. And it worked. After 4 months of operation, we had 103 clients with a variety of chronic diseases, and we helped them get the care they needed.

And Congress took notice of what we were doing. In 1966, I was invited to come testify before Congress in the Senate Subcommittee on Aging, which was chaired by Senator Kennedy. We told the committee what we were doing, told them who we were fighting for. We were fighting for people in need, people who lived in unsafe housing, had inadequate diet and clothing, a dearth of recreational opportunities, who were lonely and were in need of health care.

These people, our seniors and our families of modest means, were the reason Congress passed Medicare and Medicaid in the first place. And thank God we did.

Today, 55 million Americans—nearly every senior—has access to Medicare's guarantee. An additional 68 million of our Nation's most vulnerable have health care coverage thanks to Medicaid. Because of Medicare and Medicaid, more Americans have health insurance. Before Medicare, 48 percent of seniors had no insurance. Today, only 2 percent of seniors are uninsured. Out of pocket costs have decreased. Before Medicare, seniors paid 56 percent of health care expenses out of pocket. Today, seniors only pay 13 percent. Life expectancy is longer. Medicare has contributed to a 5-year increase in life expectancy after age 65. Deaths from heart disease have dropped by a third for people over age 65. Our elderly's poverty rate has declined dramatically, from 29 percent in 1966 to 10 percent today. Seniors have more affordable drugs. Since 2010, over 8 million seniors have saved more than $11 billion on prescription drugs. Kids are getting comprehensive early childhood screenings, and 32 million children nationwide now get needed childhood screenings.

In Maryland alone, Medicare ensures that 1 million Maryland seniors can get the health care they need at prices they can afford. And Medicaid ensures that 975,000 Marylanders can get the health care they need, including 478,000 Maryland kids—that is one in three of Maryland's children—149,000 Marylanders with disabilities, and 77,000 of our low-income seniors.

Over the past half century, we have seen Medicare and Medicaid prolong and enhance the lives of millions of Americans. Ensuring access to health care for America's most vulnerable ranks as one of our Nation's greatest public health accomplishments. That is why I am committed to doing everything within my power to keep Medicare and Medicaid strong, so that these programs can continue helping those who rely on them today, as well as those who will need them tomorrow.

That means fighting for reforms that keep Medicare solvent, as we did in the Affordable Care Act, where we extended Medicare's solvency by more than a decade. It means fighting for improvements that make Medicare stronger, as we did in the Affordable Care Act, where we closed the prescription drug ''donut hole,'' where we gave seniors free preventive services, where we put the focus on quality of care, not quantity of care.

And it means fighting to protect these vital programs from those who want to turn them from a guarantee into a voucher and political promise, as Republicans have repeatedly tried to do in their budget proposals.

Make no mistake, Republican proposals to privatize Medicare, to turn it into a voucher program, would end Medicare as we know it. I will not let that happen. I will fight side-by-side with those 1 million Maryland seniors and 55 million American seniors. We will fight to keep Medicare and Medicaid strong and healthy so that they can continue to provide for the health care needs of our citizens

As you can see, there is a lot to celebrate as we mark Medicare and Medicaid's 50th anniversary. For the past five decades, these programs have accomplished their two main goals: ensuring access to health care for the elderly, for the disabled, and for those of modest means. And protecting people against the financial hardship of health care costs.

I consider it a great honor and privilege that I have been able to devote so much of my career to protecting, improving, and fighting on behalf of Medicare and Medicaid and all the people served by these programs. From my days as a young social worker helping seniors and families get the health care they needed, to my days in the House and Senate fighting against efforts to privatize Medicare or block grant Medicaid, to those years spent working to refresh and improve these programs through the Affordable Care Act, including closing the ''donut hole,'' expanding Medicaid eligibility, and ensuring seniors could get free preventive screenings.

I believe ''honor thy father and mother'' is a good commandment to live by and a good policy to govern by. That is why I have fought to save and strengthen Medicare and Medicaid to ensure that health care is affordable, accessible, reliable, and undeniable.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment to express my disdain for the reprehensible actions of Planned Parenthood and my support for the defense of all the unborn babies subject to this group's immoral practices.

Thanks to the Center for Medical Progress, the Nation has quickly been made aware that Planned Parenthood affiliates across the country have been modifying their abortion procedures for the specific purpose of preserving organs from the fetuses being aborted in exchange for compensation. In the video released this week, a former procurement technician explains how the procurement of certain body parts warrants a higher level of compensation,

stating: ''If you can somehow procure a brain or a heart you're going to get more money than just [an . . .] umbilical cord.'' As a father of four, and a strong advocate for the sanctity of life, I am deeply disturbed by reports of these gruesome and inhumane actions.

However, Planned Parenthood currently continues to receive funding from hard-working taxpayers, many of whom also find their practices deplorable. Between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2012, Planned Parenthood received an average of $500 million per year, totaling $1.5 billion. On top of these high levels of federal funding, Planned Parenthood has made a profit every year since 1987.

Given our current fiscal climate and all our talk of the need to cut excessive and wasteful spending, there is no justification for continuing to subsidize their profitable venture with taxpayer dollars. It is time for big abortion businesses like Planned Parenthood to be investigated and defunded, and I have taken several actions to do just that.

For the last three congresses, I have been the Senate sponsor of the title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act. Title X is a grant program that has unfortunately become a large subsidy for abortion providers that claim to provide family planning and women's health care services. My bill, S. 51, would prohibit the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) from providing this Federal funding to an entity or their affiliate that performs an abortion.

I have also signed on to two letters regarding needed investigations into this matter. In one letter, I joined 49 fellow senators to request that Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell immediately begin a ''thorough review of the compliance of the Department and Planned Parenthood—one of the Department's grantees—with all relevant and applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and other requirements.'' In a second letter, I joined 10 Senators in asking both Secretary Burwell and Attorney General Loretta Lynch to conduct a full investigation into Planned Parenthood to determine if the organization violated Federal law.

Lastly, I am supporting a bill introduced by Senator JONI ERNST that would prohibit Planned Parenthood, or any of its affiliates, subsidiaries, successors, or clinics, from receiving any Federal funds. Instead, funds that are currently offered to Planned Parenthood would be available to other eligible entities to provide women's health care services, including diagnostic laboratory and radiology services, well-child care, prenatal and postnatal care, immunizations, and cervical and breast cancer screenings.

The sanctity of human life is a principle that Congress should proclaim at every opportunity. The time has come to respect the wishes of the majority of Americans who adamantly oppose using taxpayer dollars for abortions by denying Federal funds to these abortion providers. I strongly encourage the support of my fellow Senators on efforts to defund Planned Parenthood and protect unborn babies from being the target of these gruesome practices.

INNOVATION

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my remarks at the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions hearing on Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act: Exploring Barriers and Opportunities within Innovation be printed in the RECORD.

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

INNOVATION

This is our sixth hearing during this Congress on the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. This morning we are talking about innovation in higher education.

Ranking Member Murray and I will each have an opening statement, then we will introduce our panel of witnesses. After our witness testimony, senators will each have 5 minutes of questions.

Clark Kerr, the former president of the University of California, wrote in his 2001 book, ''The Uses of the University'' that of 85 human institutions founded before 1520 and largely unchanged today—about 70 are universities.

As for the other 15 institutions—well, among them are the Catholic Church, and the Isle of Man.

Kerr wrote: ''Universities are among the most conservative of all institutions in their methods of governance and conduct and are likely to remain so.''

If that's true, maybe we ought to pack up this hearing on innovation in higher education and head home?

Let's keep our seats for a minute.

The world around the universities is changing—especially the students who attend them.

First, there are more people attending.

Right around the end of World War II, only about 5% of the population 25 years old and up had earned a college degree.

When the first Higher Education Act was signed in 1965, only about 10% of this population had a college degree.

Now, about 32% of Americans 25 and up have a college degree.

Second, American colleges and universities are now serving the most diverse group of students ever—

40% are 25 years or older and come to college with experiences in the workforce.

Of the 21 million students in higher education, only one-third are full-time undergraduates under 22 years old.

Only 18.9 percent of first-time, full-time students live on a campus and students are increasingly coming from a wide array of backgrounds and are the first in their family to attend college.

Third, employers need workers with post-secondary degrees.

Labor economist Dr. Anthony Carnevale of Georgetown University tells us, if we don't change the trend, we'll be about 5 million short in 2020 of people who have the proper post-secondary skills.

Congress needs to help colleges and universities meet the needs of a growing population of today's students—one that has less time to earn their degree, wants flexibility in scheduling their classes, and needs to start earning an income sooner. And Congress may also need to consider new providers of education that don't fit the traditional mold.

I have two questions for today's hearing:

First, how can Congress help colleges find new ways to meet students' changing needs, and how can we end practices by the federal government that discourage colleges and universities from innovating?

And second, should the federal government be considering a new definition for the college or university? There are many new learning models that are entering the landscape, thanks to the internet. We need to consider what role they play in our higher education system, and whether federal financial aid ought to be available to students who are learning outside our traditional institutions.

On the first question, how we can stop discouraging innovation, I want to focus one example of innovation—competency-based learning:

One of the most promising innovations that traditional colleges and universities are making is through something called competency-based learning.

These competency-based models allow students to progress through their studies as they demonstrate competency, enabling skilled and dedicated students to finish degrees more quickly and often at significantly less cost.

For example, a working mom studying at the University of Wisconsin has an associate's degree in nursing and wants to get her Bachelors in Nursing to increase her earning potential. Through the university's new Flexible Option, she's able to earn credits and finish tests and assignments on her own time, including between her shift and her son's baseball game. Because the degree program is based on her ability to demonstrate knowledge of the subjects—rather than her ability to sit through courses twice a week—she might finish a Biology course in 8 weeks, but take only 3 weeks to finish a Mathematics course.

But it's possible that government regulations may be stifling this new model of learning.

The report by the Task Force on Government Regulation, which was commissioned by a bipartisan group of four Senators on this Committee to examine higher education regulations, told us that ''government regulation is a barrier to innovation.''

And in one example, they cited a 2010 Department of Education regulation that established a federal definition of a credit hour as a minimum of 1 hour of classroom instruction and 2 hours of outside work.

The government relies upon this definition of ''credit hour'' in determining how to award grants and loans to students.

Concerning the credit hour definition, the Task Force wrote ''by relying on the concept of 'seat time,' the Department's definition has discouraged institutions from developing new and innovative methods for delivering and measuring education, such as competency-based models which don't rely on credit hours.''

When Kentucky Community and Technical College System began a competency-based program in 2009, federal time requirements related to the credit hour, which are building blocks of semesters and academic years, got in the way. Now when students finish within the last 5 weeks of the semester they have to wait till the following semester to continue their studies.

In 2005, Congress established a provision in the higher education law for competency-based education known as ''direct assessment.'' This provision permitted programs at colleges and universities to use ''direct assessment of student learning, in lieu of

measuring student learning in credit hours'' as a way to distribute federal aid. The law said that each program had to be approved by the institution's accreditor and the Secretary of Education.

Despite this flexibility granted in the law, accreditors and the Education Department have given approval for receiving financial aid to just 6 institutions to offer one or more of these programs.

Shifting gears, a second barrier to innovation may be accreditation.

In this committee we have begun looking at the accreditation system, recognizing that it must improve, but that it also may be a barrier to innovation.

Accreditation is very old-fashioned in many ways—it is still regional, despite the fact that institutions compare themselves to peers across the country and may have little in common with those in closest proximity.

It also hasn't kept up with new ways students are learning and the new ways teachers are teaching. Today, some institutions are modifying a professor's traditional role in teaching and evaluating learning.

I'm sure there are many other examples of government discouraging institutions from innovating and I hope our witnesses can speak to some of these and ways to make policy more flexible for innovations to come.

On the second point—whether we should consider the role of new providers of higher education:

I have said that the American higher education system of today is like the American automobile industry of the 1970s.

First, it offers a remarkable number of choices of the best products in the world at a reasonable cost.

Second, it is not doing enough about challenges that will require major adjustments if, 20 years from now, it wants to be able to make that same claim of superior choices at a reasonable cost.

Like the Japanese auto manufacturers that ultimately brought the American auto industry to its knees for a time, there is an emerging market of new or upstart providers of affordable higher education.

These are organizations that aren't necessarily colleges, like we are accustomed to, but are providing higher education that may offer students a similarly high-quality education at a lower cost.

For example, students are learning technology, software-coding or product design in as little as 12 weeks at places like General Assembly, a school that hires industry experts from places like Apple and Cisco to teach adult students skills that today's employers value.

Or they're taking general education classes like college algebra from online organizations like StraighterLine under a monthly subscription fee with credentialed teachers, or attending a MOOC—a Massive Open Online Course that's free and delivered by professors at many traditional colleges.

Some organizations such as Mozilla Foundation are developing open-source ''digital badges'' that allow more types of organizations to identify and recognize an individual's subject matter mastery and competency.

But there's no place for any of these innovators in today's Higher Education Act or accreditation system. The definition of what is a college has largely remained consistent since 1965.

Some senators, the President and Secretary Duncan are interested in understanding how to enable an environment where these new providers of higher education can compete with traditional higher education and potentially offer students a lower cost, high quality education.

In 2013, President Obama said in documents accompanying his State of the Union that Congress should consider ''a new system . . . that would provide pathways for higher education models and colleges to receive federal student aid based on performance and results.''

What he and others are proposing is that students could use federal aid at these new organizations that aren't traditional colleges.

A bill from Senator Lee would allow states to create parallel accreditation pathways to broaden the kinds of classes students could attend while also receiving federal aid. Under the bill, students could receive aid for attending specialized programs, apprenticeships, professional certifications, competency tests, even individual courses. I believe Senators Bennet and Rubio are working on legislation that has a similar goal.

RECOGNIZING THE UDALL FOUNDATION

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to call attention to a remarkable foundation that has benefited thousands of young Americans. The Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation was established by Congress to honor the public service of the Udall brothers. During the past 20 years, the foundation has effectively leveraged modest Federal appropriations into unique learning experiences for over 3,000 young Americans who are committed to public service in natural resources, Native nations, and environmental areas.

The Udall Foundation has rewarded over 1,400 scholarships to college students in all 50 States, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and 44 tribal nations, for their work in public service. One of the distinguished college students receiving a scholarship from the Udall Foundation comes from my home State of Florida. Ms. Steffanie Munguia is a junior at the University of South Florida and is receiving a scholarship for her dedication to environmental conservation.

Additionally, the Udall Foundation has provided more than 200 students, from 110 tribal nations, the opportunity to gain practical experience in the Federal legislative process, through their Native American Congressional Internship Program.

The foundation strives to educate underserved middle school youth to the joys of outdoor exploration through their Parks in Focus program. Thus far, it has introduced more than 1,500 youth to 22 national parks, monuments, and other natural areas.

The Udall Foundation benefits countless groups and many areas of our environment, and I would like to congratulate them on 20 outstanding years. The foundation has delivered real results for people in every State in the Nation since its establishment and has earned our continued support now and in the years ahead.

USHER SYNDROME AWARENESS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I wish to bring attention to a genetic condition known as Usher syndrome. Usher syndrome is the most common form of combined deafness and blindness in the United States, impacting as many as 50,000 Americans, not including their families, friends, and communities. It is estimated that 82 percent of those afflicted by deaf-blindness are unemployed. In the United States, the annual economic cost of blindness alone is estimated at 145 billion dollars.

Usher syndrome results when there are mutations in genes that are important for the function of both photoreceptors in the retina and hair cells in the cochlea, or inner ear. To date, 11 genes have been identified that can cause different subtypes of Usher syndrome when mutations take place. These mutations usually lead to a deficiency of a protein that is critical for the health and function of the retina and cochlea. Usher type 1 individuals are born deaf and then learn, often before adolescence, that they are also losing their vision. Usher type 2 individuals are born with moderate to severe hearing loss and then in the prime of their adolescent lives are told that they are losing their vision. Usher type 3, usually diagnosed during adolescence, leads to the slow loss of both hearing and vision.

Life with Usher syndrome requires constant adaptation to the loss of vision, caused by retinitis pigmentosa. First is the loss of peripheral vision, when the rods are impacted resulting in the loss of night vision and the onset of tunnel vision, which shrinks over time to the size of a pinhole. Once the rods are gone, the cones atrophy. Color vision and the ability to read lips are lost, further impacting the hearing impaired Usher syndrome individual's ability to communicate with others. Often, central vision fades and the person is left completely blind.

During this time—for which there is no prediction of how long the decline to total blindness will take—individuals with Usher syndrome are constantly adapting to remain aurally and visually connected. For the hearing loss, hearing aids, cochlear implants, American Sign Language, closed captioning, assistive listening devices, and tactile sign language are among the adaptive strategies used. For the vision loss, glasses, magnification, high contrast on computer screens, screen readers, audio descriptive devices, braille, canes, and guide dogs are used to compensate for the increasing blindness.

To accelerate research, the Usher Syndrome Coalition is raising public knowledge by launching ''Usher Syndrome Awareness Day'' on the third Saturday in September. The theme centers on the autumnal equinox, which marks the start of days that contain more darkness than light—a powerful metaphor for the threat of Usher syndrome. This will be a global event that starts on one side of the world—Australia—and runs around the globe to the farthest point before the international dateline in Alaska.

Like many, I too have a personal connection with Usher syndrome. A

former congressional fellow in my office, Moira Shea, has Usher syndrome. She, with her guide dog by her side, took the Metro and came to work every day. In addition, she wore hearing aids, read lips, and overcame whatever adversity came her way. Today, Moira has lost her sight but not her vision—of finding treatments and cures for Usher syndrome so that no other generation has to go through what she and tens of thousands of other Americans have.

With the acceleration of research, it may be possible for Moira and the thousands of others afflicted by this genetic disease to regain sight. The technology is there. The Casey Eye Institute at Oregon Health & Science University has started the first human study of gene therapy for Usher syndrome. I am proud that the first clinical trial for Usher syndrome is being conducted in the state that I am privileged to represent.

I am committed to working with my colleagues to raise awareness about this devastating disease, and I applaud the hard work of the Usher Syndrome Coalition to make Usher syndrome research a higher priority at the National Institutes of Health.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF EDWARD ''SANDY'' DAVIS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, along with my colleague, the ranking member of the Budget Committee, Senator SANDERS, we wish to honor and recognize Edward ''Sandy'' Davis on his retirement after 36 years of distinguished service to the Congress, including 20 years with the Congressional Budget Office and 16 years with the Congressional Research Service. Sandy is held in high esteem by both Republicans and Democrats for his insight, extensive knowledge of the legislative process, and unfailing graciousness in dealing with Members and staff over those many years.

Sandy started his career at CRS in 1979 and quickly became an expert in Federal budget procedures and practices. He prepared over 150 reports and memoranda on the budget process and on budget process reform proposals, analyzed and edited draft legislation, and prepared committee and conference report language on major budget process legislation in 1985, 1987, and 1990. A few of his key achievements involve the development of two reports that are still being published today: ''Points of Order under the Congressional Budget Act'' and a ''Manual on the Federal Budget Process.'' Sandy also coached CRS's softball team—another key achievement of his time there.

In 1995, Sandy joined the Congressional Budget Office, quickly employing his expertise in budget laws and in the history of the congressional budget process. He first worked in the Special Studies Division, where he authored an excellent report on the Line Item Veto Act. He then worked in the Projections Unit, where he helped prepare CBO's budget projections and continued his work on budget process issues; for example, he wrote a section in CBO's January 2003 Budget and Economic Outlook entitled ''The Expiration of Budget Enforcement Procedures: Issues and Options,'' which has often been cited in discussions on that topic.

Because of his extensive knowledge of the budget and his strong interpersonal skills, in 2003 Sandy was appointed CBO's first associate director for legislative affairs, to serve as the agency's key liaison with the Congress. In that capacity, he worked closely with many staff members of the House and Senate—fielding and clarifying questions, alerting them about a forthcoming CBO publication, keeping them apprised about CBO's progress in responding to a particular request, responding to concerns about a CBO analysis, and identifying potential CBO products that would aid the legislative process.

Sandy's professional accomplishments set him apart, but his personal ethic—his good cheer and thoughtful consideration of his colleagues at CBO and on congressional staffs—truly defines him. Whether giving someone a ''heads-up'' about a hot-button issue, helping Members or congressional staff track down a cost estimate, or just answering questions about the budget or CBO's analyses, Sandy has always been gracious, straightforward, and generous with his time and efforts.

In short, over the past 36 years, Sandy exemplified the dedication and high-quality work that is so critical to the Senate's deliberations. I know my colleagues join me in extending our thanks and appreciation to Sandy for his service to our Nation and our very best wishes for a happy and productive retirement.

I would like to now turn to my colleague, Senator SANDERS, for his remarks.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank Chairman ENZI and join him in commending Mr. DAVIS for his many years of dedicated and outstanding service to CBO, the Congress, and the American people. We wish him all the best.

We hope our colleagues will join us in thanking Mr. DAVIS—and really all of the hard-working employees at the Congressional Budget Office—for his and their service.

RECOGNIZING WAYNE AND KATHY TATMAN

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to speak on behalf of Wayne and Kathy Tatman who will be inducted into the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame at the 103rd Wyoming State Fair in August. Since 1992, Wyoming has recognized individuals each year who have made substantial contributions to agriculture in our State. This year I have the honor of presenting this award to Wayne and Kathy with my colleague Senator BARRASSO.

Wyoming natives, the Tatmans have each contributed greatly to the agriculture industry and their home community of Lingle. Both have served as educators for the University of Wyoming Extension, a statewide program helping Wyoming citizens and communities address a wide range of issues through education and leadership. Wayne's career focused on production and economic issues while Kathy dedicated her efforts to consumers. Gary Stone, an extension educator for the University of Nebraska, nominated the couple, and said, ''they truly are the 'best of the best' when it comes to Wyoming agriculture.''

For more than 30 years, Wayne contributed to the UW Extension program working on livestock and crop production, invasive plants, agricultural research, and water issues. He worked to promote agriculture to Wyoming's youth through the 4–H leadership program.

Kathy joined the UW Extension Cent$ible Nutrition program in 2000. She focused on nutrition, food safety, and food economics, and worked with low income families to provide nutrition and meal planning. Kathy was also vital in developing a nutrition curriculum for the State of Wyoming.

Former UW President Tom Buchanan commented, ''Wayne and Kathy helped literally hundreds of Wyoming residents understand the impact of agriculture on so many facets of life.''

The Tatmans passed on their love of agriculture and way of life to their three sons, all of whom earned agricultural degrees from UW and are still involved in the industry. Their legacy extends beyond their family to their community, and the State as a whole.

I am proud to have the opportunity to recognize Wayne and Kathy's achievements with Senator BARRASSO as 2015 inductees into the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame. Wyoming is well served by their lasting and continuing contributions to agriculture and education in our State.

RECOGNIZING SHAUN AND LACEE SIMS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, at the 103rd Wyoming State Fair, Senator ENZI and I will have the pleasure of introducing Shaun and Lacee Sims as 2015 inductees of the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame. I am proud to say this dynamic husband and wife team exemplify the ideals of the Wyoming way of life and have made immense contributions to the State and national agricultural community.

The Sims family has demonstrated their deep-rooted commitment through five generations of involvement in stewardship of the land and production of high quality livestock. Shaun and Lacee have shared their passion for agriculture as parents, and now as grandparents, with their children and grandchildren.

Shaun and Lacee have shared their livelihood with countless local students who have toured their ranch and wind turbine facility. The students who visit their ranching operation gain valuable insight into the origin of their food and electricity. In addition to educating students, the Sims have also taught the teachers by hosting the Wyoming Ag in the Classroom Teacher Institute. As Amy Hendrickson, executive director of the Wyoming Wool Growers Association observed, ''They have served as educators, mentors, and leaders on a variety of important issues affecting Wyoming's agriculture industry, and their example of true leadership serves as a model for others.''

Shaun and Lacee have served in various capacities whenever they have been called upon. Shaun's service extends from his 14-year tenure with the Uinta County Conservation District Supervisors to his election on the National Association of Conservation Districts Executive Board. As president of the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, Shaun often sacrifices valuable time on his home ranch to attend all meetings for Uinta County and the State association. Shaun's dedication to the State and the industry has not gone unnoticed. He was recently appointed to a second term on the Wyoming Board of Agriculture.

Like her husband, Lacee has been an active agricultural advocate in Wyoming. Lacee received the Masters of Beef Advocacy certification through the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and was appointed by Wyoming Governor Matt Mead to serve on the statewide Wyoming Beef Council. Lacee has combined her passion for agriculture with her growing photography business to tell the story of agriculture through an artistic lens. By highlighting the beauty and importance of Wyoming agriculture, she is able to capture in photos what words often fail to convey. Patrick Zimmerer, with the Wyoming Board of Agriculture stated, ''Lacee tells and advocates the story of Wyoming agriculture through her lens as a photographer and through social media, telling and highlighting the importance of Wyoming agriculture to a broad audience of followers.''

Shaun and Lacee Sims represent every positive attribute of leaders in Wyoming agriculture. Together, side by side, they have represented Wyoming's interests with dedication and honor. It is because of people like them that the agricultural community in Wyoming has a bright and productive future. My wife, Bobbi, joins me in congratulating these outstanding individuals, Shaun and Lacee Sims, who are 2015 inductees into the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

DUNBARTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 250TH ANNIVERSARY

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I honor Dunbarton, NH—a town in Merrimack County that is celebrating the 250th anniversary of its founding. I am proud to join citizens across the Granite State in recognizing this special milestone.

Dunbarton, previously known by many names, including Starkstown, was incorporated in 1765 by Colonial Governor Benning Wentworth and was officially renamed Dunbarton.

The town's population has grown since then to over 2,700 residents. With more than 1,600 acres of protected land, Dunbarton is located on the Merrimack River watershed and is rich in natural beauty. Based upon its latitude and longitude, Dunbarton is known as the true center of New England.

The patriotism and commitment of the people of Dunbarton is reflected in part by their record of service in defense of our Nation. Revolutionary War General John Stark, his wife Molly and son Caleb, all lived in Dunbarton. Another Dunbarton native was Robert Roger, famed Commander of Roger's Rangers during the French and Indian War who was instrumental in developing military tactics still used to this day. Additionally, John Ordway, who helped lead the Lewis and Clark Expedition, made his way back home to Dunbarton after the expedition had finished.

The spirit of community and volunteerism is strong in Dunbarton as evidenced by the hard work and dedication of all involved with the planning and celebration of the annual Old Home Day festival, as well as this special sestercentennial anniversary.

Dunbarton is a place that has greatly contributed to the life and spirit of New Hampshire. I am pleased to extend my warm regards to the people of Dunbarton as they celebrate this special day.•

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN MURPHY

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I congratulate Brian Murphy of Dover, NH. On May, 29 2015, Brian reached an important career milestone by working his 250th National Hockey League playoff game as a linesman.

Born on December 13, 1964, Brian has been a lifelong resident of Dover. He graduated from Dover High School in 1982 and continued his education by attending the University of New Hampshire, where he earned a degree in business administration in 1986. Brian was then hired by the NHL in September 1988. His first game was on October 7, 1988 between the Pittsburgh Penguins and the Washington Capitals.

Linesmen have a difficult and often thankless job. While referees officiate the game and call penalties, linesmen break up fights between players, drop the puck for face-offs and have to keep up with the pace of the game to make offside calls—all while avoiding interference. Brian has excelled in every aspect of his career and is one of only 13 U.S. born NHL officials. Most officials who work for the NHL are Canadian nationals who have relocated.

During Brian's 27 years as an on-ice official, he has worked 1713 regular season NHL games and the men's hockey games at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. More recently, Brian was selected for the 7th Stanley Cup Finals between the victorious Chicago Blackhawks and the Tampa Bay Lightning in June of this year.

As the former president of the National Hockey League Officials Association, Brian understands the sacrifices and hard work that are necessary to perform his job. I ask my colleagues to join me today in celebrating Brian's career as a linesman. I am delighted to congratulate him on reaching this important career milestone and I wish him many more years of success.•

RECOGNIZING THE ASSOCIATION FOR FACILITIES ENGINEERING

• Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Association for Facilities Engineering. The organization began in Framingham, MA when Henry ''Harry'' S. Dennison, president of the Factory Managers Association, saw a need for increased information-sharing within the engineering world. Because of this, Dennison invited a group of 25 mechanics and engineers from the greater Boston area to attend the organization's first informal meeting. On June 9, 1915, the organization's constitution was approved, their officers were elected and they began their history as a working, professional consortium for engineers and mechanics alike.

Years later in 1954, a group of engineering clubs associated with the organization came together and changed the organization's name to the American Institute of Plant Engineers, AIPE. AIPE became the hub for countless engineering societies in New England and elsewhere, including the New England Chapter of AIPE, comprised of New Hampshire and five other States. In May of 1996, AIPE's board of directors voted to change their name to the Association for Facilities Engineering or AFE, in an effort to include more than just plant engineers, and to focus on buildings and facilities as a whole.

Wayne Saya of Nashua serves among the leaders and board members of AFE. As AFE's executive director, Wayne is personally committed to furthering the message and continued success of the association. He believes that the chapters of AFE have the best tools for problem solving and often cites his motto during mediations: ''Chapters may not always be right, they are just never wrong!'' His continued advocacy is a vital tool for engineers, mechanics

and buildings that might not otherwise have a say.

AFE is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that considers the wellbeing of its chapters before all else. They recognize that a strong relationship with a chapter can mean more opportunities for all parties involved. With global reach, AFE is inventive and organized—it is the only association of its kind with a fully paperless online presence.

It is because of organizations like AFE that our country can continue to excel and innovate, while ensuring the needs of engineers are met. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating this exceptional organization for their unparalleled work and commitment. Congratulations to AFE for reaching this important milestone, and best wishes for the next 100 years.●

REMEMBERING ROGER VICKERS

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the life and legacy of Marion County Sheriff Roger Vickers who passed away on Thursday, July 23, 2015 following a battle with cancer.

Sheriff Vickers dedicated his life to law enforcement and protecting the community. With more than three decades of service with the Arkansas State Police, Sheriff Vickers was well respected in the law enforcement community by the time he retired from the State police in 2008 as lieutenant and assistant troop commander of Troop I in Harrison. During his time with the Arkansas State Police, he received numerous commendations, including the Valor Award, the highest honor bestowed by the State police.

His commitment to Marion County led him to run for sheriff. From the time he was elected in 2008, Sheriff Vickers fought tirelessly to improve his community. He was an advocate for building a new jail and his vision is starting to take shape with the Marion County Quorum Court recently approving purchasing land for the project.

Sheriff Vickers was a well-qualified law enforcement officer and also a true public servant. Prior to his career in law enforcement, he served as a marine during the Vietnam war, earning the Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, and a Presidential Unit Citation.

I am greatly appreciative for Sheriff Vickers' lifetime of service throughout the State of Arkansas. My prayers are with his wife Joan, and his family and friends during this trying time. I hope they find comfort knowing that he made a positive impact on his community.●

TRIBUTE TO AIDAN ANDREWS

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Aidan Andrews, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Aidan is currently a student at the Taft School. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Aidan for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO STEVEN BARBEE

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Steven Barbee, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Steven is currently a student at Redondo Union High School. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Steven for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO NINA BARBERO

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Nina Barbero, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Nina is a student at Florida Gulf Coast University, where she is majoring in economics. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Nina for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ALEX FOGG

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Alex Fogg, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Alex is a student at Princeton University, where he is majoring in chemistry. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Alex for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO THEODORE FURCHTGOTT

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Theodore Furchtgott, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Theodore is a student at Princeton University, where he is majoring in history. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Theodore for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JORDAN GARSIDE

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Jordan Garside, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Jordan is a law student at the University of Virginia. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jordan for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO HAYDEN GRAHL

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Hayden Grahl, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Hayden is a student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he is majoring in political science. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Hayden for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO AMBER MARIANO

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Amber Mariano, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Amber is a student at the University of Central Florida, where she is majoring in political science. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Amber for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO LOGAN PERETZ

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Logan Peretz, a 2015 summer

intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Logan is a student at Northwestern University, where he is majoring in political science and economics. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Logan for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE PERRY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize Katherine Perry, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

Katherine is a student at Colorado College, where she is majoring in political science. She is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Katherine for all the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come. ●

TRIBUTE TO JAMES RULEY

● Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, today I recognize James Ruley, a 2015 summer intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the people of the State of Florida.

James is a law student at the Indiana University Mauerer School of Law. He is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to James for all the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY THAT WAS ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13441 WITH RESPECT TO LEBANON—PM 22

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Lebanon that was declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond August 1, 2015.

Certain ongoing activities, such as continuing arms transfers to Hizballah that include increasingly sophisticated weapons systems, undermine Lebanese sovereignty, contribute to political and economic instability in the region, and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *July 29, 2015*.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:03 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. 427. An act to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

H.R. 675. An act to increase, effective as of December 1, 2015, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, to improve the processing of claims by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 202(a) of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146), the Democratic Leader appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the Commission on Care: Mr. Michael Blecker of San Francisco, California.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) announced that on today, July 29, 2015, he signed the following enrolled bills, previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 1482. An act to improve and reauthorize provisions relating to the application of the antitrust laws to the award of need-based educational aid.

H.R. 876. An act to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require hospitals to provide certain notifications to individuals classified by such hospitals under observation status rather than admitted as inpatients of such hospitals.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 675. An act to increase, effective as of December 1, 2015, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, to improve the processing of claims by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill and joint resolution were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 1881. A bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

H.J. Res. 61. Joint resolution amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, July 29, 2015, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 1482. An act to improve and reauthorize provisions relating to the application of the antitrust laws to the award of need-based educational aid.

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–2431. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division,

Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Zeta-cypermethrin; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9929–74) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2432. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Phosphoric Acid Manufacturing and Phosphate Fertilizer Production RTR and Standards of Performance for Phosphate Processing'' ((RIN2060–AQ20) (FRL No. 9931–01–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2433. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Isofetamid; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9923–86) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2434. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fluxapyroxad; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9930–73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2435. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Ethanesulfonic acid, 2-hydroxy and the corresponding ammonium, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, and zinc salts; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9930–22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2436. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Benalaxyl-M; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9927–63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2437. A communication from the Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–2438. A communication from the Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a violation of the Antideficiency Act; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–2439. A communication from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Martin E. Dempsey, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–2440. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Raymond T. Odierno, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–2441. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2013 Integrated Mortgage Disclosures Rule Under the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (Regulation X) and the Truth In Lending Act (Regulation Z) and Amendments; Delay of Effective Date'' (RIN3170–AA48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 27, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2442. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 12947 with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2443. 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 15–015); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2444. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 15–048); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2445. 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 15–046); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2446. 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 15–066); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–2447. 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; Wyoming; Revisions to SO2 Ambient Standards'' (FRL No. 9931–38–Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2448. 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; Washington: Interstate Transport of Fine Particulate Matter'' (FRL No. 9931–46–Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2449. 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; North Carolina: Non-interference Demonstration for Federal Low-Reid Vapor Pressure Requirement for Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties'' (FRL No. 9931–27–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2450. 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; Georgia: Revisions to Definitions and Ambient Air Quality Standards'' (FRL No. 9931–65–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2451. 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 and Designation of Areas; North Carolina; Redesignation of the Charlotte-Rock Hill, 2008 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment'' (FRL No. 9931–28–Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2452. 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; West Virginia; 2011 Base Year Emissions Inventory for the Marshall, West Virginia Nonattainment Area for the 2010 1-Hour Sulfur Dioxide National Ambient Air Quality Standard'' (FRL No. 9931–56–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2453. 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; Consumer and Commercial Products and Mobile Equipment Repair and Refinishing Operations'' (FRL No. 9931–29–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2454. 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 Iowa; Revisions to Linn County Air Quality Ordinance'' (FRL No. 9931–33–Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2455. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Technical Amendments to Inadvertent Errors in Air Quality Designations for the 2006 24-hour Fine Particulate National Ambient Air Quality Standards (2006 24-hour PM2.5 NAAQS), 1997 Annual PM2.5 NAAQS, and 1987 Annual Coarse Particle (PM10) NAAQS'' (FRL No. 9929–97–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2456. A communication from the Regulations Specialist, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Subsistence Management Regulations for Public Lands in Alaska—2015–2016 and 2016–2017 Subsistence Taking of Fish Regulations'' (RIN1018–AZ67) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2457. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species 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; Designation of Critical Habitat for Mount Charleston Blue Butterfly (Icaricia (Plebejus) shasta charlestonensis)'' (RIN1018–AZ91) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2458. A communication from the Chief of the Recovery and State Grants 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; Technical Corrections for 54 Wildlife and Plant Species on the List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants'' (RIN1018–BA89) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works .

EC–2459. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Endangered Species 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 Status for the Rufa Red Knot'' (RIN1018–AY17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2460. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Foreign Species 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; Listing All Chimpanzees as Endangered Species; Final Rule'' (RIN1018–AZ52) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2461. A communication from the Chief of the Division of Environmental Review, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Interagency Cooperation—Endangered Species Act of 1973, as Amended; Incidental Take Statements'' (RIN1018–AX85) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2462. A communication from the Wildlife Biologist, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Migratory Bird Permits; Update of Falconry Permitting Reporting Address'' (RIN1018–BA90) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 373. A bill to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards governing discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel (Rept. No. 114–96).

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment:

S. 284. A bill to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, and for other purposes.

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 1596. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the ''Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building''.

By Mr. CORKER, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1632. A bill to require a regional strategy to address the threat posed by Boko Haram.

By Mr. JOHNSON, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, without amendment:

S. 1826. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Sheila Gwaltney, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kyrgyz Republic.

Nominee: Sheila Gwaltney.

Post: Kyrgyz Republic.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: 0.
2. Spouse: N/A.
3. Children and Spouses: N/A.
4. Parents: Helen Gwaltney Rose—deceased 2002; Ralph Carl Gwaltney, Sr.—deceased 1971.
5. Grandparents: Ollie Tice Casey—deceased 1978 (est); Homer Tice—deceased in 1940s (est); William Gwaltney—deceased in 1960s (est); Father's mother—deceased in 1930s (est).
6. Brothers and Spouses: George Michael Gwaltney—Deceased in 1997; Ralph Carl Gwaltney, Jr., 0; Marjorie Gwaltney, 0; Dan Gwaltney, 0; Joann Gwaltney, 0; David Gwaltney, 0; Sue Gwaltney, 0; Steven Gwaltney, 0; Deborah Gwaltney, 0.
7. Sisters and Spouses: NA.

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*Perry L. Holloway, of South Carolina, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

Nominee: Perry Lee Holloway.

Post: Georgetown, Guyana.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: None.
3. Children and Spouses: None.
4. Parents: None.
5. Grandparents: None.
6. Brothers and Spouses: None.
7. Sisters and Spouses: None.

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*Kathleen Ann Doherty, of New York, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cyprus.

Nominee: Kathleen Ann Doherty.

Post: Cyprus.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions: amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: Not applicable.
3. Children and Spouses: Not Applicable.
4. Parents: Marilyn Doherty: None. John Doherty: Deceased (2007).
5. Grandparents: Thomas Doherty (1944) Deceased; Edward Grimm (1956) Deceased; Eliza Jane Doherty (1990) Deceased; Helen Rita Grimm (1986) Deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: Robert Doherty and spouse Elizabeth Doherty; Friends of Jim Meffert: $99 10/2010; ACP Services PAC: Cumulative Total $1000, 2/2011, 3/2012, 4/2013, 3/2014, Hope for Congress: Total $250, 2/2014, Spouse (Elizabeth Doherty): Obama Victory Fund: Cumulative Total Amount, $366, February, July, and September 2012.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Erin Doherty Rose and spouse Peter Rose: None; Patricia Doherty and spouse Robert Garber: Alan Grayson, Congressional Re-Election Campaign, $15.00, 9/2010; Bill Pascrell, Congressional Re-Election Campaign, $25.00, 9/2010; MoveOn.org, $5.00 9/2010; Alan Grayson, Congressional Re-Election Campaign, $15.00, 9/2012; Elizabeth Warren, Senatorial Election Campaign, $50.00, 9/2011; John Arvanites, Congressional Campaign, $50.00, 8/2012; Act Blue DSCC, $15.00, 2/2012; MoveOn.org, $5.00, 9/2012; Act Blue DCCC, $50.00, 9/20/13; Corey Booker, NJ Senatorial Election Campaign, $25.00, 8/2013; Barbara Buono, NJ Governor Election Campaign, $50,00, 8/2013.

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*Hans G. Klemm, of Michigan, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Romania.

Nominee: Hans G. Klemm.

Post: Romania.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: Mari Kano Klemm: None.
3. Children and Spouses: N/A.
4. Parents: Hans J. Klemm—deceased; Ingeborg K. S. Klemm—deceased.
5. Grandparents: Grandfather: Emil Klemm—deceased; Grandmother: Martha Klemm—deceased; Grandfather: Georg Schievelbein—deceased; Grandmother: Charlotte Schievelbein—deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: Steven Klemm, none; Eileen Klemm (spouse), none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Lori Klemm, none; Sally Klemm, none.

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*James Desmond Melville, Jr., of New Jersey, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Estonia.

Nominee: James Desmond Melville. Jr.

Post: Tallinn, Republic of Estonia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: None.
3. Children and Spouses: None.

4. Parents: None.
5. Grandparents: None.
6. Brothers and Spouses: None.
7. Sisters and Spouses: None.

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*Peter F. Mulrean, of Massachusetts, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Haiti.

Nominee: Peter Francis Mulrean.

Post: Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: $250, 09/02/2012, Barack Obama.
2. Spouse: Corinne Beque: None.
3. Children and Spouses: Chloe Mulrean: None; Celine Mulrean: None.
4. Parents: Francis H. Mulrean—deceased, none; Ann S. Mulrean, None.
5. Grandparents: Francis X. Mulrean—deceased, None; Catherine Mulrean—deceased, None; William Mahoney—deceased, None; Margaret Mahoney—deceased, None.
6. Sisters and Spouses: Linda M. Mulrean, None; John G. Rowe, None; Diane J. Mulrean, None; Mary C. Mulrean, None; Robert P. Wiemann—None.

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*Laura Farnsworth Dogu, of Texas, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Nicaragua.

Nominee: Laura Farnsworth Dogu.

Post: Mexico City.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: None.
3. Children and Spouses: Derin Berk Dogu (son), none; Adem Akin Dogu (son) none.
4. Parents: Patricia F. Farnsworth, none; David Lee Farnsworth (deceased).
5. Grandparents: Agnes Fanning (deceased), Wallace Fanning (deceased).
6. Brothers and Spouses: Andrew Farnsworth (brother), none; Jennifer Farnsworth (spouse), none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Katherine Farnsworth (sister), none.

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*Samuel D. Heins, of Minnesota, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Norway.

Nominee: Samuel D. Heins.

Post: U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway.

Nominated: May 14, 2015.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, Amount, Date, Donee:

1. Samuel D. Heins Please see continuation pages.
2. Stacey Mills Heins Please see continuation pages.
3. Children and Spouses: Madeleine Sarah lsraelson (Heins): None; Brody Israelson: None; Nora Sarah Murray (Heins): None; Scott Murray: Please see continuation pages.
4. Parents: Maurice Heins: Please see continuation pages; Hadassa Wagman Heins: Please see continuation pages.
5. Grandparents: Alec Wagman: Deceased; Libby Wagman: Deceased; Samuel Heins: Deceased; Rose Heins: Deceased.
6. Brothers and Spouses: None.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Sulamith Heins Potter: None; Jack Potter: None.

Samuel D. Heins, 2,500, 10/19/2011, Barnes for Congress; 200, 12/13/2011, Chris Coleman for Congress; 30,800, 8/5/2011 (refunded on 8/12/2011), Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; 10,000, 8/12/2011, Franken MVPS; 2,500, 9/30/2011, Friends of Maria; 800, 2/2/2011, Klobuchar for Minnesota 2012; 1,000, 7/28/2011, McCollum for Congress; 2,500, 5/3/2011, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 35,800, 8/17/2011 ($5,000 refund on 8/17/2011; $30,800 refunded from portion of contribution allocable to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee on 3/29/2013), Minnesota Senate 2012; 10,000, 5/11/2011, Minnesota Senate Victory Committee 2012; 2,500, 9/13/2011, Montanans For Tester; 2,500, 9/13/2011, Montanans For Tester; 2,500, 4/4/2011, Obama For America; 2,500, 4/4/2011, Obama For America; 30,800, 10/11/2011, Obama Victory Fund 2012; 9,200, 12/16/2011, Swing State Victory Fund; 250, 3/31/2011, Tim Walz for US Congress; 2,250, 5/11/2011, Tim Walz for US Congress; 2,500, 5/12/2011, Tim Walz for US Congress; 5,000, 9/14/2011, Treasure State PAC; 2,500, 6/17/2011, Whitehouse for Senate; 35,800, 3/27/2012, Committee for Charlotte, NC; 10,000, 9/19/2012, Iowa Democratic Party (transferred to nonfederal account); 5,000, 3/2/2012, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 2,000, 9/19/2012, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 500, 11/29/2012, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 500, 6/5/2013, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 1,000, 3/4/2013, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 5,000, 1/24/2013, Midwest Values PAC; 2,500, 4/3/2013, Follow the North Star Fund; 32,400, 2/28/2013, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; 5,200, 5/19/2014, Alison Lundergan Grimes for US Senate; 5,000, 7/15/2014, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; 15,000, 2/20/2014, Democratic National Committee; 10,000, 8/07/2014, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 1,000, 9/11/2014, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party (transferred to nonfederal account on 10/18/2014); 10,000, 10/17/2014, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party (transferred to nonfederal account on 10/18/2014); 5,000, 6/27/2014, Ready for Hillary PAC; 1,000, 7/8/2014, Tim Waltz for US Congress; 5,000, 7/7/2014, Win Minnesota Federal PAC.

Stacey Mills Heins, 2,500, 10/20/2011, Barnes for Congress; 10,000, 8/12/2011 ($5,000 refunded on 2/24/2013 from portion of contribution allocable to Midwest Values PAC), Franken MVPS; 200, 2/2/2011, Klobuchar for Minnesota 2012; 1,400, 2/2/2011, Klobuchar for Minnesota 2012; 300, 4/30/2011, Klobuchar for Minnesota 2012; 2,300 4/30/2011 ($200 refunded on 5/11/2011), Klobuchar for Minnesota 2012; 1000, 7/27/2011 (refunded 2/11/2013,) Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 30,800, 10/11/2011, Obama Victory Fund 2012; 9,200, 12/16/2011, Swing State Victory Fund; 2,500, 8/31/2011, Tim Walz For US Congress; 300, 9/30/2012 (refunded on 4/30/2013), Democratic Party of Wisconsin; 2,500, 5/31/2012, Jim Graves for Congress; 2,500, 9/24/2012, Jim Graves for Congress; 5,000, 3/19/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012; 30,800, 3/19/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012; 2,500, 6/15/2012, Tim Walz for US Congress; 5,000, 1/24/2013 (refunded 2/24/2013), Midwest Values PAC; 500, 3/11/2013, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party; 5,000, 1/14/2013, Presidential Inaugural Committee 2013; 5,000, 1/2/2013, Presidential Inaugural Committee 2013; 500, 6/18/2014, Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party.

Maurice Heins, 5,000, 8/8/2011, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; 20,000, 9/14/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012.

Hadassa Wagman Heins, 25,000, 10/27/2011, Obama Victory Fund 2012; 5,000, 5/21/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012; 1,000, 7/23/2012, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; 20,000, 9/14/2012, Obama Victory Fund 2012.

Scott Murray, 100, Sep 14, Mayday PAC.

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*Paul Wayne Jones, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Poland.

Nominee: Paul Wayne Jones.

Post: Poland.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.
2. Spouse: Catherine Cheremeteff Grove Jones, none.
3. Children and Spouses: Aleksandra Cheremeteff Jones, none; Hale Grove Jones, none.
4. Parents: Evelyn Jones (Mother), $175, 2014, DSCC; $175, 2013, DSCC; $150, 2012, DSCC; $50, 2012, Obama Victory Fund; $50, 2012, Obama for America; Father—deceased.
5. Grandparents: None living, none.
6. Brothers and Spouses: none.
7. Sisters and Spouses: Catherine Johnsen (Sister), none; Sigurd Johnsen (Her Spouse), none; Margaret Anne Wayne Jones (Sister), none.

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*Michele Thoren Bond, of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Consular Affairs).

*Sarah Elizabeth Mendelson, of the District of Columbia, to be Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

*Sarah Elizabeth Mendelson, of the District of Columbia, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, during her tenure of service as Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

*Gayle Smith, of Ohio, to be Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

*Thomas O. Melia, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination list which was printed in the RECORD on the date indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that this nomination lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Maura Barry Boyle and ending with Anthony Wolak, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 10, 2015.

(minus 3 nominees: Jeffries Blunt de Graffenried, Jr.; Debbie Patrice Jackson; Christopher Nairn Steel)

By Mr. INHOFE for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

*Kristen Marie Kulinowski, of New York, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

*Eric Martin Satz, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2018.

*Vanessa Lorraine Allen Sutherland, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

*Vanessa Lorraine Allen Sutherland, of Virginia, to be Chairperson of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

*Gregory Guy Nadeau, of Maine, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration.

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*Denise Turner Roth, of North Carolina, to be Administrator of General Services.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 1882. A bill to support the sustainable recovery and rebuilding of Nepal following the recent, devastating earthquakes near Kathmandu; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 1883. A bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. REED, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1884. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to deliver a meaningful benefit and lower prescription drug prices under the Medicare program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BROWN, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1885. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of assistance and benefits to veterans who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or occupying temporary housing, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 1886. A bill to reauthorize the Integrated Costal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 1887. A bill to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk due to political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself and Mr. ENZI):

S. 1888. A bill to reduce waste and implement cost savings and revenue enhancement for the Federal Government; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. 1889. A bill to make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. TILLIS, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 1890. A bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 1891. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to improve coal royalties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1892. A bill to provide for loan repayment for teachers in high-need schools; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ALEXANDER (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BENNET, Mr. KIRK, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. CASSIDY):

S. 1893. A bill to reauthorize and improve programs related to mental health and substance use disorders; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 1894. A bill to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 1895. A bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act for purposes of making claims under such Act based on exposure to atmospheric nuclear testing; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 1896. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to ensure that employees are not misclassified as non-employees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCOTT (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 1897. A bill to help keep law enforcement officers and communities safer by making grants to purchase body worn cameras for use by State, local, and tribal law enforcement officers; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 1898. A bill to establish a program to assist in the importation and care of abused, injured, or abandoned nonhuman primates; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. BLUNT:

S. Res. 234. A resolution to authorize the printing of a collection of the rules of the committees of the Senate; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. NELSON):

S. Res. 235. A resolution designating September 2015 as ''National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month''; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 30

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 30, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the employer mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 31

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 31, a bill to amend part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate covered part D drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries.

S. 141

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 141, a bill to repeal the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act providing for the Independent Payment Advisory Board.

S. 149

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 149, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

S. 258

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 258, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services.

S. 330

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 330, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 621

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 621, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety and effectiveness of medically important antimicrobials approved for use in the prevention and control of animal diseases, in order to minimize the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

S. 637

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 637, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 700

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 700, a bill to amend the Asbestos Information Act of 1988 to establish a public database of asbestos-containing products, to require public disclosure of information pertaining to the manufacture, processing, distribution, and use of asbestos-containing products in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 709

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 709, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the amendments made by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act which disqualify expenses for over-the-counter drugs under health savings accounts and health flexible spending arrangements.

S. 804

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) 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. 925

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 925, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to convene a panel of citizens to make a recommendation to the Secretary regarding the likeness of a woman on the twenty dollar bill, and for other purposes.

S. 1110

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1110, a bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture to publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in National Forest System trail maintenance, and for other purposes.

S. 1121

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1121, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1144

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1144, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for a corporate responsibility investment option under the Thrift Savings Plan.

S. 1212

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1212, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 1312

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1312, a bill to modernize Federal policies regarding the supply and distribution of energy in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 1345

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1345, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to diabetes self-management training by authorizing certified diabetes educators to provide diabetes self-management training services, including as part of telehealth services, under part B of the Medicare program.

S. 1382

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1382, a bill to prohibit discrimination in adoption or foster care placements based on the sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status of any prospective adoptive or foster parent, or the sexual orientation or gender identity of the child involved.

S. 1465

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1465, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand access to stroke telehealth services under the Medicare program.

S. 1489

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1489, a bill to strengthen support for the Cuban people and prohibit financial transactions with the Cuban military, and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1555, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Filipino veterans of World War II, in recognition of the dedicated service of the veterans during World War II.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1659, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1760

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1760, a bill to prevent gun trafficking.

S. 1789

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1789, a bill to improve defense cooperation between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

S. 1812

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1812, a bill to protect public safety by incentivizing State and local law enforcement to cooperate with Federal immigration law enforcement to prevent the release of criminal aliens into communities.

S. 1832

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1832, a bill to provide for increases in the Federal minimum wage.

S. 1833

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1833, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve the child and adult care food program.

S. 1834

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1834, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect more victims of domestic violence by preventing their abusers from possessing or receiving firearms, and for other purposes.

S. 1872

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1872, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require the Secretary to provide for the use of data from the second preceding tax year to carry out the simplification of applications for the estimation and determination of financial aid eligibility, to increase the income threshold to qualify for zero expected family contribution, and for other purposes.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1875, a bill to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, and for other purposes.

S. 1877

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1877, a bill to require the Attorney General to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate Planned Parenthood, and for other purposes.

S. 1881

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1881, a bill to prohibit Federal funding of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

S. RES. 230

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 230, a resolution designating September 25, 2015, as ''National Lobster Day''.

AMENDMENT NO. 2279

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2279 intended to be proposed to H.R. 22, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 2416

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2416 intended to be proposed to H.R. 22, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 2419

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2419 intended to be proposed to H.R. 22, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 2456

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2456 intended to be proposed to H.R. 22, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 1883. A bill to maximize discovery, and accelerate development and availability, of promising childhood cancer treatments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined by Senator CAPITO in the introduction of the Childhood Cancer Survivorship, Treatment, Access, and Research, STAR, Act of 2015. This legislation is an extension of ongoing bipartisan efforts in the Senate over the past decade to get us closer to the goal of hopefully one day curing cancers in children, adolescents, and young adults. Representatives MCCAUL, VAN HOLLEN, and SPEIER are introducing the companion legislation in the other body.

I first started working on this issue after meeting the Haight family from Warwick, RI, in June of 2004. Nancy and Vincent lost their son, Ben, when he was just 9 years old to neuroblastoma, a very aggressive tumor in the brain.

The heart-wrenching story of Ben Haight highlights the importance of this legislation. It is my hope that one day Ben's story, and thousands of other children like him, will be one of survival. With the strong support of families like the Haights for increased research into the causes of childhood cancers and improved treatment options, I introduced bipartisan legislation that eventually was signed into law in 2008 as the Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Childhood Cancer Act.

This was an important step. Yet, more work remains. With the STAR Act, we would take the next needed steps to advance pediatric cancer research and child-focused cancer treatments, while also improving childhood cancer surveillance and providing resources for survivors and those impacted by childhood cancer.

If a treatment is working, doctors elsewhere should know immediately. The same should happen if a treatment isn't working, or if other major medical events occur during the course of a particular treatment. It is critical that doctors, nurses, and other providers are able to effectively communicate information about the disease, the treatment process, and what other health and development impacts children can expect to experience.

As such, the STAR Act reauthorizes the Caroline Pryce Walker Conquer Childhood Cancer Act to help create a comprehensive children's cancer biorepository for researchers to use in searching for biospecimens to study and would improve surveillance of childhood cancer cases.

Additionally, this legislation includes provisions dealing with issues that arise for survivors of childhood cancer. Unfortunately, even after beating cancer, as many as two-thirds of childhood cancer survivors are likely to experience at least one late effect of treatment; as many as one-fourth experience a late effect that is serious or life-threatening, including second cancers and organ damage.

We must do more to ensure that children survive cancer and any late effects so they can live a long, healthy, and productive life. This legislation would enhance research on the late effects of childhood cancers, improve collaboration among providers so that doctors are better able to care for this population as they age, and establish a new pilot program to begin to explore improved models of care for childhood cancer survivors.

This legislation also provides some clarity for patients and their physicians attempting to access new drugs and therapies from pharmaceutical companies. When a patient has run out of other options, the last thing they and their families need is to spend months being given the run-around trying to access a potential treatment.

Lastly, this bill will ensure more pediatric expertise at the National Institutes of Health to better leverage the research investment to improve pediatric cancer research by requiring the inclusion of at least one pediatric oncologist on the National Cancer Advisory Board and improving childhood health reporting requirements to include pediatric cancer.

I am pleased that the Childhood Cancer STAR Act has the support of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, St. Baldrick's Foundation, and Children's Oncology Group, among others. I look forward to working with these and other stakeholders, as well as Senator CAPITO to urge the rest of our colleagues to join us in supporting this crucial legislation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. REED, Mr. BROWN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KING, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 1884. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to deliver a meaningful benefit and lower prescription drug prices under the Medicare

program; to the Committee on Finance.

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. 1884

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Medicare Prescription Drug Savings and Choice Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN OPTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subpart 2 of part D of title XVIII of the Social Security Act is amended by inserting after section 1860D–11 (42 U.S.C. 1395w–111) the following new section:

''MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN OPTION

''SEC. 1860D–11A. (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, for each year (beginning with 2017), in addition to any plans offered under section 1860D–11, the Secretary shall offer one or more Medicare operated prescription drug plans (as defined in subsection (c)) with a service area that consists of the entire United States and shall enter into negotiations in accordance with subsection (b) with pharmaceutical manufacturers to reduce the purchase cost of covered part D drugs for eligible part D individuals who enroll in such a plan.

''(b) NEGOTIATIONS.—Notwithstanding section 1860D–11(i), for purposes of offering a Medicare operated prescription drug plan under this section, the Secretary shall negotiate with pharmaceutical manufacturers with respect to the purchase price of covered part D drugs in a Medicare operated prescription drug plan and shall encourage the use of more affordable therapeutic equivalents to the extent such practices do not override medical necessity as determined by the prescribing physician. To the extent practicable and consistent with the previous sentence, the Secretary shall implement strategies similar to those used by other Federal purchasers of prescription drugs, and other strategies, including the use of a formulary and formulary incentives in subsection (e), to reduce the purchase cost of covered part D drugs.

''(c) MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN DEFINED.—For purposes of this part, the term 'Medicare operated prescription drug plan' means a prescription drug plan that offers qualified prescription drug coverage and access to negotiated prices described in section 1860D–2(a)(1)(A). Such a plan may offer supplemental prescription drug coverage in the same manner as other qualified prescription drug coverage offered by other prescription drug plans.

''(d) MONTHLY BENEFICIARY PREMIUM.—

''(1) QUALIFIED PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE.—The monthly beneficiary premium for qualified prescription drug coverage and access to negotiated prices described in section 1860D–2(a)(1)(A) to be charged under a Medicare operated prescription drug plan shall be uniform nationally. Such premium for months in 2017 and each succeeding year shall be based on the average monthly per capita actuarial cost of offering the Medicare operated prescription drug plan for the year involved, including administrative expenses.

''(2) SUPPLEMENTAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE.—Insofar as a Medicare operated prescription drug plan offers supplemental prescription drug coverage, the Secretary may adjust the amount of the premium charged under paragraph (1).

''(e) USE OF A FORMULARY AND FORMULARY INCENTIVES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to the operation of a Medicare operated prescription drug plan, the Secretary shall establish and apply a formulary (and may include formulary incentives described in paragraph (2)(C)(ii)) in accordance with this subsection in order to—

''(A) increase patient safety;

''(B) increase appropriate use and reduce inappropriate use of drugs; and

''(C) reward value.

''(2) DEVELOPMENT OF INITIAL FORMULARY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In selecting covered part D drugs for inclusion in a formulary, the Secretary shall consider clinical benefit and price.

''(B) ROLE OF AHRQ.—The Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality shall be responsible for assessing the clinical benefit of covered part D drugs and making recommendations to the Secretary regarding which drugs should be included in the formulary. In conducting such assessments and making such recommendations, the Director shall—

''(i) consider safety concerns including those identified by the Food and Drug Administration;

''(ii) use available data and evaluations, with priority given to randomized controlled trials, to examine clinical effectiveness, comparative effectiveness, safety, and enhanced compliance with a drug regimen;

''(iii) use the same classes of drugs developed by the United States Pharmacopeia for this part;

''(iv) consider evaluations made by—

''(I) the Director under section 1013 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003;

''(II) other Federal entities, such as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

''(III) other private and public entities, such as the Drug Effectiveness Review Project and State plans under title XIX; and

''(v) recommend to the Secretary—

''(I) those drugs in a class that provide a greater clinical benefit, including fewer safety concerns or less risk of side-effects, than another drug in the same class that should be included in the formulary;

''(II) those drugs in a class that provide less clinical benefit, including greater safety concerns or a greater risk of side-effects, than another drug in the same class that should be excluded from the formulary; and

''(III) drugs in a class with same or similar clinical benefit for which it would be appropriate for the Secretary to competitively bid (or negotiate) for placement on the formulary.

''(C) CONSIDERATION OF AHRQ RECOMMENDATIONS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, after taking into consideration the recommendations under subparagraph (B)(v), shall establish a formulary, and formulary incentives, to encourage use of covered part D drugs that—

''(I) have a lower cost and provide a greater clinical benefit than other drugs;

''(II) have a lower cost than other drugs with the same or similar clinical benefit; and

''(III) have the same cost but provide greater clinical benefit than other drugs.

''(ii) FORMULARY INCENTIVES.—The formulary incentives under clause (i) may be in the form of one or more of the following:

''(I) Tiered copayments.

''(II) Reference pricing.

''(III) Prior authorization.

''(IV) Step therapy.

''(V) Medication therapy management.

''(VI) Generic drug substitution.

''(iii) FLEXIBILITY.—In applying such formulary incentives the Secretary may decide not to impose any cost-sharing for a covered part D drug for which—

''(I) the elimination of cost sharing would be expected to increase compliance with a drug regimen; and

''(II) compliance would be expected to produce savings under part A or B or both.

''(3) LIMITATIONS ON FORMULARY.—In any formulary established under this subsection, the formulary may not be changed during a year, except—

''(A) to add a generic version of a covered part D drug that entered the market;

''(B) to remove such a drug for which a safety problem is found; and

''(C) to add a drug that the Secretary identifies as a drug which treats a condition for which there has not previously been a treatment option or for which a clear and significant benefit has been demonstrated over other covered part D drugs.

''(4) ADDING DRUGS TO THE INITIAL FORMULARY.—

''(A) USE OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—The Secretary shall establish and appoint an advisory committee (in this paragraph referred to as the 'advisory committee')—

''(i) to review petitions from drug manufacturers, health care provider organizations, patient groups, and other entities for inclusion of a drug in, or other changes to, such formulary; and

''(ii) to recommend any changes to the formulary established under this subsection.

''(B) COMPOSITION.—The advisory committee shall be composed of 9 members and shall include representatives of physicians, pharmacists, and consumers and others with expertise in evaluating prescription drugs. The Secretary shall select members based on their knowledge of pharmaceuticals and the Medicare population. Members shall be deemed to be special Government employees for purposes of applying the conflict of interest provisions under section 208 of title 18, United States Code, and no waiver of such provisions for such a member shall be permitted.

''(C) CONSULTATION.—The advisory committee shall consult, as necessary, with physicians who are specialists in treating the disease for which a drug is being considered.

''(D) REQUEST FOR STUDIES.—The advisory committee may request the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality or an academic or research institution to study and make a report on a petition described in subparagraph (A)(i) in order to assess—

''(i) clinical effectiveness;

''(ii) comparative effectiveness;

''(iii) safety; and

''(iv) enhanced compliance with a drug regimen.

''(E) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The advisory committee shall make recommendations to the Secretary regarding—

''(i) whether a covered part D drug is found to provide a greater clinical benefit, including fewer safety concerns or less risk of side-effects, than another drug in the same class that is currently included in the formulary and should be included in the formulary;

''(ii) whether a covered part D drug is found to provide less clinical benefit, including greater safety concerns or a greater risk of side-effects, than another drug in the same class that is currently included in the formulary and should not be included in the formulary; and

''(iii) whether a covered part D drug has the same or similar clinical benefit to a drug in the same class that is currently included

in the formulary and whether the drug should be included in the formulary.

''(F) LIMITATIONS ON REVIEW OF MANUFACTURER PETITIONS.—The advisory committee shall not review a petition of a drug manufacturer under subparagraph (A)(i) with respect to a covered part D drug unless the petition is accompanied by the following:

''(i) Raw data from clinical trials on the safety and effectiveness of the drug.

''(ii) Any data from clinical trials conducted using active controls on the drug or drugs that are the current standard of care.

''(iii) Any available data on comparative effectiveness of the drug.

''(iv) Any other information the Secretary requires for the advisory committee to complete its review.

''(G) RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Secretary shall review the recommendations of the advisory committee and if the Secretary accepts such recommendations the Secretary shall modify the formulary established under this subsection accordingly. Nothing in this section shall preclude the Secretary from adding to the formulary a drug for which the Director of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality or the advisory committee has not made a recommendation.

''(H) NOTICE OF CHANGES.—The Secretary shall provide timely notice to beneficiaries and health professionals about changes to the formulary or formulary incentives.

''(f) INFORMING BENEFICIARIES.—The Secretary shall take steps to inform beneficiaries about the availability of a Medicare operated drug plan or plans including providing information in the annual handbook distributed to all beneficiaries and adding information to the official public Medicare website related to prescription drug coverage available through this part.

''(g) APPLICATION OF ALL OTHER REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS.—Except as specifically provided in this section, any Medicare operated drug plan shall meet the same requirements as apply to any other prescription drug plan, including the requirements of section 1860D–4(b)(1) relating to assuring pharmacy access.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 1860D–3(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–103(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) AVAILABILITY OF THE MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.—A Medicare operated prescription drug plan (as defined in section 1860D–11A(c)) shall be offered nationally in accordance with section 1860D–11A.''.

(2)(A) Section 1860D–3 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–103) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(c) PROVISIONS ONLY APPLICABLE IN 2006 THROUGH 2016.—The provisions of this section shall only apply with respect to 2006 through 2016.''.

(B) Section 1860D–11(g) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–111(g)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(8) NO AUTHORITY FOR FALLBACK PLANS AFTER 2016.—A fallback prescription drug plan shall not be available after December 31, 2016.''.

(3) Section 1860D–13(c)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–113(c)(3)) is amended—

(A) in the heading, by inserting ''AND MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLANS'' after ''FALLBACK PLANS''; and

(B) by inserting ''or a Medicare operated prescription drug plan'' after ''a fallback prescription drug plan''.

(4) Section 1860D–16(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–116(b)(1)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end;

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

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(E) payments for expenses incurred with respect to the operation of Medicare operated prescription drug plans under section 1860D–11A.''.

(5) Section 1860D–41(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w–151(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(19) MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.—The term 'Medicare operated prescription drug plan' has the meaning given such term in section 1860D–11A(c).''.

SEC. 3. IMPROVED APPEALS PROCESS UNDER THE MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.

Section 1860D–4(h) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1305w–104(h)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) APPEALS PROCESS FOR MEDICARE OPERATED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop a well-defined process for appeals for denials of benefits under this part under the Medicare operated prescription drug plan. Such process shall be efficient, impose minimal administrative burdens, and ensure the timely procurement of non-formulary drugs or exemption from formulary incentives when medically necessary. Medical necessity shall be based on professional medical judgment, the medical condition of the beneficiary, and other medical evidence. Such appeals process shall include—

''(i) an initial review and determination made by the Secretary; and

''(ii) for appeals denied during the initial review and determination, the option of an external review and determination by an independent entity selected by the Secretary.

''(B) CONSULTATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF PROCESS.—In developing the appeals process under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall consult with consumer and patient groups, as well as other key stakeholders to ensure the goals described in subparagraph (A) are achieved.''.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 1891. A bill to amend the Mineral Leasing Act to improve coal royalties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today, I am proud to stand up for fairness by introducing legislation with my Senate colleague, Senator TOM UDALL of New Mexico, to ensure American taxpayers receive the full value of coal produced on public lands.

The Coal Royalty Fairness Act would require the Interior Department to collect royalties for coal mined on Federal lands based on the actual market value of coal. This bill is based on current successful practices in Montana—the Nation's second largest Federal coal-producing State. Currently, some private mining companies sell coal to their own affiliated companies at a lower cost than market value, and pay Federal royalties based on the cheaper, first point of sale.

American taxpayers are getting ripped off by coal companies under the current, broken coal royalties system. I raised concerns about this 2 years ago, and today, Senator UDALL and I are introducing legislation to get the public every penny owed by companies that may be taking advantage of a loose system. Instead of subsidizing private coal companies, it is time to put this money back where it belongs—into rural communities and the pockets of taxpayers.

Our bill will require the Interior Department to collect royalties based on the actual market value of coal, not the below-market price they charge their own companies.

Our bill will also bring some much-needed transparency to the Federal coal program by requiring the Interior Department to publish more information and calling for Government Accountability Office to review the program every 3 years.

I urge my colleagues to join Senator UDALL and me by cosponsoring and ultimately passing this important bill.

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. 1891

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 ''Coal Royalty Fairness Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. VALUATION OF COAL ROYALTIES.

Section 7 of the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 207) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking the fourth sentence; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) ROYALTIES.—

''(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) ASSESSMENT VALUE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'assessment value', with respect to Federal coal, means—

''(I) the price of Federal coal paid by the purchaser at final sale; or

''(II) a price imputed by the Secretary based on the coal price index.

''(ii) EXCLUSIONS.—The term 'assessment value' does not include, as determined and to the extent determined to be appropriate by the Secretary—

''(I) transportation costs, as determined in accordance with the transportation cost index; or

''(II) the cost of coal washing.

''(B) BROKER.—The term 'broker' means a person that resells Federal coal.

''(C) COAL PRICE INDEX.—The term 'coal price index' means the schedule of average market prices of Federal coal (in United States dollars) paid by the purchaser at final sale, based on the quality and type of the Federal coal, as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration.

''(D) PURCHASER.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'purchaser' means a person that—

''(I) purchases or contracts to purchase Federal coal—

''(aa) directly from a coal mine operator; or

''(bb) indirectly from a broker; and

''(II) uses that Federal coal in any industrial or energy conversion process.

''(ii) EXCLUSION.—The term 'purchaser' does not include—

''(I) a coal broker; or

''(II) any other third-party intermediary.

''(E) QUALITY.—The term 'quality', with respect to Federal coal, means the quality of Federal coal measured in British thermal units, sulfur, moisture, and other criteria determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

''(F) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior.

''(G) TRANSPORTATION COST INDEX.—The term 'transportation cost index' means the transportation cost index established under paragraph (7).

''(H) TYPE.—The term 'type', with respect to Federal coal, means a general category of coal, such as metallurgical coal or steam coal, as determined by the Secretary.

''(2) PAYMENT RATE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a lease shall require payment of a royalty in such amount as the Secretary shall determine of not less than 12.5 percent of the assessment value of Federal coal, as determined under paragraph (3).

''(B) EXCEPTION.—In lieu of the royalty payment rate described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary may establish such lower royalty payment rate as the Secretary determines to be appropriate in the case of Federal coal recovered by an underground mining operation.

''(3) VALUATION FOR ROYALTIES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall establish, as the valuation for Federal coal royalties, the assessment value of Federal coal.

''(4) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(A) REPORTING.—The purchaser of Federal coal shall annually submit to the Secretary a report containing such information as the Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out this subsection.

''(B) AUDITS.—To carry out this subsection, the Secretary may examine the records of any person engaged in the purchase, sale, transportation, or marketing of Federal coal.

''(5) COAL PRICE INDEX.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall compile the assessment values of coal by type and quality of coal in a coal price index.

''(B) PUBLICATION.—Not less frequently than quarterly, the Secretary shall publish the coal price index, along with a methodological description, including—

''(i) the method of calculation;

''(ii) the data used to calculate the coal price index in an aggregate manner that does not reveal proprietary information; and

''(iii) any other information the Secretary considers appropriate to ensure transparency.

''(C) OTHER INFORMATION.—If a person believes that the coal price index significantly deviates from the assessment value of the coal produced by the person, the person may petition the Secretary to use information supplied by the person in lieu of the coal price index, including all information the Secretary requires to accurately determine the assessment value and audit the records of the person.

''(6) EXPORTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In assessing royalties for the export of Federal coal under this subsection, the Secretary may obtain from the exporter of the Federal coal such information as the Secretary determines to be necessary to carry out this subsection.

''(B) ASSESSMENT VALUE OF EXPORTED COAL.—Subject to subparagraph (C), in determining the assessment value of Federal coal that is exported, the Secretary shall—

''(i) use the price of coal free on board the marine vessel used to transport the coal overseas at the port of origin; and

''(ii) limit any deductions that apply to the assessment value of the Federal coal to costs incurred prior to being free onboard the vessel.

''(C) UNCERTAIN EXPORT PRICE.—If the Secretary cannot determine the value of exported coal in accordance with subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall—

''(i) assess royalties under this subsection based on the coal price index for coal of a similar quantity and type; and

''(ii) limit any deductions that apply to the assessment value of the Federal coal to costs incurred within the contiguous United States.

''(7) TRANSPORTATION COST INDEX.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the other provisions of this paragraph, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Transportation (in consultation with the Surface Transportation Board and others), shall—

''(i) compile in a transportation cost index the average costs of transporting coal; and

''(ii) determine the amount of any transportation cost deduction under this subsection, on the basis of the transportation cost index.

''(B) UNIT OF MEASUREMENT.—The transportation cost index shall be based on the average transportation costs per ton of coal or another unit of measurement determined by the Secretary.

''(C) DIFFERENCES IN TRANSPORTATION COSTS.—The transportation cost index shall take into consideration differences in the costs of transportation, as determined by the Secretary, based on—

''(i) the mode of transportation;

''(ii) the geographic region, and

''(iii) other characteristics of the transportation industry that the Secretary considers to be necessary to calculate a fair, transparent, and accurate transportation cost index.

''(D) EXCLUSIONS.—The transportation cost index shall not include costs associated with, as determined by the Secretary—

''(i) take-or-pay contract penalties;

''(ii) liquidated damages;

''(iii) the speculative aspects of transportation transactions; or

''(iv) any other costs that are not directly associated with moving Federal coal from 1 location to another location.

''(E) PUBLICATION.—Not less than twice annually, the Secretary shall publish the transportation cost index, along with a methodological description, including—

''(i) the method of calculation;

''(ii) the data used to calculate the transportation cost index, in an aggregate manner that does not reveal proprietary information; and

''(iii) any other information the Secretary considers to be appropriate to ensure transparency.

''(F) OTHER INFORMATION.—If a person believes that the transportation cost index significantly deviates from the transportation costs of the person, the person may petition the Secretary to use information supplied by the person (other than costs descried in subparagraph (D)) in lieu of the transportation cost index, including all information the Secretary requires to accurately determine cost and audit the records of the person.

''(8) REVIEWS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—To ensure a transparent, fair, and efficient administration of the Federal coal program, and to ensure that citizens of the United States receive a fair return on Federal coal, not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this subsection and every 3 years thereafter during the 15-year period beginning on that date of enactment, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that describes a review of the Federal coal program, including the administration of this subsection.

''(B) CONSULTATION.—In conducting a review under this paragraph, the Comptroller General shall consult with—

''(i) the Secretary;

''(ii) the Director of the Bureau of Land Management;

''(iii) the Secretary of Transportation; and

''(iv) the Secretary of Energy.

''(C) INCLUSIONS.—A review under this paragraph shall include a review of—

''(i) the total volume of coal production from Federal land;

''(ii) the total volume of remaining coal reserves on Federal land;

''(iii) the total revenues generated from the Federal coal program, itemized by type of revenue, including lease bonus payments and royalties;

''(iv) market prices for coal;

''(v) market prices for transportation costs and any other deductible costs; and

''(vi) the appropriateness of royalty rates.

''(D) FORMAT.—The Comptroller General shall report information in a review under this paragraph—

''(i) in the aggregate for the United States; and

''(ii) categorized by State for at least the top 10 Federal coal-producing States, as determined by the Comptroller General.

''(9) APPLICATION.—This subsection—

''(A) applies to coal mined from Federal land; and

''(B) does not apply to coal mined from tribal land.''.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER):

S. 1894. A bill to provide short-term water supplies to drought-stricken California; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the historic drought that is devastating California and much of the West and to introduce the California Emergency Drought Relief Act along with Senator BOXER.

The toll on some of our most vulnerable communities is mounting.

As of July, 2,091 wells are already dry or will soon run out of water. This puts more than 10,000 people in jeopardy.

Rural and disadvantaged communities are some of the hardest hit.

Just this month, the Washington Post reported that arsenic had been found in wells serving St. Anthony's mobile home park in the Coachella Valley at twice the safe concentration.

In Porterville, Californians are bathing themselves with bottled water.

California is also suffering a massive loss of agriculture production.

A study from UC Davis estimates that farmers will fallow 563,000 acres in 2015, a 35 percent increase from last year when farmers fallowed 410,000 acres.

The State's agriculture sector stands to lose $1.8 billion in direct agricultural costs this year, on top of $1.5 billion last year.

The San Joaquin Valley is at the epicenter of the drought, and the possible damage to our nation's food supply is dire.

The Valley is home to 90 percent of the country's tomatoes, 74 percent of our lettuce, and 95 percent of our broccoli. The drought's effects on the Valley will extend far beyond California's borders.

But the devastating consequences of this drought aren't limited to a single region.

UC Davis also reports that California's economy will lose an estimated $2.7 billion in 2015, along with 18,600 jobs.

That is on top of $2.2 billion last year and 17,100 jobs lost.

Effects on the environment are also destructive.

Groundwater reserves in underground aquifers are being depleted, which is causing the surrounding land to sink.

Delta smelt are at their lowest levels since surveys first began in 1959, while Chinook salmon are imperiled by warmer water in the Sacramento River.

Saltwater from the San Francisco Bay threatens to contaminate freshwater in the Delta, imperiling an entire ecosystem, not to mention the ill effects on drinking water supplies and farmland.

Finally, we can't ignore the increasing threat of wildfires. Since January 1, the U.S. Forest Service reports more than 5,000 fires have burned on state and federal lands, a 10 percent increase over last year.

Despite the high likelihood of a strong El Niño this year, one wet season won't fix the problems. Experts estimate that California needs at least three above-average precipitation years to cover the current 37 million acre-foot deficit.

Doing nothing is simply not an option.

In drafting the bill we're introducing today, we started with the bill that unanimously passed the Senate in 2014.

We then modified that bill, adding significant environmental protections and removing controversial provisions.

We also included a range of provisions to protect and restore threatened and endangered species, as well as a number of programs to support long-term infrastructure projects like desalination, water recycling and storage.

My staff and I have taken dozens of meetings since January.

We have met with Congressional Republicans and Democrats, environmental groups, water districts, and State and local officials.

My California staff has visited water projects throughout the State to collect ideas, and my staff in Washington has consulted closely with Federal agencies to ensure the bill adheres to environmental law.

By releasing a bill this summer, months before the rainy season, Congress and the public will have ample time to review, debate and, where necessary, suggest improvements.

I expect the bill will receive a committee hearing, allowing every member of Congress and the public to weigh in.

Let me briefly discuss how this bill will help.

Federal policy will be most effective if it is aligned with the State's goals and the State water bond.

This means expanding Federal efforts to include long-term solutions such as desalination, recycling and storage. We also must look at ways to help communities that are running out of water.

To help those communities, the bill includes a new program to assist areas that have suffered the brunt of the drought, communities like Porterville and others in Tulare County.

Providing emergency supplies like bottled water is a no-brainer, but it is a short-term fix.

We need to look beyond this emergency at ways we can shift these communities from vulnerable water sources like wells to more sustainable and resilient water systems.

We also need to take a close look at desalination and water recycling. These are two of the most promising technologies that may offer long-term solutions.

The bill identifies 26 desalination projects capable of producing more than 330,000 acre-feet of water.

It also identifies 105 recycling projects with the potential to produce about 854,000 acre-feet of water.

That is a total of 1.2 million acre-feet of clean water per year, enough for 2.4 million households.

But these projects aren't cheap. That is why the bill funds a loan-guarantee program and other financing mechanisms to help make these projects a reality.

Another area we should focus on is storage. This drought has showed that our reservoir capacity is insufficient.

Given the consensus that droughts will grow more severe, we have to increase how much water we can hold from wet to dry years.

The bill positions the Federal Government as a partner with California to build new reservoirs and expand existing reservoirs.

Conservation and groundwater recharge are two more promising areas. While cities and towns are doing their part, the bill also identifies areas where the Federal, state and local governments and the ag sector can do more.

Finally, the Federal Government can play a significant role in supporting research on promising technologies, from recapturing energy and improving membranes used in desalination to developing strategies to minimize environmental effects of smart-water strategies.

The bill also includes a number of short-term, low-cost proposals to protect and assist in the recovery of fish populations, including salmon and smelt.

This includes authorizations to implement the Endangered Species Act recovery plan for salmon; trap-and-barge fish and address predator species, two ways to reduce mortality rates; create additional spawning habitat for endangered and threatened species; and improving how water systems are managed using the latest science and technology.

The bill's short-term provisions build on legislation that unanimously passed the Senate in 2014, with added protections for environmental and water rights and the removal of several provisions to address environmental concerns.

The bill's short-term provisions will help move water efficiently to those areas where it is most needed.

Let me be clear—this language was carefully drafted to remain consistent with environmental laws, including the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act, as well as all biological opinions.

Here are some examples of how the short-term section works.

First, by operating the water systems with more precision, we will be able to monitor for endangered species like the Delta Smelt and adjust pumping levels to avoid harming fish. By doing this, more water can be moved to the communities that need it while protecting endangered and threatened species.

The bill also directs agencies to open the Cross-Channel Gates on the Sacramento River during times when salmon are not migrating. This would allow thousands of acre feet of water to be moved without harming fish or water quality.

For water transfers in the Delta—where water sellers and buyers can help get water where it's needed—we included many additional protections. Every transfer will be reviewed to ensure it is consistent with environmental laws. The transfers, which can only occur in April and May, must include only additional water pumped into the Delta on top of the regular river flow.

Moving water more efficiently will help supply water to millions of Californians in urban areas, from Silicon Valley to Southern California.

It will also increase water allocations for family farms in the San Joaquin Valley. More than 15,000 small farms served by the Friant Water Authority—with an average size of just 83 acres—would benefit.

I have introduced many bills during my years in the Senate, and this may be the most difficult.

Nevertheless, the goal has remained constant: a bill that can get signed into law that benefits all regions of the State.

Congress worked together after Hurricanes Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast and Hurricane Sandy devastated the East Coast.

I think we now have a bill that will help the West survive this historic drought.

I look forward to a committee hearing on this bill and to public input to make it even better.

By Mr. McCAIN:

S. 1895. A bill to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act for purposes of making claims under such Act based on exposure to atmospheric nuclear testing; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce legislation that would amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, RECA, by adding Mohave County, AZ, to the list of counties eligible for downwinder compensation. A similar proposal was introduced today by Congress PAUL GOSAR. I am hopeful this bill will help close a painful chapter for those Arizonans who were arguably the most affected by nuclear weapons testing during the Cold War.

In 1990, Congress enacted the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to compensate victims or their survivors who suffered certain illnesses caused by fallout exposure ''down wind'' of atmospheric nuclear weapons testing during the 1950's and 1960's. Among other requirements, eligibility is limited to individuals who can prove their physical presence in one of several affected counties. Astonishingly, despite its close proximity to the Nevada Test Site, the original RECA law and its subsequent amendments never listed Mohave County proper as an affected area. I believe the people of Mohave County deserve to see righted this unjust policy which has obstructed their ability to qualify for compensation.

I understand that several of my colleagues have proposed similar RECA amendments in previous years. I would hope that these various RECA proposals give additional consideration to an April 2005 report by the National Academy of Sciences, NAS, that assessed, among other things, whether additional geographic areas should be added to the RECA program. The NAS study revealed a much wider area of radioactive fallout then originally identified when the RECA law was first written. The report also recommended replacing the geographic area criteria with a new science-based process for determining compensation eligibility, a method similar to what's used in the Radiation Exposed-Veterans Compensation Act and the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act. I believe it is worthwhile for policy makers to consider the recommendations of the NAS report.

This bill is an expansion of the RECA program and thus I will be working with my colleagues to find funding offsets to ensure there is no net increase in government spending if this legislation were enacted. I encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 234—TO AUTHORIZE THE PRINTING OF A COLLECTION OF THE RULES OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Mr. BLUNT submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 234

Resolved, That a collection of the rules of the committees of the Senate, together with related materials, be printed as a Senate document, and that there be printed 250 additional copies of such document for the use of the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SENATE RESOLUTION 235—DESIGNATING SEPTEMBER 2015 AS ''NATIONAL SPINAL CORD INJURY AWARENESS MONTH''

Mr. RUBIO (for himself and Mr. NELSON) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 235

Whereas the estimated over 1,275,000 individuals in the United States who live with a spinal cord injury cost society billions of dollars in health care costs and lost wages;

Whereas an estimated 100,000 of those individuals are veterans who suffered a spinal cord injury while serving as members of the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas work-related accidents are the leading cause of spinal cord injuries;

Whereas motor vehicle crashes are the second leading cause of spinal cord injuries and traumatic brain injuries;

Whereas 70 percent of all spinal cord injuries that occur in children under the age of 18 are a result of a motor vehicle accident;

Whereas every 48 minutes a person will become paralyzed, underscoring the urgent need to develop new neuroprotection, pharmacological, and regeneration treatments to reduce, prevent, and reverse paralysis; and

Whereas increased education and investment in research are key factors in improving outcomes for victims of spinal cord injuries, improving the quality of life of victims, and ultimately curing paralysis: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates September 2015 as ''National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month'';

(2) supports the goals and ideals of National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month;

(3) continues to support research to find better treatments and therapies, and a cure for spinal cord injuries;

(4) supports clinical trials for new therapies that offer promise and hope to individuals living with paralysis; and

(5) commends the dedication of national, regional, and local organizations, researchers, doctors, volunteers, and people across the United States that are working to improve the quality of life of people living with spinal cord injuries and their families.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 9:45 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10:30 a.m., in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Wireless Broadband and the Future of Spectrum Policy.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. CORNYN. 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 July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 9 a.m., in room SH–216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act: Combating Campus Sexual Assault.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, in room SD–628 of

the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Examining the True Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in Native Communities.''

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

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Ending Veteran Homelessness.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 2 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Financial Crisis in Greece—Implications and Lessons Learned.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Role of Bankruptcy Reform in Addressing Too-Big-To Fail.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT, AGENCY ACTION, FEDERAL RIGHTS, AND FEDERAL COURTS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights, and Federal Courts be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 2 p.m., in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Revisiting IRS Targeting: Progress of Agency Reforms and Congressional Options.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 29, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Budget Committee interns Flora Lipsky and Hannah be given floor privileges for the rest of the week.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 224; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

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

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officer for appointment as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and appointment to the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., sections 152 and 601:

To be general

Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

AUTHORIZING THE PRINTING OF A COLLECTION OF THE RULES OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 234, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 234) to authorize the printing of a collection of the rules of the committees of the Senate.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 234) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

NATIONAL SPINAL CORD INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 235, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 235) designating September 2015 as ''National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 235) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 3236

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if the Senate receives the papers for H.R. 3236, that at 1:45 p.m. on Thursday, July 30, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3236; that the bill be read three times and the Senate vote on passage of the bill with no intervening action or debate; that there be a 60-affirmative-vote threshold for passage of the bill; and that following passage of the bill, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, July 30; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use

later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 22, postcloture; further, that the time following leader remarks until 12 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form; finally, that all time during the adjournment of the Senate count postcloture on H.R. 22.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:28 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, July 30, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. SAMUEL D. COX

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. GINA M. GROSSO

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. PAUL A. GROSKLAGS

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

RICHARD H. FILLMAN, JR.

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

DEAN R. KLENZ
SYLVIA A. B. MILLER
JAMES J. RICHE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

RICHARD L. BAILEY
KENNETH S. SHEDAROWICH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

WILLIAM ANDINO
ROBERT J. BLAESING
FREDA W. BREDY
ELESS D. BROWN
FORREST E. CHASE
BETTY J. DEMUS
ELIZABETH A. ENGLISH
RUSSELL A. FREEMAN
ROSEANN E. GROB
JEFFREY E. HAFNER
SANDRA I. HERSH
THOMAS S. HYSLIP
NATHAN G. LEWANDOSKI
LARRY J. LUEDEMAN
MARY M. MEADE
BRADLEY C. NINDL
MICHAEL J. PRESCOTT
JAMES R. ROBERTSON
CINDY M. SALADIN MUHAMMAD
JANE F. SCHILLACI
CHRISTOPHER P. WILLARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

DAVID B. ANDERSON
MATTHEW J. BARRY
STEVEN E. BATTLE
STEVEN J. BAUER
GLORIA Y. BROWNE
CHRISTINA CAWLEY
SHEMROCK O. CORDOVA
IVONNE M. DALY GUZMAN
TIMOTHY J. DICKASON
S. FOLLEY DUNNA
FRANK P. FAUSTUS
MICHAEL Q. FITE
ALEXANDER G. GARZA
BRIAN L. GLADWELL
TODD G. GOTTSCHALK
DAVID M. GOURLAY
LYLE B. HAM
GERALD D. HAUTMAN
VICTOR R. HERNANDEZPILLICH
FOSTER C. KORDISCH III
DUANE LUKE
DEBORAH S. LYON
ROBERT F. MARINO
MATTHEW L. MASTERSON
PETER MAZOLEWSKI
CRAIG C. MCFARLAND
CECILIA P. MIKITA
JAMES E. MILLER
TERRY L. MILLS
WILLIAM D. MURRELL
RICHARD A. NAHOURAII
PAZ C. NUANEZ
BIDEMI Y. OLANIYILEYIMU
WILLIAM H. PAULL
CLAUDE C. PERKINS
MARK D. PORTER
LUIS J. RAMOS SANTIAGO
ALAN L. RIVERA
LAWRENCE M. ROBERMAN
NORMAN A. SABIO
DON J. SARMIENTO
RICHARD A. SCHEURING
FRANK L. SCHMID
RAFAEL G. SEMIDEI
DOUGLAS G. SMITH
ANN M. STRAIGHT
CARL W. THURMOND

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JERRY G. BAUMGARTNER
JOSE E. COLON
CARLOS J. MIRO
JOSEPH ROSENWALD
MAURI M. THOMAS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ELIZABETH A. ANDERSON
MICHELLE M. BEACH
SCOTT L. BORCHARDT
JAMIE P. CHERRY
KATHLEEN A. CLARY
ONDINE CRABTREE
LACONNIA Y. DANDY
ZANDRA M. DAY
RANDY A. ESTES
LINDA S. FISHER
ANGELA S. GARNER
ALEXANDER GILSON
SHARON A. GREENAWAY
OK S. HODGES
WILLIAM R. KOGL
TERESA M. LONG
ALEXIOS A. LOUKAS
JOHN M. RINEHART
CARLISS L. TOWNS
KAREN H. WILLIAMS
RONALD D. WOODARD
MARGARET L. YOUNG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

TONIA M. CROWLEY
CHRISTOPHER FOWLER
CLIFFORD D. GEHRKE
JAMES R. HILL
DONALD B. JONES
ERIK J. KIRCHEN
BONNIE S. LOWE
DOUGLAS R. MEDD
ROBERTO J. NOGUERAS
DENNIS J. RATLIFF
PEDER SWANSON
CHERYL M. K. ZEISE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JENNIFER M. AHRENS
DEIDRE M. ANDERSON
JERALD N. CHESTER
BRENDA L. HAVELKA
GERALD D. HOLLEGER
TODD W. TRAVER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY DENTAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

RAMIE K. BARFUSS
DAVID A. BELTRAN
JOHN F. DECKER
WALTER G. DIMALANTA
WILLIAM A. GILBERT
KEVIN R. GILLESPIE
JEFFERY B. HAMBRICE
JOSEPH W. IVORY
HARRY J. JACKSON
HWAHOON JEONG
ANITA M. KIMBROUGH
JOSEPH R. LOWE
EDWARD W. LUMPKINS
DAVID R. MAXWELL
AMANDA R. NELSON
JOEL M. NICHOLS
NATHAN C. PARRISH
RACHELLE A. RETOMA
CHRISTOPHER L. ROWE
CURTIS D. SCHMIDT
BRIAN W. STANCOVEN
MICHAEL J. STEWART
RUSSELL D. TAYLOR
DENTONIO WORRELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

DAVID J. ADAM
BRIAN L. ADAMS
ERIC P. AHNFELDT
MICHAEL V. ARNETT
FARHAN S. AYUBI
BRIAN C. BELDOWICZ
BROCK A. BENEDICT
PAMELA BLAND
JOHN H. BODEN
ANTHONY C. BONFIGLIO
EDWARD E. BRIDGES II
SAMUEL E. BURKETT
TRAVIS C. BURNS
CRAIG M. BUSH
ROBERT W. BYRNE
MICHAEL S. CAHILL
BRIAN J. CARR
LAUDINO M. CASTILLOROJAS
MATTHEW S. CHAMBERS
MARCUS H. COLYER
ROBERT J. S. CORNFELD
MARK S. CRAIG
STEVEN H. CRAIG
KEVIN L. CUMMINGS
LAURENCE DAVIDSON
RACHEL S. DAWSON
MATTHEW L. DRAKE
DOUGLAS M. DUDEWICZ
MATTHEW J. ECKERT
EDUARDO ESCOBAR
MASSIMO D. FEDERICO
DORI M. FRANCO
MATTHEW D. GIVENS
CHRISTINE M. GOULD
YOLANDA N. GRAYDAVIS
ARTHUR F. GUERRERO
JORDAN M. HALL
NATHAN E. HARTVIGSEN
JODY N. HEFNER
CHRISTOPHER C. HIGGINS
HEATHER L. HIGGINS
MICAH HILL
THOMAS N. HOFFMANN
LUKE J. HOFMANN
JOHN D. HORTON
JAMES T. T. HSU
STEVEN J. HUDAK
KATHRYN JOHNSON
OWEN N. JOHNSON
NATHAN D. JONES
ANDREW KAGEL
ESTHER KIM
YOUNG W. KIM
MEGAN K. KLOETZEL
NICHOLAS J. LANGE
RYAN J. LARSON
DAVID S. LIDWELL
JEFFREY R. LIMJUCO
NICK M. LY
ANDREW W. MACK
EDWARD W. MALIN IV
ERIK S. MANNINEN
BRIAN P. MARKELZ
JOSEPH W. MAY
ALEX J. MCKINLAY
DANIEL F. MCLAUGHLIN
MARIA M. MOLINA
PATRICK D. MUNSON

KUWONG B. MWAMUKONDA
DARIUSZ G. MYDLARZ
DAYNE M. NELSON
BURTON T. NEWMAN
PHU T. NGUYEN
VU Q. NGUYEN
ANTHONY A. D. NOYA
NKEMAKONAM OKPOKWASILI
PAULA S. OLIVER
JOSHUA C. PACKARD
BENJAMIN N. PALMER
JOSEPH R. PARK
CARL R. PAVEL
MICHAEL D. PERREAULT
JASON T. PERRY
JAMES D. PHILLIPS
BRIAN L. PIENKOS
SAMUEL L. PRESTON III
LISA K. PRINCE
JEREMY T. REED
AMANDA B. REEDMALDONADO
SEAN C. REILLY
AMBER E. RITENOUR
JOSHUA S. RITENOUR
ROMAN D. ROSARIO
ANNE T. SALADYGA
JASON E. SAPP
RHIANA D. SAUNDERS
SEBASTIAN R. SCHNELLBACHER
DAVID C. SEMERAD II
ANDREW SENCHAK
DANIEL C. SESSIONS
JEFFREY E. SHERWOOD
JARETT T. SKINNER
BENJAMIN H. SMITH
GEORGE J. SMOLINSKI III
VANCE Y. SOHN
BRONWYN R. STALL
THEODORE R. STEFANI
JUSTINE E. TRIPP
CHRISTOPHER J. TUCKER
EVELYN R. VENTO
AMY E. VERTREES
MAURA WATSON
THOMAS A. WEBSTER
JENNIFER A. WHERLEY
SCOTT A. WHITWORTH
SCOTT G. WILLIAMS
DAVID A. WONDERLICH
YANG XIA
VICTOR Y. YU

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

APRIL CRITELLI
PETER W. HUNT
EDWARD A. JOHNSON
THERESA A. MELTZ
VON L. MILLER
SCOTT E. SALLAWAY
GREGG A. VIGEANT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

THOMAS F. CALDWELL
VALPERSIA D. GAINERSHASUGLUW
DAN C. GODBEE
SCOTT M. HOVIS
JOHN M. MADDOX
MICHAEL PIESMAN
LAURIE A. SPRAGA
JAMES G. WAKEFIELD
BRONSON B. WHITE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

CAROL L. COPPOCK
REBECCA L. GIESE
MARIE N. WRIGHT

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

NORMAN S. CHUN
FRANK A. DEQUATTRO
HARRY W. HATCH

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

LAVETTA L. BENNETT
TIMOTHY J. DECKERT
ERIC E. GAMES
MICHAEL P. HANNON
ROBERT G. HILL III
THOMAS S. IVESTER
JEFFREY B. LOUGHLIN
ZOE M. OLLINGER
PATRICK J. SHANNON
RICHARD L. STITZER, JR.
CRAIG W. STRONG

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate July 29, 2015:

FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICES

ALLISON BECK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION DIRECTOR.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

JEFFREY MICHAEL PRIETO, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

CAROL FORTINE OCHOA, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 152 AND 601:

To be general

GEN. JOSEPH F. DUNFORD, JR.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ENFORCE THE LAW FOR SANCTUARY CITIES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 23, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3009, the Enforce the Law for Sanctuary Cities Act.

The murder of Kathryn Steinle in San Francisco was a senseless tragedy. My heart continues to go out to her family and friends at this difficult time.

As a nation, we cannot base complex policy decisions regarding the intersection of our federal immigration system and local law enforcement on a single tragic event.

Sanctuary Cities exist because municipalities across the country recognized that they had to act to keep families together as Congressional Republican leadership refused to move forward on bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform.

These are some of the most populous cities in the country—New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston—and the list goes on.

Our local law enforcement agencies are not trained immigration agents, nor should they be.

This conversation comes at a time in this country when many local law enforcement agencies are facing a crisis of trust with the communities they are sworn to protect and serve.

To threaten their federal funding based on local decisions about how best to serve their communities, as H.R. 3009, would do, is not only misguided but dangerous.

Instead, my colleagues should be working to pass bipartisan legislation to fix our broken immigration system and address these longstanding issues in a comprehensive and thoughtful way.

SAWTOOTH NATIONAL RECREATION AREA AND JERRY PEAK WILDERNESS ADDITIONS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 27, 2015

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize one of America's greatest conservation writers, Rocky Barker of the Idaho Statesman. Rocky has provided unparalleled depth and insight to the readers of Idaho and the United States throughout the 15 years I have been working on CIEDRA and SNRA+. He has hiked throughout these mountains and understands every nuance and aspect of the area and this bill. I want to thank him for covering this story fairly and accurately all of these years. I also want to thank former Blaine County Commissioner Tom Bowman for all of the great help he has provided. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CONGRATULATING THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SUPERMILEAGE TEAM

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Northern Illinois University Supermileage team on their recent success at the 36th Annual SAE Supermileage Competition in Marshall, Michigan.

Over the course of two days in June, engineering and technology students from around the world completed the challenge of designing and constructing a single-person, fuel-efficient vehicle. The Northern Illinois vehicle, called the Huskie Rocket, was able to reach a fuel efficiency of 1,057 miles per gallon, placing the Northern Illinois Supermileage team third in the world, and second in the United States.

Since 2010, the NIU Supermileage team, led by faculty advisor Dr. David Schroeder, has consistently placed in the top ten at the annual SAE Supermileage Competition. This year's impressive showing included the hard work of ten NIU students, including Supermileage team captain Lindsey Dodis, Kevin Kuebrich, Christian McAdoo, Kyle McNamara, Russell Fordyce, Andrew Hagel, Adam Detrick, Aaron McKeown, Tom Swanberg, and Saajan Patel. All the students, faculty, and staff that contributed to the success of the Supermileage team and their Huskie Rocket should be commended for their hard work and dedication to applying what they have learned from the NIU College of Engineering and Engineering Technology at the Supermileage Competition.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 16th District of Illinois, I wish to express our sincere congratulations for the hard work of the Northern Illinois University Supermileage team. I look forward to seeing what these bright and dedicated students accomplish in the future.

TRIBUTE TO THE ALEX THEATRE'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Alex Theatre upon its 90th anniversary.

The Alex Theatre has been a cornerstone of the Glendale community since its establishment in 1925. In its early years, the Alex Theatre was home to Vaudeville theatrics and silent films. For the next 60 years, the Alex Theatre previewed first-run films, ranging from 1937's Saratoga to 1977's Star Wars, solidifying its continuing identity as the epicenter of Hollywood glamour.

Originally designed by architects Charles R. Selkirk and Arthur G. Lindley, the theatre façade was remodeled in 1940 by S. Charles Lee—a remodel that included the extraordinary 100-foot Art Deco tower.

The Alex Theatre continued hosting Hollywood premieres until the 1980s, at which point the theatre began to fall into disrepair. In 1991, however, the Glendale Redevelopment Agency restored the Alex Theatre to its former glory, investing over $6 million.

The renovated theatre opened on New Year's Eve in 1993 to serve as a community arts theatre and civic center. Owned by the City of Glendale and operated by Glendale Arts, the Alex Theatre was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996.

Since its redesign in the 1990s, the Alex Theatre has retained its identity as a center for arts, but has increased its functions. Another expansion project began in July 2013 and was completed in June 2014. This $5.2 million renovation added 6,600 square feet to the backstage area.

The Alex Theatre is currently home to four companies: the Los Angeles Ballet Company, the Alex Film Society, the Glendale Youth Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. In addition to hosting these companies, the Alex Theatre also hosts dance, comedy, theatre, music, and special events to serve more than 100,000 people who pass through its doors annually. To attest to the theatre's versatility, I had the great pleasure of hosting the 21st State Senate Arts Competition at the Alex Theatre in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

The Alex Theatre is destined to continue its impressive legacy as a local and national landmark. I am honored to recognize the Alex Theatre for its great cultural value to the community, and ask all members to join me in congratulating the Alex Theatre upon its 90th anniversary.

IN HONOR OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TEVIS CUP RIDE

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Tevis Cup Ride of the Western States Trail.

The Western States Trail Foundation hosts the Ride with the aim of preserving the trail. Throughout its long history, the trail has been used by Native Americans, emigrants, gold and silver miners, and sportsmen alike.

The Tevis Cup is the oldest modern-day endurance ride, covering one hundred miles in one day. Riders begin in Robie Park, east of

Squaw Valley, and have twenty-four hours to make their way to the end of the rugged trail in Auburn, California. The 60th annual ride will take place on August 1, 2015.

Thousands of horseback riders from around the world participate in the Tevis Cup. The event brings together a vast community of volunteers dedicated to keeping the Western States Trail open to the public. Volunteers spend innumerable hours and significant financial resources to make this equestrian endurance ride a success year after year.

Mr. Speaker, the Western States Trail Foundation and the Tevis Cup Ride have made an important contribution to both the local economy and the preservation of this rugged Sierra trail. I thank the Western States Trail Foundation for hosting the Tevis Cup Ride, particularly on the event's 60th Anniversary, and I commend the Foundation for its continuing efforts to ensure the trail remains a monument to public access and enjoyment of our nation's abundant natural resources.

REMEMBERING LEONORA TERESA BROWNE WELCH

HON. EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Leonora Teresa Browne Welch who passed away peacefully on Tuesday, July 28, 2015.

Mrs. Welch was born in Savannah, Georgia on June 23, 1928 and was the only child of Josephine Mollo and Palmer Carr Browne. She had many fond memories of her childhood with Italian family members on her mother's side, and growing up on her father's dairy farm, Kensington Dairy, which comprised the land known today as Kensington Park and Fairway Oaks.

Mrs. Welch attended Cathedral Day School and St. Vincent's Academy where she was Valedictorian of her graduating class in 1946. She went on to study journalism at Armstrong College and worked at Citizens and Southern Bank.

In 1952, Mrs. Welch married O.C. Welch, Jr., a Savannah native and engineer for the Seaboard Coastline Railroad, and by 1963 she was a busy mother to her eight children. She was affectionately called "Noni" by her husband and later by her many grandchildren. The Welches were married for 43 years until Mr. Welch's death in 1996.

Mrs. Welch was a devout Catholic throughout her life, and the Welch family were communicants of St. James Catholic Church where their children attended school before going on to attend St. Vincent's Academy and Benedictine Military School.

As her children began to leave the house, Mrs. Welch found more time to avail herself to volunteer for several community organizations including Goodwill, but was especially dedicated to her work in the Diocese of Savannah and St. James offices. She also enjoyed a close circle of friends known as The BOF's—or Best of Friends—who met monthly for luncheons around Savannah. She was also active in the Daughters of Ireland.

Mrs. Welch was a shining example of God's unconditional love, and was a loving and proud mother and grandmother. She is survived by her daughters Celeste Welch Crago and Julie Welch Cirincioni; and her sons Michael Warren Welch (Aino), O.C. Welch III, Daniel Kevin Welch, Brian Christopher Welch (Tiffany), Douglas Gerald Welch (Marcy), and Joseph Thomas Welch (Charlotte); 20 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NATURAL GAS ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Natural Gas Environmental and Economic Security Act with a number of my colleagues, including the Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee RAÚL GRIJALVA, to reduce the frivolous and unnecessary waste of natural gas from public lands. Large volumes of natural gas are regularly flared, vented, or simply leak from Federal oil and gas leases—in 2013 alone, the amount of lost gas could meet the heating and cooking needs of 1.6 million American homes according to the Environmental Defense Fund. To make matters worse, the Center for American Progress and The Wilderness Society showed that the amount of gas lost to venting and flaring doubled between 2008 and 2013, with no sign of the trend slowing. In addition, this wasted gas is not subject to royalties, costing the American taxpayers as much as $58 million annually in lost revenue according to the Government Accountability Office.

Beyond being economically wasteful, these processes are bad for human health and the environment. Gas released to the atmosphere from venting and leaks contributes dramatically to climate change, since methane, the major component of natural gas, has 25 times the warming impact of carbon dioxide over 100 years. In 2013 alone, the Environmental Defense Fund estimated that the volume of methane released to the atmosphere was equivalent to the emissions from 5.6 million cars. Venting, flaring, and leaks all affect local air quality as well by releasing volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter into the atmosphere. These environmental costs undercut the potential benefits of natural gas as a lower-carbon, cleaner burning fuel alternative to coal.

Local regulations have already demonstrated that the best way to curb venting, flaring, and fugitive releases is to both enact strong regulations and incentivize gas capture by collecting royalties on lost gas, and our bill, the Natural Gas Environmental and Economic Security Act takes this two-pronged approach. To address royalties, the bill amends the Mineral Leasing Act and the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to require royalties on all gas produced from new leases, including gas used on the lease to power equipment. Gas lost in acute emergency situations would remain exempt from royalties to ensure that safety is not compromised.

The bill would also require that 99 percent of all gas produced each year from Federal leases be captured within 5 years. It also prohibits venting and limits routine flaring. To reach the 99 percent goal, the bill establishes equipment and operation standards, mandatory leak detection and repair procedures, and recordkeeping requirements; it also institutes new reporting requirements for all gas produced, disposed, or leaked on a lease and requires public disclosure of the data. Market-appropriate enforcement mechanisms for noncompliance, as well as guidelines for applying such measures, are also established.

This bill is a win-win for the American taxpayer, providing both environmental and economic benefits, while also promoting the growth of the domestic methane mitigation industry, which is creating high-paying jobs through small businesses across the nation. Further, many of these gains come at minimal or no cost to producers, since many mitigation technologies pay for themselves once the captured gas is marketed.

The Natural Gas Environmental and Economic Security Act stops the waste of valuable taxpayer resources, protects the environment and public heath, and boosts the economy. I ask that my colleagues support this commonsense legislation and rein in the waste of natural gas from our public lands.

HONORING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF DOROTHEA MCBRIDE

HON. MARTHA ROBY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday July 29, 2015

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dorothea McBride who is retiring from the Department of Veterans Affairs after 27 years of dedicated service. A Registered Nurse, a Veteran, and Patient Administrator at Central Alabama Veterans Healthcare System, her tireless work has been instrumental in helping the veterans of Central Alabama.

Under particularly challenging circumstances, Dorothea has provided critical health care to many of our nation's most dedicated servants. Whether responding to veterans directly or working with my office on Congressional inquiries, she has demonstrated an exceptional level of professionalism and patriotism, literally saving lives.

Dorothea McBride cares deeply for the veterans in her care. She never failed to respond diligently and with compassion and courtesy when asked for help. Along with my staff, I want to wish her all the best in the next chapter of her life. We will never forget her service.

CONGRATULATING GIL MILLER ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES NAVY

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Captain Gil Miller on his retirement from the United States Navy and to thank him for his many years of dedicated service.

Captain Miller is a Naval Academy graduate who has devoted 25 years of his life to serving our country. For the last two years he has

done an outstanding job as commander of Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base in Tarrant County, Texas. He has served our country well while also making significant contributions to the communities around the base.

Earlier in his career, Captain Miller flew SH–2 and SH–60 helicopters based on ships in the Eastern Pacific, Central America, and Caribbean. He also flew fleet airlift missions in the Beechcraft C–12 and the C–130T Hercules transport for three tours, and deployed on relief missions for the Pakistani earthquake and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Captain Miller served two tours in the Pentagon as Executive Assistant to the Deputy Director and as principal briefer to the Undersecretary of Defense for all Reserve and National Guard mobilizations, deployment orders, and global force management.

While Captain Miller has served our country he has been blessed with the support of his wife, Cheryl.

I offer my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to Captain Miller for his outstanding career in the Navy and wish him the best in his retirement.

CONGRATULATING JOHN S. LIZAMA ON HIS PROMOTION TO BRIGADIER GENERAL IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Johnny S. Lizama of the village of Santa Rita on his promotion to the rank of Brigadier General of the Guam Air National Guard. Brigadier General Lizama is the Director of Staff for Air, Joint Forces Headquarters, Guam National Guard. He was appointed to serve as the Assistant Adjutant General-Air Force by Governor Eddie Baza Calvo.

Brigadier General Lizama began his military career in June 1977 after enlisting in the United States Coast Guard. In December 1982, he enlisted in the Air Force and reported to Eglin Air Force Base as a Direct Duty Assignment Interior Electrician with the 3202nd Civil Engineering Squadron. He later served as a Manpower Management Technician with Detachment 6, 3904th Management Squadron at Beale Air Force Base, California, during his last two years of active duty service. In 1988, Brigadier General Lizama separated from the Air Force and returned to Guam, where he joined the Guam Air National Guard and served as the 254th Services Flight Superintendent until 1992.

In 1992, Brigadier General Lizama was commissioned in the Guam Air National Guard as Personnel Programs Officer for the 254th Air Base Group and later as Director of Personnel for the Active Guard Reserve. As Director of Personnel, he administered a range of personnel programs to include procurement, professional development, recruitment and retention programs, and support for contingency operations, among other major responsibilities.

From 2002 to 2006, Brigadier General Lizama was the comptroller for the 254th Air Base Group with oversight of $2.1M in appropriated funds, whose financial management expertise was instrumental in the planning and standup of the 254th Security Forces Squadron. As commander of the 254th Air Base Group from August 2007 to September 2013, he was responsible for the command and control of Guam Air National Guard's units and activities and their maximum readiness capabilities.

Brigadier General Lizama is a 1977 alumnus of Father Duenas Memorial High School in Tai, Guam. He received a Bachelors degree in Management from the University of Guam and Masters degrees in Public Administration and Human Resources from Golden Gate University. Additionally, Brigadier General Lizama enrolled and successful completed Air War College.

I extend my congratulations to Johnny S. Lizama on his promotion to Brigadier General, and I join the people of Guam in commending him for his service to our nation and island. Brigadier General Lizama's promotion marks an important milestone in the history of the Guam National Guard. Finding qualified officers to serve in Assistant Adjutant General positions ensures that the vision and intent of the Guard Empowerment Act is being fulfilled on Guam. This will provide greater professional development for well qualified officers in the Guam National Guard.

Moreover, this is a historic occasion for our island as Brigadier General Lizama is the first Chamorro Airman to be promoted and federally recognized at the rank of brigadier general in the Guam Air National Guard and the United States Air Force. I also extend my congratulations to his wife, Dee, and their four children, Keith and his wife Paul Jean, Kimberly and her husband Jonathan, Brother Cody, OFM Cap., and Rico as well as to his two grandchildren, Taehlyn-Jean and Urijah John. I wish him the best on this important achievement.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE TO ABDO YOUSSEF SAAB

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of Abdo Youssef Saab of Los Angeles, California, a man of integrity and an outstanding community leader, who passed away on July 23, 2015.

Abdo was born in Hammana, Lebanon on August 15, 1945. He was educated in Jesuit schools in Lebanon, studied in France and received his Civil Engineering degree. Abdo came to Los Angeles in the early 1970's, where he met Lourdes, a community liaison for the Los Angeles Mayor's Office; they fell in love and married. They lived and raised their two daughters, Liane and Jessica in La Cañada Flintridge before moving to Los Angeles.

Mr. Saab began a long and remarkable career as a businessman, ascending quickly to the position of Vice President of Downtown L.A. Motors. He then began several businesses, including a travel agency and a consulting firm. Abdo was also active in the local law enforcement and political communities.

A charismatic man, Abdo's presence was felt wherever he went. He loved to make people laugh, and his good sense of humor made a positive lasting impression on everyone he met. Valuing integrity in work, politics and life, Mr. Saab treated everyone equally with respect and as a friend, and cared deeply about civil liberties and justice. He enjoyed helping people and was a dependable friend in hard times. Deeply patriotic, Abdo loved Lebanon, his country of origin, and America, his adopted home.

A devoted family man, Abdo is survived by his loving wife Lourdes, daughters Liane and Jessica Saab, brother George and sisters Georgette, Layla, Aida and May.

Abdo was an irreplaceable part of our community and he will be sorely missed by his family and friends and all those whose lives he touched. A trusted friend and a man of impeccable character, I ask all Members to join me in remembering Abdo Youssef Saab.

HONORING PRINCIPAL JAMES CONDON FOR THE 2015 INDIANA PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

HON. JACKIE WALORSKI

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Principal James Condon of Plymouth High School for being named the 2015 Principal of the Year. His success in fostering an exceptional learning environment for students in Plymouth is nothing short of remarkable.

Every year, the National Association of Secondary School Principals recognizes outstanding middle school and high school principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students. Recipients are chosen based on their performance in four categories, which include personal excellence, collaborative leadership, curriculum and personalization. Among other requirements, an award winner must model values, beliefs and attitudes that encourage others to higher levels of performance; create a culture of collaboration; ensure that each student has the best possible opportunity of realizing success; and create a school climate that is warm, inviting, safe and secure. Every one of us depends on our teachers, and because of that, they deserve our support and appreciation.

For over 20 years, Principal Condon has been contributing to the betterment of Indiana education. Since he became the principal of Plymouth High School in 2007, the school has been rated as one of the top high schools in Indiana and has received an "A" from the state in school accountability. As an added accomplishment, the school has achieved an 86 percent graduation rate, exceeding the Indiana state average by nearly 10 percent. These remarkable achievements have been duly-recognized and rewarded. Before receiving Principal of the Year, he was named the top high school principal in Indiana's second district, which includes Elkhart, St. Joseph, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, LaPorte and Kosciusko counties. Because of leaders like him, Hoosier classrooms are filled with future doctors, scientists and entrepreneurs.

Principal Condon's efforts have been instrumental in advancing Indiana's education system. His leadership has led to the development of digital and project-based learning, creation of dual credit courses and preparation of students for the job market. As a result, Plymouth High School now offers 35 dual credit courses and has achieved one of Indiana's highest pass percentages on AP classes. The school recently opened a state-of-the-art Advanced Manufacturing Training Center that serves students during the day and adults in the evening. Contributions like these would not be possible without the effort of passionate educators like Principal Condon. Quite simply, his work is bettering the lives of Hoosiers.

I want to take this opportunity to once again thank Principal Condon for helping students in Plymouth develop their talents and become our future leaders. On behalf of myself and my fellow Hoosiers, I congratulate him on receiving this prestigious award.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF LUEN THAI GROUP

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, today I ask you to join me in celebrating a fifty-year story of success that spans not just the Northern Mariana Islands or the mid-Pacific region, but three continents and several oceans. The Luen Thai Group of companies was founded by Dr. Tan Siu Lin in Hong Kong in September 1965, expanded to the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam in the 1970s, and now provides many important services to our community through its many local, regional, and international affiliates.

The Luen Thai Group is among the most successful apparel and accessories supply chain service providers in the world. The apparel business is listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and produced 175 million units of garments, bags and shoes last year.

The company has invested heavily in the tourism industry in our region and continues to drive the expansion of tourism today. Luen Thai affiliate Century Travel and Tours is responsible for bringing thousands of visitors to our islands and for providing for their enjoyment during their stay with professional, quality services in air and ground passenger transportation.

Luen Thai Fishing Venture is a ''one-stop'' seafood provider, offering a full range of supply chain services from fleet operation, base operation, and processing in the central and western Pacific regions, to marketing and sales in Japan, the United States and China.

Luen Thai is also a provider of third party logistics as well as air and sea freight forwarding. The synergy created by these three areas of activity not only supports Luen Thai's own growth, but also helps connect the many small islands scattered over our vast ocean region, contributing to economic development and lifting the quality of life for those who inhabit Micronesia.

And affiliate Asia Pacific Airlines' services match the needs of a wide-ranging clientele. APA is a US-registered airline and a reliable air cargo service carrier in the western Pacific region.

Luen Thai has been involved in shipping since its early days. Along with partners, Luen Thai set up Mariana Express Lines, Ltd. in 1997 to increase the supply of shipping services in the Micronesian region. MELL's reliable and regular shipping services have brought business growth to Luen Thai Group as well as other enterprises in the region.

With service stations in 12 countries across Asia and America, affiliate CTSI is the largest provider of logistics services in Micronesia. It also works closely with MELL and APA to provide a full range of logistics and support services, including logistics consultancy and training, as well as customized IT solutions which support service integration, real time information and efficient operations. CTSI strives to provide the best to its customers by fostering a corporate culture that champions quality service, and by continually investing in both personnel as well as the hardware of the company.

Affiliate POI Aviation provides a broad range of round-the-clock services in ground handling, passenger and cargo handling, airport operation, and aircraft maintenance, to Saipan International Airport and its users.

Affiliate Century Insurance was established in the 1980s as an agent for a number of multi-national non-life insurance companies to issue and underwrite policies on commercial and domestic types of insurance in Micronesia. It was granted a Certificate of Authority to operate as the first fully-fledged non-life insurance company in CNMI.

For a long time, the sheer size of Micronesia has made it difficult and costly to provide a quality health service to the small populations scattered over its islands. Luen Thai met this challenge by investing in TakeCare, Inc. TakeCare provides medical insurance and owns FHP Health Center. One of the longest serving health service providers in the region, FHP operates twelve centers of medical care on Saipan and Guam which cover the full spectrum of wellness, both in sickness and health, from monitoring physical fitness to dispensing quick responses to urgent medical needs such as transfer service to major medical facilities overseas.

Affiliate Saipan Tribune is a daily newspaper that keeps the people of Saipan informed about life on the island and world events while its web version serves as a window to the islands for the outside world. The Tribune is a very important part of the community fabric.

Luen Thai also owns Cosmos Distributing Co. Ltd. and Dickerson & Quinn, which is a vast network in Micronesia for the distribution of a myriad of international brands.

Tango, Inc. brings great, state-of-the art cinema to the western Pacific region. Today, the company owns 17 movie screens, 30 bowling alleys, and other entertainment and dining outlets in the region.

Realty Management Services provides professional management and rental services in Guam and Saipan, including for residential, commercial and industrial properties. The first-rate service and green initiatives of RMS have set benchmarks in the region.

Dr. Tan Siu Lin's values and beliefs are the guiding principles of the operation and development of businesses in Luen Thai. Dr. Tan believes strongly in giving back to the communities where Luen Thai operates.

In 2009, Luen Thai launched the ''iServe. iGiveback.'' program that incorporated all business units and their employees. The group of companies has also shown its support for educational, art, cultural, as well as sport activities and programs with generous sponsorships.

The first Tan Siu Lin Foundation was established in Saipan in 1986, followed by others in Guam, Hong Kong, and China, to oversee and coordinate Dr. Tan's wide-ranging charitable works in many different places.

The history of the Luen Thai group of companies is an extraordinary success story that reflects the vision and dedication of Dr. Tan and his family. The company and its affiliates bring employment, products, services, and business opportunities to the Northern Mariana Islands, to our entire region, and around the world.

RECOGNIZING VIC STORY JR., 2015 FLORIDA FARMER OF THE YEAR

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this opportunity to recognize a close friend of mine whose dedication to the citrus industry has greatly impacted our Central Florida community. Mr. Vic Story Jr. of Lake Wales, Florida was recently named the 2015 Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Expo Florida Farmer of the Year. Mr. Story oversees The Story Companies, his family-owned and operated business, which includes land holdings, citrus management, citrus marketing and harvesting for over 7,000 acres of citrus in Polk, Hardee, Highlands, and Hendry counties.

In 1945, upon returning home from fighting in World War II, Mr. Story's parents moved to Polk County, Florida and purchased 100 acres. Mr. Story, along with his brother, Terry, helped his father plant their property with an orange and grapefruit grove until all the land was planted in citrus. Mr. Story's father, Vic Sr. grew the family's grove into a successful enterprise after surviving the major citrus freezes in 1957–58. In 1965, they began purchasing other citrus groves in the area, and by 1984, they had started a harvesting company. Today Mr. Story serves as the President and Chairman of the Board of The Story Companies for the family farm. He has passed on the management of the family business to his two sons, Kyle and Matt.

This October, Mr. Story and his family will head to Moultrie, Georgia for the Sunbelt Ag Expo, where he will compete with nine other state winners for the Southeastern Farmer of the Year. He is most deserving of being named 2015 Florida Farmer of the Year. His leadership, dedication, and passion continue to be an inspiration to us all.

IN RECOGNITION OF COLONEL RICK HARNEY, JR. ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Colonel Rick Harney, Jr. on the occasion of his retirement from the United States Army. Throughout his 37 year career, Col. Harney has selflessly served our country and community; namely, during the time he spent as Director of the United States Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC) at the Carlisle Barracks, which I am honored to represent. USAHEC is a tremendous institution within my congressional district charged with educating members of our Armed Forces and honoring soldiers—past and present.

Col. Harney enlisted in the Army in August of 1978. In 1987, after matriculating from the United States Officer Candidate School in Fort Benning, Georgia as a Distinguished Military Graduate, he received his commission as a Field Artillery Lieutenant. He has undertaken many notable assignments, including Assistant Commandant and Chief at the United States Army Quartermaster School in Fort Lee, Virginia, and Commander of the Defense Distribution Center at the Anniston Army Depot in Alabama. Such roles have enabled Col. Harney to positively influence his colleagues, as well as the future strategic leaders of our military.

A Magna Cum Laude graduate from Hawaii Pacific University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, he also holds an impressive number of advanced degrees, including a Master of Business Administration from Webster University, a Master of Military Arts and Science from the United States Army Command and General Staff College, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the Air War College. In addition to his academic success, Col. Harney has received an extensive amount of awards and decorations. These include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Meritorious Service Medal with Silver Oak Leaf Cluster, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Joint Service Achievement Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Achievement Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters, Joint Meritorious Unit Award with Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Superior Unit Award, Master Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, and Parachute Rigger Badge. Such accolades are indicative of the high caliber of his dedicated service to our nation.

On July 7th, 2014, Col. Harney assumed duties as the Director of the USAHEC at the Carlisle Barracks in my congressional district. As an instructor and educator, Col. Harney has significantly improved the experiences of his fellow instructors and students. The initiatives and programs he has implemented have shaped the lives of the future leaders of our military, and have enhanced the effectiveness of the United States Army War College. Even though he will no longer be present at USAHEC on a day-to-day basis, his legacy will inevitably carry on.

Mr. Speaker, I am humbled to congratulate Col. Harney on the culmination of a distinguished, 37 year career in the United States Army. I hope that he will celebrate the occasion in the company of his wife, Leslie, his children, Dominick, Aerin, Marc, and Ashley, and his grandchildren, Izumi, Eugene, Marc, Marvelo, Mecca, Ayrielle, and Ash'kelon. I wish him all the best in this next chapter of his life.

IN HONOR OF EMMA HARRIS ARMSTRONG

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the accomplishments of an extraordinary woman, Mrs. Emma Harris Armstrong. Throughout her 99 years, Mrs. Armstrong has experienced important moments in history and has also continuously striven to improve the lives of her family, friends, and community.

Mrs. Armstrong's hardworking and independent attitude grew out of her childhood and subsequent life experiences. Growing up as the third child of twelve siblings, she, like her siblings, helped with household chores and sharecropping, while worshipping at the Mount Olive Baptist Church and attending school. At the Brunswick Courthouse in Georgia, Emma Harris Armstrong married John ''Jackie'' Armstrong. During their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong traveled across the United States to accommodate Mr. Armstrong's military career. During and after World War II, Mrs. Armstrong resided in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Mrs. Armstrong often passed the time playing tennis with other Army wives, eventually becoming quite good at the sport. Through her and her husband's travels, Mrs. Armstrong cultivated a love for travel and the beautiful sites of this country.

Mrs. Armstrong has seen an incredible amount of change during her lifetime. During her life, Mrs. Armstrong has seen the devastating effects of the Great Depression, the desperate times of World War II, and the landing of the first man on the moon. Mrs. Armstrong lived through the painful effects of discrimination, however, despite everything, she always approached the evils of segregation with love in her heart. Through her independence and strong will, Mrs. Armstrong raised two children in the midst of these turbulent times while still finding time to be actively involved in her church, the community, and politics. Mrs. Armstrong worked on the Senate campaigns for both Senator George McGovern and Senator Tim Johnson.

On most days, Mrs. Armstrong can be found attending church activities, spending time with family, and devoting her time to the community. Throughout her years, Mrs. Armstrong has always treated all her family, friends, and visitors with graciousness and kindness.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the incredible perseverance and steadfastness of this woman. Mrs. Emma Harris Armstrong is a great lady whose love and dedication inspires numerous people around her. I ask my colleagues to join me in venerating this distinguished individual.

HONORING SHARON P. PEARCE, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, Sharon P. Pearce, CRNA, MSN, of Lexington, North Carolina. Ms. Pearce's term as president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA) will soon come to an end.

Throughout her presidency at the AANA, Ms. Pearce has been a strong advocate for patient safety and the practice of nurse anesthesia. She has worked tirelessly to advance policies that modernize the industry and meet the unique needs of patients. Ms. Pearce has also been a vocal advocate for veterans' access to quality healthcare.

Ms. Pearce has served as a CRNA for more than 20 years and has made great contributions to the healthcare system in North Carolina. She has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to professional development having received her Master of Science in Nurse Anesthesia from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a Certificate in Nurse Anesthesia from Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and an Associate Degree in Nursing from Davidson County Community College.

Ms. Pearce has been an active member of numerous AANA committees and has previously served in AANA leadership positions including President-Elect, Vice President, and Region 2 Director. She has even served as President of the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists. Ms. Pearce produced the AANA Public Relations award winning video, ''The Best Kept Secret in Healthcare,'' and is nationally recognized as a distinguished speaker on anesthesia topics.

Equally as impressive to her leadership in her official capacity as a CRNA has been her involvement in philanthropic endeavors. Among other charitable acts, Ms. Pearce has served on the board of directors for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, where she started and led a ''Walk to Cure Diabetes'' that raised nearly $500,000 for research.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in honoring Sharon P. Pearce, CRNA, MSN, for her notable career and her esteemed service as the most recent president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

A SACRED TRUST: CELEBRATING MEDICARE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity today to mark the 50th anniversary of Medicare and to express my strong support for the programs that provide health coverage for older Americans.

Fifty years ago, our country made a commitment to our seniors. A commitment that said

if you worked hard and paid into the system you would have access to quality healthcare in retirement. To this day, Medicare continues to provide health insurance coverage for millions of Americans age 65 and older, and adults with permanent disabilities. Medicare, along with Social Security, is a sacred trust that I have consistently fought to preserve and one that we must continue to protect for the 54 million Americans enrolled in Medicare today—and those who will enroll throughout our nation's tomorrows.

Amended and improved throughout the years, Medicare has come to play a key role in providing health coverage to millions of Americans. The Social Security Amendments of 1965, established Medicaid to ensure low-income families have access to healthcare; Social Security Amendments of 1972, extended Medicare eligibility to individuals under age 65 with long-term disabilities; then later the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2006, established the Medicare Advantage program and a new landmark prescription drug benefit known as Medicare Part D.

In addition to large scale changes to the program, I have supported and worked on policies that address specific aspects of Medicare to both raise the quality of life for beneficiaries while also saving the program money in the long run. For example, I authored legislation that was signed into law (PL 100–203) to provide Medicare coverage for therapeutic shoes for seniors with severe diabetic foot disease. At the time, Medicare covered costly amputations—which an estimated 25,600 seniors received annually—but not the therapeutic shoes what would prevent the need for those amputations. The American Diabetes Association estimated that my bill would save Medicare over $100 million in one year alone, while the affordable and available foot care would spare seniors the trauma of an amputation.

And my work to sustain and protect the program continues. Earlier this year I was pleased to lend my support to the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (PL: 114–10) which finally repealed the flawed SGR—the statutory method for determining the annual update to the Medicare physician fee schedule. Previous temporary patches to the SGR were unsustainable and unproductive, leaving seniors questioning if they could visit their own doctors if the so-called patches were not extended.

A final repeal of the SGR modernizes the formula for determining Medicare reimbursements and will help the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid transition to a new system intended to incentivize quality of care and overall health improvements. This law allows seniors to retain access to quality healthcare, establishes predictability for the doctors who treat Medicare beneficiaries, and continues to give seniors the security and confidence they need when making healthcare decisions.

With that work successfully accomplished, we can and must do even more to strengthen Medicare and ensure the healthcare needs of all seniors are met, now and into the future.

Accordingly, yesterday, I introduced the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) Innovation Act. My new bill, introduced with a group of bipartisan co-sponsors—including the lead Democratic cosponsor Rep. EARL BLUMENAUER, the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health Chairman KEVIN BRADY and Ranking Member JIM MCDERMOTT—will allow CMS to test models that bring PACE's effective care plans to more seniors as well as individuals with disabilities.

By way of background, PACE is an effective, integrated and community-based program that works to raise quality of life of senior citizens, while keeping them in their homes and supporting their independence. It delivers the entire range of medical and long-term services including: medical care and prescription drug services; physical or occupational therapy; day or respite care; and medical specialties, such as dentistry, optometry, and podiatry.

Currently, participating in a PACE program is limited to those aged 55 and older who meet state-specified criteria for needing a nursing home level of care (LOC). However, many populations—including younger individuals, people with multiple chronic conditions and disabilities, seniors who need comprehensive care but do not yet meet the nursing home LOC standard—could benefit from the all-inclusive nature of the PACE model.

Having worked to bring the first PACE program to New Jersey, St. Francis Medical Center's Living Independently for the Elderly (LIFE) in Trenton, I've personally visited seniors who are enrolled in PACE and witnessed how this important program works to raise the quality of life of its enrollees. Today over 100 PACE programs are serving seniors throughout the country including four, soon to be five, centers in my home state of New Jersey. This bill is important to build on the success of the program and make it better, offering better comprehensive care and preserving the dignity of those most deserving of our care and attention.

To further strengthen the Medicare system and aid those individuals and families who are facing the reality of Alzheimer's disease, I also recently introduced the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act (HR 1559). My HOPE Act would provide for Medicare coverage of a care-planning session for newly diagnosed patients and their family caregivers or legal representatives.

Mr. Speaker, my Alzheimer's legislation will fill an important gap in current Medicare services. Take for example an experience of one of my constituents, Mary Gerard of Ocean New Jersey. Mary was one of the 15 million family members and friends who act as unpaid caregivers to Alzheimer's and dementia patients across the country every year.

When her mother Helen was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, Mary took charge and was there with her mother day in and day out—faithfully and lovingly—until she passed. She is a trained critical care nurse. She was equipped with knowledge and resources that many first time caregivers do not have. Yet even with a medical services background, she still struggled with the challenges of her new life as a caregiver.

Alzheimer's caregivers provide an estimated 17 billion hours of unpaid care every year. The emotional and financial toll can be immense. Many are untrained and offered little guidance to function in their new role. Navigating the long-term care system is a daunting task and can appear overwhelming, particularly for those who have only recently received the news that a loved one has Alzheimer's disease.

Upon receiving this diagnosis, patients and their families—like Mary's—are frequently at a loss for how to effectively plan for the next stage of their lives. Passage of my legislation will empower individuals with much-needed information to outline their future treatments and care—giving patients HOPE, and a plan for their future.

As our population ages, it is imperative that we preserve and expand access to the services that enable senior citizens to live healthy and productive lives, and give seniors the security and confidence they need when planning for their future medical care.

Strengthening and preserving Medicare is a promise that every preceding generation has made and kept. It is our duty to continue to honor the senior citizens in New Jersey and around the country who have worked hard to provide for their families and help build our communities and deliver on promises made, for—at a minimum—another 50 years to come.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH BIRTHDAY OF MS. KERI LEE SMITH OF ROSEVILLE, CA

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Keri Lee Smith of Roseville, CA, as she celebrates her 50th birthday today, July 29, 2015.

A fourth generation Californian, Keri Lee is an active member in the community of Roseville. Keri graduated from CSU Chico in 1988, earning a BS in Business with a minor in Recreation Administration. She received her teaching credentials from CSU Chico in 1991. She later earned a Masters of Education from the University of LaVerne and received a G.A.T.E. certificate from UC Davis. Keri has been teaching for over a decade in the greater Roseville area, and currently teaches math and life sciences at Western Sierra Collegiate Academy in Rocklin and educates future teachers as a professor at Chapman University.

Agriculture has long been a part of Keri Lee's life. She was born in Chico and raised on a family farm her great-grandfather began in 1918 in Clarks Valley, part of the California coastal range. Later, the farming operation moved to Butte City near the Sacramento River, where her siblings continue the enterprise today. When she's not teaching, Keri finds time to be an active member of the California Women in Agriculture.

Keri Lee is a loving wife to her husband Scott and a dedicated mother to their three children: Emma, Garret, and Maddox. Keri spends much of her time shuttling the children between sports and scouts, cheering them on at ball fields, and shaping them into confident future leaders. Her role as a mother also includes service as the President of the Roseville High School Parents Club, a Girl Scout Troop Leader, and a member of the Parent-Teacher Council. In her limited spare time, Keri enjoys to read, bake, and travel.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Ms. Keri Lee Smith on this special day, and in wishing her a happy 50th birthday.

HONORING THE LIFE OF AMOS LYNCH

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the life achievements of Amos H. Lynch, Sr.

Amos served as a leader in civil rights, business, and journalism in Columbus and throughout Ohio. Amos was relentless in pushing for a more equal and prosperous city, state, and country and he inspired a generation to continue to improve on his vision. The City of Columbus is a better place because of Amos' efforts and dedication. I am honored to have known him.

When Amos graduated from Columbus South High School in 1943, he had already spent years writing for neighborhood papers. He would go on to establish three newspapers in Columbus: the Ohio Sentinel, the Call and Post, and the Columbus Post. As a student at The Ohio State University at the height of World War II, he was drafted into the Navy and served the next three years treating wounded members of the military in New York and Illinois.

During his 2011 induction into the Ohio Civil Rights Hall of Fame, he stated "I learned early in my life that the written word is the most powerful tool for acquiring equal civil rights for all, and that newspapers were the best method for getting the word out." Amos tirelessly called for greater economic opportunities for African-Americans and integration in schools and housing.

On behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 12th Congressional District, I would like to recognize Amos for his devotion to the great state of Ohio and to all of the communities that have benefitted from his invaluable contributions.

HONORING MS. SHAR KNUTSON

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Shar Knutson, who on October 15th, 2015 will retire from her post as the first woman to serve as president of Minnesota AFL–CIO. Ms. Knutson has led the 300,000-member state branch of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO) since 2009.

The Labor movement runs deep for Ms. Knutson, who was raised in a union family and worked a union job as a single parent, experiencing firsthand the benefits of organizing for improving lives.

Prior to her election in August 2009, Ms. Knutson served as president of the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation for a decade. One of her signature victories occurred in 1999, when she led a coalition of labor and community leaders to successfully oppose then-St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman's effort to outsource the city's public water works to a non-union firm.

Before her union work, she was a policy analyst to former St. Paul Mayor Jim Scheibel, specializing in labor, health and immigration issues. She served on the Greater Twin Cities United Way board as well as the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs Advisory Council.

As head of the Minnesota AFL–CIO, Ms. Knutson helped lead the coalition that successfully raised Minnesota's minimum wage, coordinated efforts that kept a "Right to Work" constitutional amendment off the ballot, and increased political participation among union members. Also under her leadership, the Minnesota AFL–CIO successfully passed legislation extending unemployment benefits for locked out workers, opened up new avenues for women and young workers to be involved in the labor movement, and built an infrastructure to support affiliate unions in their organizing efforts.

I am privileged to recognize the decades of tireless advocacy of Ms. Shar Knutson, whose contributions to Minnesota's workers will be felt for years to come.

TRIBUTE TO FIREFIGHTERS AT MOYERS CORNERS FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JOHN KATKO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Deputy Chief Frank Crispin, Deputy Chief Steve Zaferakis, Firefighter Phil Vogt, Firefighter Ryan Whitmore, and Firefighter Jeremy Corsaro of the Moyers Corners Fire Department. On December 25, 2014, Moyers Corners Fire Department was alerted to a residential fire in Liverpool, New York. Upon arrival, these five members of the Fire Department were advised that there were victims within the residence. Working collectively, these firefighters quickly rescued the two individuals trapped within the residence. Without hesitation, upon removing the victims from the residence, these firefighters began emergency medical efforts on the victims, one of which was found to be in full cardiac arrest. Due to the rescue and life-saving medical efforts of these firefighters, both victims survived the incident, were transported to Upstate Hospital, and are recovering from their injuries.

The bravery and heroism of Deputy Chief Crispin, Deputy Chief Zaferakis, Firefighter Vogt, Firefighter Whitmore, and Firefighter Corsaro displayed on Christmas Day of 2014, have earned them the 2015 Firemen's Association of the State of New York's Firefighters of the Year Award. I am proud to recognize these courageous individuals for their service to Central New York and congratulate them on their receipt of the FASNY 2015 Firefighters of the Year Award.

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SILVETTE WOMEN'S GOLF CLUB

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 80th Anniversary of the Silvette Women's Golf Club of Staten Island.

Established in 1935, the Silvette Women's Golf Club is the oldest women's public golf club in the State of New York. The Silvettes started out as a group of ten women who came together to organize friendly tournaments. After only three years, the Silvettes grew in membership as their weekly tournaments became increasingly popular with a prize of two dollars for first and second place.

The Silvettes continue to play in many tournaments as well as interclub matches with other women's golf clubs in New York and New Jersey. However, their most important event is the annual Silvette Memorial Classic. On the first day of the Classic, the Silvettes meet in the morning on the green of the 6th hole and in a gesture of remembrance, each golfer draws the name of a deceased Silvette and plays in her memory.

Throughout their history, the Silvettes have been active in their community, and have held many tournaments to benefit various charities over the years. Their dedication to the game and their community shows why the Silvettes have had such a presence since 1935.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the House join me in honoring the Silvette Women's Golf Club of Staten Island on their 80th Anniversary.

HONORING CASA ALLEGRA COMMUNITY SERVICES

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Casa Allegra Community Services (CACS), which has been providing residential support, community integration and income earning opportunities for people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities in the San Francisco Bay Area for four decades.

In 1975, Chris Bonfiglio and Eileen Falvey co-founded CACS in San Rafael, California to provide housing for five young people with disabilities facing unexpected homelessness. They not only succeeded in their goal, but have grown the organization significantly from its origins. Today CACS runs two long-term care homes along with numerous living, educational, and career programs for individuals with disabilities in seven counties across the region.

The hard work undertaken by the staff and leadership at CACS has impacted many in its 40 years. CACS' efforts extend beyond meeting basic needs—which it performs well and with compassion—by striving to encourage people with disabilities to lead meaningful lives.

CACS has played a crucial and necessary role in our community by serving as a voice for those who need it most. Mr. Speaker, it is fitting to honor and thank Casa Allegra Community Services on their 40th Anniversary for their commitment to bettering the lives of those with disabilities.

HONORING COMMUNITY CHAMPION DR. WILLIAM DICUCCIO

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of my constituents from Western Pennsylvania, Dr. William DiCuccio. Dr. DiCuccio is a prestigious medical professional in Butler County, and his sincere desire to serve has had an international impact.

Dr. DiCuccio received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Saint Vincent College and then went on to attend Medical School at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. Shortly after graduation Dr. DiCuccio opened his own family practice, William A. DiCuccio M.D. & Associates, where he worked for the following 30 years. Throughout his career, Dr. DiCuccio has maintained an honorable reputation while serving in various prominent positions within the community. These positions include Vice President of Medical Affairs for Butler Health System, Medical Director for Butler County Prison, and his current position as Medical Director, at Sunnyview Nursing Home. Dr. DiCuccio humbly embraced each of these roles, taking full advantage of his ability to positively influence the lives of those around him.

Due to his professionalism and expertise, Dr. DiCuccio's involvement has been an asset to various advisory boards, including Butler County Community College (Vice Chairman, Board of Directors), World Servants (Board Member), Community Health Clinic of Butler (Chairman/Board Member), St. Vincent College-Boyer School (Board Member), Gaiser Center (Board Member), and Mission Development Villa Hermosa-Dominican Republic (Director). In addition, Dr. DiCuccio has voluntarily participated in a number of civic organizations and professional societies, continuously giving back to the community. He is currently an active member of the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Geriatrics Society, Pennsylvania Medical Society, and the Butler County Medical Society.

When he's not caring for patients, Dr. DiCuccio enjoys spending time with his family, participating within his church, traveling, and golfing. These very interests were the driving factors behind Dr. DiCuccio's first trip to the Dominican Republic, a trip which would forever change his life. While traveling abroad, Dr. DiCuccio and his wife, Marge, visited a small barrio called Villa Hermosa, a poverty-stricken town located about 70 miles from the Dominican Republic's capital city, Santo Domingo. Villa Hermosa, which means "beautiful village" in English, is home to 4,500 of the most genuine people, whose positive attitudes remain resilient despite their lack of basic necessities.

Villa Hermosa consisted of miles of shacks, constructed from scrap metal. The community was without drinking water, sewage systems, and electricity; however, there was an abundance of joy. The children that ran through the streets did not have clothing on their backs or shoes on their feet, yet there were smiles on their faces. The time spent with these wonderful people was inspirational and life-changing for Dr. DiCuccio and within an hour of departure from Villa Hermosa, he realized God led him there for a very specific purpose.

Dr. William and Marge DiCuccio started the "Hope Project" which has collaborated with World Servants, various churches, and individual sponsorships, all focused on the same objective of improving the quality of life for others. Since Dr. DiCuccio took the initiative, the transformations within Villa Hermosa have been immeasurable: The local church, which serves as the heart of the community, has been repaired and expanded, allowing them to accommodate for large crowds. A brand new grade school, where 400 students are educated, fed, immunized, clothed, and cared for in general, has been constructed and developed. In addition, this school brings countless benefits to the surrounding community, one of those being the fact that it employs a number of local residents, including seven teachers, a psychologist, a principal, a secretary, and cleaning staff. In order to produce clean drinking water, a well was drilled and a water purification plant was constructed. This plant produces 4,000 gallons of water per hour, sold to benefit the people of Villa Hermosa. Most recently, a medical clinic was constructed and is currently being run by Medical Missions International. This clinic is combating the leading cause of death in the Dominican Republic, namely the spread of communicable diseases.

In serving God, his family, and all of those in need, Dr. DiCuccio is an absolute inspiration. His compassion and generosity has positively influenced the lives of so many, and will continue to do so for years to come. Therefore, on behalf of the Third Congressional District of Pennsylvania, along with Villa Hermosa, I would like to express sincere gratitude and appreciation to Dr. William DiCuccio, an admirable professional, a selfless individual, and a true Community Champion.

CELEBRATING LIBERIAN INDEPENDENCE

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 168th anniversary of independence for the Republic of Liberia.

In 1847, after decades under the rule of the American Colonization Society, the Republic of Liberia declared its independence in order to establish a free, sovereign state in West Africa.

Today, my home state of Rhode Island is home to a thriving Liberian-American community of 15,000 men, women, and children who help make our state such a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family.

I am delighted today to celebrate this great country, its people, their traditions, its strong ties to the United States, and the lasting impact this community has made in Rhode Island and other places all across America.

Last year, I had the honor of visiting Liberia with the United Nations Foundation and speaking with officials there about ways to strengthen ties between our two countries and support peacekeeping efforts in West Africa.

I extend my best wishes and congratulations to Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and to all those celebrating in Liberia and around the world this week.

CELEBRATING THE MINNESOTA SPOKESMAN-RECORDER'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate and honor the Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder on its 80th Anniversary. The Spokesman-Recorder is the oldest African-American business in Minnesota and one of the oldest African-American newspapers in the United States. A longstanding pillar and voice of the Minnesota African-American community since its inception in 1934, the Spokesman-Recorder remains a journalistic force to this day.

Started as two separate papers, the Minneapolis Spokesman and the St. Paul Recorder were founded on August 10, 1934 by Cecil E. Newman. Mr. Newman was truly invested in the lives and communities his papers reached. He designed both papers as communication vehicles to unite, educate, inspire and empower the Twin Cities African-American community. When founding his publications, Mr. Newman was quoted as saying, "I didn't have enough money to begin one newspaper, so I began publishing two."

Mr. Newman was an important voice in the civil rights era, advising Senators Hubert H. Humphrey (D–MN) and Clifford P. Case (R–NJ) throughout the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as well as Senator Walter F. Mondale (D–MN) on the Fair Housing Act of 1968. Mr. Newman's commitment to civil and human rights and his bipartisan advocacy gained the papers respect and influence.

Now one publication, the Spokesman-Recorder, has been a springboard for African-American talent and continues to nurture and support talented writers, photographers and journalists. The Spokesman-Recorder helped launch the careers of internationally-renowned photographer and writer Gordon Parks and honored U.S. journalist and former Ambassador to Finland, Carl Rowan.

After Mr. Newman's passing in 1976, his wife Launa took the helm as publisher. Mrs. Newman remained in that role for 32 years until she handed the reins to their granddaughter, Tracey Williams-Dillard, in 2008. Ms. Williams-Dillard has worked to continue Cecil Newman's legacy and the Spokesman-Recorder now connects the entire state of Minnesota through print and digital content.

I am proud to represent the congressional district that the Spokesman-Recorder and the Newman family call home. Today, I congratulate the Spokesman-Recorder for its accomplishments, its lasting legacy, and the decades of hard work required to publish one of the top African-American owned newspapers in the United States.

HONORING MR. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL ON THE OCCASION OF HIS APPPOINTMENT AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FEDERAL WATER POLICY AT THE CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to recognize Joaquin Esquivel on his appointment to serve as Assistant Secretary for Federal Water Policy at the California Natural Resources Agency.

Mr. Esquivel has served on U.S. Senator BARBARA BOXER'S staff for over 8 years, most recently serving as Legislative Assistant and Director of Information and Technology. During his time with Senator BOXER, Mr. Esquivel has developed policy expertise in a variety of issues critical to California including water policy, agriculture, tribal issues, and the Salton Sea. Among his many contributions to federal water policy, Mr. Esquivel has been instrumental in the creation of comprehensive drought resiliency legislation and helped write the Water in the 21st Century Act (W21).

A native to the Coachella Valley, Mr. Esquivel grew up in La Quinta. His parents both worked for Coachella Valley Unified School District and his grandparents were farmworkers. After graduating from La Quinta High School, Mr. Esquivel went on to earn a bachelor's degree in English at the University of California, Santa Barbara, fulfilling his passion for literature and its ability to reflect and catalyze social change. He then took a chance to pursue his dreams, stepping out of his comfort zone; in 2007 he moved to Washington, D.C., where he first started with Senator BOXER as an intern.

Mr. Esquivel's talent and success are an example of how our local youth can go on to make a difference for their communities. Furthermore, growing up in the Coachella Valley, he understands firsthand the unique struggles that our district faces with the decline of the Salton Sea. He has been a true champion of the Salton Sea, coordinating Senator BOXER'S efforts on this impending issue and shepherding authorizing language that would allow the Army Corps of Engineers to help with its restoration.

Mr. Esquivel's other legislative accomplishments include spearheading ideas and legislation to protect pollinators across California, which are essential to our state's almond production and other agricultural industries. Furthermore, as the Senator's lead staffer on tribal issues, Mr. Esquivel has worked to ensure the more than 100 federally recognized tribes in California have a voice in Congress.

I am proud to recognize Mr. Esquivel's contributions to our nation's water, tribal, and agricultural policies, and I look forward to seeing the vision and leadership he will bring to State of California.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ''FEDERAL PROTECTIVE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015''

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I am reintroducing legislation to reform the Federal Protective Service (FPS).

The ''Federal Protective Service Improvement and Accountability Act of 2015'' seeks to improve FPS' ability to carry out its mission to protect the 1.4 million Federal employees and visitors that access more than 9,500 Federal facilities across the nation.

After the 1995 domestic terrorist attacks on the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, there was broad recognition that Federal buildings, which are symbols of our democracy, must be protected against terrorist attacks while remaining accessible to citizens.

In recent years, the increasing number of terrorist plots against diverse U.S. government facilities in Illinois, Washington State, and New York City as well as attacks on government buildings in other western democracies, such as Canada and Norway, has brought into focus the need to strengthen U.S. Federal building security.

Unfortunately, the primary agency responsible for providing such security—the Federal Protective Service—has a range of longstanding administrative challenges that, to my mind, raise questions about its ability to provide adequate Federal building security.

To ensure that FPS makes progress on its fundamental challenges, my legislation calls for immediate attention to address staffing, training, and contractor oversight challenges that the Government Accountability Office has identified as problematic.

It also directs FPS to not only put in place uniform minimum training and certification standards for all guards, regardless of whether they are contract guards or Federal employees, but develop and implement a strategy for using covert testing to improve performance of security screening at FPS-protected facilities.

Importantly, my legislation recognizes that though FPS is responsible for security, the Interagency Security Committee, comprised of Federal agencies that are tenants, has a major role to play in ensuring that risk-based security practices are in use.

Specifically, my bill requires DHS to assess the degree to which the consensus standard for risk management, which was developed by the Interagency Security Committee, has been adopted at non-military Federal facilities.

My legislation also is forward-looking.

It directs DHS to implement a one-year pilot program to research the advantages of converting guard positions at the highest risk FPS-protected facilities from contract guard positions to Federal positions.

Additionally, my legislation requires DHS to take a hard look at whether the fee-based system under which FPS currently operates provides adequate resources to cover the actual costs that FPS incurs.

Since October 2014, when terrorists attacked government sites in Canada, FPS' has been operating at an enhanced level, at the direction of DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson.

The resulting increased tempo FPS' security operations has necessitated the deployment of more law enforcement to higher-sensitivity facilities, increases in the frequency of visitor and vehicle screening, and enhancements to explosive canine detection and patrol operations.

Each time that FPS is directed to heighten security operations, new costs are incurred. FPS has no choice but to absorb those costs, often, I suspect, at the expense of addressing longstanding administrative challenges.

GAO, since 2009, has identified weaknesses in FPS' oversight of contract guards as an issue.

Now is the time, from a security and a taxpayer perspective, to have a long overdue discussion about whether FPS' fee model is designed to not only cover surges in protective activities but also to cover the costs of implementing core oversight and administration reforms that GAO has repeatedly recommended.

That discussion must include looking at whether some combination of appropriations and fees need to be part of the equation.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I urge Members to cosponsor the ''Federal Protective Service Improvement and Accountability Act of 2015''.

HONORING THE COAST GUARD'S 225TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Coast Guard's storied history of service to our nation. Next week, on August 4th, the Coast Guard will celebrate its 225th anniversary.

On that day in 1790, President George Washington signed an act establishing ten cutters, known as the Revenue Marine Service. These cutters were to be strategically positioned near our ports and used for the collection of tariffs. They were essential to our young Nation's finances, maritime security and trade activities. Over the years, several other services such as the Cutter Service, the Lighthouse Service, and the Life-Saving Service joined together to ultimately become the U.S. Coast Guard.

While the service is vastly different than originally established, the Coast Guard has evolved with the changing threats to our nation. Following the events of September 11, 2001 the Coast Guard proved to be an even greater asset to our nation as their role in security operations significantly expanded through heightened vigilance in ports and increased presence along our coastline.

As one of the five armed forces of the United States and the only military organization within the Department of Homeland Security, the Coast Guard protects our Nation's maritime interests at home and abroad. Their presence along our rivers, in the ports, coastal regions and on the high seas is vital to our national security.

Right now there are Coast Guard men and women aboard buoy tenders and ice breakers keeping shipping lanes open ensuring a steady flow of commerce and transportation. National Security Cutters are conducting drug interdictions in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific keeping drugs off of our streets. Air stations and small boat stations are on call

around the clock ready to save mariners in distress. Vessel examiners are inspecting commercial ships to keep them operating safely and ensuring the environmental stewardship of our waters.

The Coast Guard has a large presence in my district conducting missions vital to the safety and prosperity of the Great Lakes. I am proud to represent the Coast Guard men and women at Sector Detroit and adjoining stations, as well as Air Station Detroit which operates out of Selfridge Air National Guard Base. I know the boaters in Michigan's 10th district are in good hands.

Just two weeks ago, I met with the Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul Zukunft, a superb leader with a bold vision that makes me optimistic for the future of this great service.

The Coast Guard's values of honor, respect, and devotion to duty are seen day in and day out by the men and women who proudly wear the uniform. We are fortunate that they go to work every day ready to serve and protect the American people.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I want to commend the men and women of the Coast Guard for their many years of service and wish them a happy 225th anniversary.

Semper Paratus.

WASHINGTON TIMES ARTICLE: AN EXCUSE FOR CRUSHING KRATOM: THE FDA'S UNDUE SCRUTINY IS UNSCIENTIFIC

HON. AUMUA AMATA COLEMAN RADEWAGEN

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit an article from the July 23, 2015 edition of the Washington Times entitled, An excuse for crushing kratom: The FDA's undue scrutiny is unscientific.

(By Lloyd Billingsley—Thursday, July 23, 2015)

Last year, Americans spent an estimated $374 billion on prescription drugs, up 13 percent from the year before. These drugs include OxyContin, Vicodin, Percocet and others that the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved for sale without regard to their potential for abuse.

Meanwhile, the ''potential for abuse'' was used for many years to block even a discussion of the possible medical benefits of cannabis. And now federal officials are using it again to attack another potential natural remedy, kratom.

Kratom (Mitragyna speciosa), which derives from a tree that grows in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, has been found to reduce pain, lessen dependence on opiates (like OxyContin), and work as a mild stimulant.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration considers kratom a ''drug of concern.'' The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) calls it ''dangerous.''

Last year, U.S. marshals, at the request of the FDA, seized more than 25,000 pounds of raw kratom in Van Nuys, Calif. The action, explained Melinda Plaisier, FDA associate commissioner for regulatory affairs, ''was taken to safeguard the public from this dangerous product.'' Ms. Plaisier called kratom ''a botanical substance that poses a risk to public health and has the potential for abuse.''

Kratom's potential for benefit was of no apparent concern.

Edward Boyer, professor of emergency medicine and director of medical toxicology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, told Scientific American in 2013 that kratom blunts a patient's withdrawal from opioids ''awfully, awfully well.''

Dr. Boyer explained that kratom binds with serotonin receptors. ''So if you want to treat depression, if you want to treat opioid pain, if you want to treat sleepiness,'' kratom ''really puts it all together.'' It gives addicts access to a drug that effectively treats pain without causing respiratory problems.

Oregon resident Paul Kemp occasionally uses kratom, he says, to ease back pain, help him relax and gain energy. Last year Mr. Kemp told reporters it was ''ludicrous'' for the FDA to stop the importation of kratom on the grounds that it ''may be'' dangerous, when FDA-approved products such as OxyContin are known to be dangerous.

Likewise, FDA-approved Xanax and Valium are often abused, along with the ''psychostimulant'' Adderall, used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

What bothers the FDA, Mr. Kemp writes, is that kratom is being used very effectively as ''a way for America's prescription drug addicts to break free without experiencing the usually traumatic withdrawal symptoms that stop most victims of OxyContin and other opioids from getting clean.''

Edward Boyer, the toxicology professor, acknowledges that kratom can be abused, but ''speaking as a scientist, a physician and a practicing clinician, I think the fears of adverse events don't mean you stop the scientific discovery process totally,'' he told Scientific American.

If big pharma isn't behind something, the attitude seems to be in Washington, legislators and regulators don't even want to talk about it. But talk and listen they should.

Scientific research should continue. Federal and state officials need to be open-minded, see where the scientific research leads, and consider all the evidence—including the testimony of people like Paul Kemp who swear that kratom has helped them.

Banning kratom or banning its ingredients, as Indiana has done, is the wrong message at the wrong time.

A better option at this stage would be to let the voters decide, as California did in 1996 with medicinal marijuana. Let voters decide if Kratom should be banned—without proof—as a dangerous menace, or whether individuals suffering from withdrawal pain and other maladies should be free to make their own informed choices.

HONORING MARGARET A. ''ANNIE'' LAUDICK

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Margaret A. "Annie" Laudick, a loving wife and the mother of my close friend, Andy Laudick.

Annie was a devoted wife to James, her husband of 47 years, as well as an adoring mother and grandmother to her two children and nine granddaughters. She was a woman of great faith, belonging to St. Mary's Catholic Church. She was also a member of the Eagles Ladies Auxiliary and the American Legion Auxiliary.

Annie will be greatly missed by not only her family, but also by the Greensburg community. Her capacity for love and compassion is unrivaled, and I consider it a privilege to have known such a benevolent and sincere woman.

On a personal note, I will never forget Annie's smile. In high school, I remember going to Andy's house to swim at their pond. And, every time I visited, I would be greeted by his mom's big smile.

She was a remarkable woman who will truly be missed by everyone whose lives she touched. Today, it is my privilege to honor the life of Margaret A. Laudick.

HONORING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF GEORGE KUBOTA, SR., AND HIS SONS HERB AND GEORGE, JR.

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exemplary life and career of George Kubota, Sr., as well as the lives and careers of his sons Herb Kubota and George Kubota, Jr. After decades of service as both small business owners and public servants, we celebrate and reflect upon their positive impact in Pend Oreille County, Washington.

George Kubota, Sr. was born in Japan in 1886. As a young man, he immigrated to the United States and settled in the small northeast Washington community of Newport, Washington, where he opened the first laundry in the area. His business, Kubota Steam Laundry, primarily served the mining, logging, milling, and railroad industries. As these industries grew to the north, he and his family moved to Metaline Falls, Washington, where they expanded and diversified their business. In 1929, he founded the Metaline Falls Trading Company, a hardware store that still operates today and is an integral part of both the community in Metaline Falls and the county.

In 1942, he was detained by the FBI and was due, along with his family, to be sent to an internment camp. However, due to his positive impact on the community, many residents throughout the northern part of the county made special efforts to prevent their internment. He became a citizen after the war. George was a true patriot, pioneer, and fixture of his community, serving the citizens of Pend Oreille County for decades. George died in 1988 at the age of 102.

George Kubota, Sr. also had two sons, George and Herb, who additionally deserve recognition for their service to the communities in northeast Washington. After receiving college degrees and serving their country in the Armed Forces, Herb and George joined their dad running the Metaline Falls Trading Company in the 1950s, and, like their father, became important fixtures of their community. Herb served for years as an EMT and devoted large portions of his life to help the elderly of the community. Both Herb and George served as volunteer firefighters until the mandatory retirement age. George Kubota, Jr. has also devoted significant time to public service, serving

several terms on the town council and as mayor of Metaline Falls. He has served on the boards of numerous community organizations and was instrumental in the construction and expansion of a medical clinic in Ione, Washington. Herb sadly passed away in 2005. George, now 84, continues to run the store their father founded. The massive contributions of these three men cannot be overstated—the scale and duration of their positive influence on the communities of Pend Oreille County goes beyond that of ordinary citizens.

So today, I rise to recognize George Kubota and his sons Herb and George for their dedication to family, community, and country. They have continuously gone above and beyond as citizens and public servants, and for all their accomplishments and service, we are grateful for their positive impact on Eastern Washington.

STOP DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING FOR WOMEN'S SERVICES ACT STATEMENT OF INTRODUCTION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing, along with my colleague Representative SUZANNE BONAMICI, the Stop Deceptive Advertising for Women's Services Act. This important bill protects the rights of women seeking family planning services.

Women deserve to receive comprehensive, impartial, and medically accurate information when making personal health decisions. Unfortunately, there are so-called Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs) that deliberately misinform or mislead women seeking information on family planning services. They pose as sources of unbiased pregnancy counseling, using deceptive propaganda to dissuade women from considering comprehensive birth-control options or legal abortion. These fake reproductive health clinics entice women through their doors under the pretense of providing the full range of reproductive options and services, and this bill would expose their deceptive tactics.

The Stop Deceptive Advertising for Women's Services Act directs the Federal Trade Commission to promulgate rules under the Federal Trade Commission Act, declaring it an unfair or deceptive act for an entity, such as a crisis pregnancy center, to advertise as a provider of abortion services if the entity does not provide abortion services.

Clearly, deception and intimidation have no place when a woman is seeking information about her pregnancy. Working together we can help stop the fraud and confusion these Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs) are perpetrating on the women of America.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation—because women deserve access to the best, most comprehensive healthcare information. Women need and deserve accurate and comprehensive information when making personal decisions about family planning, and so-called Crisis Pregnancy Centers provide neither. Our legislation would expose and stop deceptive and false advertising from CPCs.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD ALFRED THOMAS, LONGEST SERVING AND GREATEST PATROL OFFICER IN THE HISTORY OF THE HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to retired Senior Police Officer Edward Alfred Thomas of Houston, Texas, one of the first African American police officers to integrate the Houston Police Department and the longest serving in the Department's history.

So well, so ably, and so honorably did Officer Thomas serve the citizens of Houston that last month the Houston City Council voted unanimously to rename the Houston Police Department headquarters building as the ''Edward A. Thomas Houston Police Department Headquarters Building.''

This honor is well deserved because, as Houston Police Chief Charles McClelland has said, Officer Edward Alfred Thomas ''is the epitome of what every police officer should be'' and that it is both fitting and proper that ''a man of his stature, character and outstanding ethics and morals be given this honor.

Mr. Speaker, Edward Alfred Thomas was born near Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1920 and went on to attend Southern University in Baton Rouge, where he played football before being drafted to the military during World War II, where he saw action with the U.S. Army at Normandy, in northern Africa, and during the Battle of the Bulge.

After the war and his honorable discharge from the Army, Edward Thomas became one of the first African American police officers in the city of Houston when he joined the Houston Police Department on January 12, 1948 and where he remained for the next 63 years until his retirement on July 23, 2011.

Mr. Speaker, Officer Thomas' more than six decades of hard work and courage paved the way for the hundreds of additional African American and officers of color who followed, including the current Houston Police Chief, Charles McClelland.

Although Officer Thomas enjoyed a long and distinguished career, this is not to say it was easy or without challenges, especially given the fact that Officer Thomas joined the Houston Police Department in 1948, more than 15 years before the height of the Civil Rights Movement.

When he began his career Officer Thomas was assigned to foot patrol at night patrolling the African American neighborhoods of Houston, the Third, Fourth and Fifth Wards.

Because of his race, Officer Thomas was not allowed to drive a squad car or to arrest White suspects without obtaining permission from his supervisor and at one point in his career, he was disciplined for speaking to a White meter maid who asked him to walk with her in order to avoid the unwanted attention and advances of nearby construction workers.

In those early years, Officer Thomas was not allowed to congregate with his white counterparts, he could not attend roll calls with white officers, and he could not eat in the cafeteria.

But Officer Thomas persevered and helped pave the way for many other African American police officers, like Chief McClelland and the more than 1,000 African American police officers who today comprise about 20 percent of the Houston Police Department.

Mr. Speaker, naming the 26-story headquarters building of the Houston Police Department after Officer Edward Alfred Thomas is a fitting tribute to a man who is, unarguably, one of the greatest police officers in the history of the Houston Police Department and remains one of the most revered and respected.

During his years of service to the city of Houston, Officer Thomas was named The 100 Club's ''Officer of the Year;'' awarded a Chief of Police Commendation by former Chief of Police Lee P. Brown; and recognized twice by The 100 Club with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1998 and 2011, respectively; and has received many letters of appreciation from citizens and supervisors.

Mr. Speaker, the renaming of the Houston Police Department headquarters building in honor of Officer Thomas was supported by the Houston Police Officer's Union (HPOU), the African American Police Officer League (AAPOL), Houston Police Organization of Spanish Speaking Officers (OSSO), and the Houston Organization of Public Employees (HOPE).

Chief McClelland is absolutely correct in noting that there could be no finer tribute to any patrol officer than to name the headquarters building in honor of ''a patrol officer for 65 years who underwent intense, systemic discrimination,'' and to have his name on the building as an inspiration and example for others to follow.

INTRODUCTION OF THE POSTAL INNOVATION ACT OF 2015

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the United States Postal Service (USPS) provides universal connectivity all across the country and a low cost delivery service that not just individual families rely on, but businesses of all sizes.

However, the Postal Service faces growing financial problems attributable to burdensome mandates in existing law and the continued decline in mail service volumes. As a result, the Postal Service is hard-pressed to identify cost-saving initiatives that can alleviate their financial woes while at the same time maintaining their high quality of service.

That is why I have introduced the Postal Innovation Act of 2015, which will authorize the Postal Service to take simple, common-sense steps towards modernization such as updating its fleet of vehicles to align with updated environmental and safety standards, and broadening its services to reflect the evolving demands of today's consumers.

The Postal Service must be given the flexibility to innovate and provide its customers modern services. By offering basic financial services, internet connectivity, and the ability to ship beer, wine, and spirits, this Act will allow the Postal Service to not only raise revenue, but remain a cornerstone of American communities.

In addition to raising revenue and increasing services to meet consumer demands, upgrading to energy efficient technology can reduce the postal fleet's carbon emissions while simultaneously cutting costs. This is critical because the federal government ought to lead by example, not lag decades behind. Further, implementing cutting-edge active safety and crash avoidance technology across the postal fleet will make streets safer for all users in every community in America.

The Postal Service is a vast and sprawling enterprise that touches almost every household six days a week. We will all benefit from preserving and improving this vital piece of America's infrastructure and fabric of life.

SUPPORT AN END TO CORRUPTION IN GUATEMALA

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, one year ago, a surge of unaccompanied child migrants from Central America was front-page news. Although that humanitarian crisis at our borders appears to have abated, the difficulties and life-threatening challenges faced by many citizens in Central America continue. The region urgently needs support in order to address the root causes of outmigration—economic and social inequality, insecurity and injustice.

It is encouraging that the Obama Administration has worked with the governments of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras to present a request for $1 billion to tackle the structural and multidimensional causes of migration through investments and programs to create jobs, expand education and social protection, strengthen public security and the judicial system, and improve transparency and efficiency in public administration. Congress is now considering this aid package in the House and Senate versions of the FY 2016 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bills. While I support the overall amount of the request, I do have concerns about how best to target funds so that they reach vulnerable and poor communities, and especially youth and families in those communities, who are most in need of support, while at the same time strengthening human rights and judicial systems in each of these countries.

In this context, I believe it is important to focus attention on the situation in Guatemala, which today is facing a critical juncture. Recent revelations of cases of widespread and deep-seated corruption in Guatemala raise serious concerns about the capacity of that government to be an effective partner in reducing poverty and inequality in the region. Evidence of massive and shameless looting of the state by high level Guatemalan officials in the Perez Molina government, the legislature and political parties has sparked a remarkable citizen mobilization. What started as urban, middle-class protests organized through social media networks has morphed into nationwide demonstrations demanding the resignation of President Perez Molina, and the immediate passage and implementation of fundamental reforms to electoral, judicial, civil service, and procurement systems. Some are calling for a 'government of national renovation' as a transition to begin to renew the political leadership and help restore citizen confidence in government.

I want to honor this unprecedented, continuing, and fearless rise of the Guatemalan people—students, people of all ethnic and religious groups, civil society organizations, and ordinary citizens of all ages are coming together with a common agenda against corruption and in favor of reform. That said, I note that frustration is growing as proposed reforms supported by the National Platform for Reform of the State—a coalition of over 100 civil society and academic organizations—are not progressing as demanded. And there are legitimate concerns expressed by civil society organizations that national elections scheduled for September 6th will take place in an environment that will enable fraud through illicit financing and in which threats will be used to intimidate voters. In this crucial moment, every citizen who is speaking out peacefully needs to be protected, defended and encouraged.

I also want to recognize the brave and excellent work of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala, CICIG, whose technical capacity has supported the bold investigative initiatives undertaken by the Guatemalan Attorney General's office to uproot corruption. When CICIG was established in 2007, it was described as a choice between the past and future. Guatemala recognized that it needed help controlling illegal, clandestine and corrupt power structures in the post-conflict years. CICIG is now at the heart of this challenging but potentially promising moment in Guatemala's history. Together with civil society and some dedicated leaders in Guatemala's justice system, the good women and men of CICIG are playing a critical role in helping move Guatemala towards justice and a better future. They, too, need protection and encouragement to keep up the good work.

Clearly, the next few weeks and months are critically important as the Guatemalan people work to figure out how to best address the challenges they face. At this important juncture, I urge the Obama Administration, including our U.S. diplomats and other agency representatives in Guatemala, to do their utmost to support Guatemalan civil society efforts to hold their own government accountable. Over the next weeks and months we will see whether Guatemala is capable of carrying out real change and moving closer to establishing a just, accountable and increasingly secure, equitable and prosperous country for all its citizens.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. CASSIE WELCH

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Cassie Welch for her service to my office and the 21 Congressional District of California over the past year.

Ms. Welch was born in Savannah, Tennessee to Donnie and Marilyn Welch. After spending her youth in Savannah and completing her high school education, Ms. Welch attended the University of North Alabama, where she received a Bachelor's of Science in Biology, Mississippi State University, where she received a Master's of Science in Animal Nutrition, and the University of Idaho, where she received a Doctorate of Philosophy in Animal Physiology.

After completing her education, Ms. Welch accepted a Fellowship in my Washington, D.C. office through the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Federation of Animal Science Societies. During her time in my office, she handled several legislative portfolios, including agriculture, animal rights, budget, housing, labor, natural resources, and social security.

On August 21, 2015, Ms. Welch's time in my office will come to an end. Ms. Welch will be moving to Iowa to begin the next chapter of her life. While I know she is very excited about her upcoming journey, she will be greatly missed as a member of my team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Cassie Welch for her public service to the people of the Central Valley and wishing her well in this next chapter of her life.

RECOGNIZING THE BRANSON FFA TRAP TEAM'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Branson High School Future Farmers of America Trap Team on their senior division championship win and overall third place victory at the 2015 Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation National Championship.

The Senior Division team, made up of Kennedy Mattox, Kory Gray, Jacob Anderson, Gage Dixon and Colten Calvert, hit 974 of 1,000 clay pigeons to take first place in their division. During the competition, Kennedy missed only one target, placing him above 697 other shooters to earn third place in the individual standings.

The Pirates' trap team earned a third place victory overall. It is the culmination of the Open Division team's fifth place victory, the Intermediate Advanced team's fourth place victory, the Intermediate Entry's third place victory and many other individual medals in sporting clays, handicap trap and regular trap.

The 2015 Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation National Championship had a record breaking number of entries, further showing the team's sharp skill and national achievement. The program is designed to use shooting sports to teach valuable skills such as sportsmanship, responsibility and teamwork to young individuals.

The Branson team, led by Coach Joe Henderson, has seen ample success in recent years and will compete at The American Trap Association's AIM Grand Nationals in August.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Branson High School FFA Trap Team for their accomplishments and hard work and in wishing them luck in their future endeavors.

HIRE VETS ACT OF 2015

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, as a combat veteran, I'm deeply concerned that the men and women of our military continue to struggle to find employment upon reentering civilian life. These individuals have not only displayed great courage but have acquired distinctive skills that make them ideal candidates for employment. Veterans who serve this country honorably shouldn't struggle to find employment, which is why I'm introducing the HIRE Vets Act of 2015.

The HIRE Vets Act is a bipartisan bill that would promote private sector recruiting, hiring, and retaining of men and women who served honorably in the U.S. military through a voluntary and effective program. Specifically, it would create an awards program recognizing the meaningful, verifiable efforts undertaken by employers—both large and small—to hire and retain veterans.

This program, designed to be self-funded and within the U.S. Department of Labor, will allow employers to proudly display one of four Presidential Awards on their products and marketing materials. These "HIRE Vets Medallions"—Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum—would be awarded to employers that achieve specific hiring and retention goals each year.

The program also establishes similar tiered awards for small and mid-sized employers with fewer than 500 employees. To ensure proper oversight, the Secretary of Labor would be required to provide Congress with annual reports on the success of the program and the hiring and retention levels of veterans.

This bill goes beyond simply recognizing that a business hires veterans. The HIRE Vets Act is an opportunity for Americans to see which companies truly live up to the employment promises they make to veterans. It is our duty to ensure veterans are given the benefits and resources they've earned through their service to this country, and this includes encouraging meaningful job opportunities. This bill creates an innovative system to encourage and recognize employers who make veterans a priority in their hiring practices, incentivizing the creation of thousands of jobs for veterans.

HONORING ANGELA PEATMAN

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Angela Peatman, an outstanding member of the Napa Valley community and my dear friend, on the occasion of her 80th birthday.

Born on July 30, 1935, Ms. Peatman has been a dedicated public servant, a devoted mother, and a tireless advocate for families in the Napa Valley. She began her public service at the Cope Family Resource Center in Napa, where she served as a board member and later as president. Ms. Peatman flourished in her role at the nonprofit organization, where she cherished the opportunity to work directly with her local community.

Ms. Peatman also served as a founding board member and president of the Puertas Abiertas Community Resource Center. Founded in 2005, the Center offers educational programs and advocacy services to support personal growth and family stability in the Latino community throughout Napa County. The organization also works to bridge the gap between service providers and the Latino community by providing culturally sensitive intake and referral services for over 500 families every year.

In 2010, Ms. Peatman was named "Citizen of the Year" by the Napa Chamber of Commerce in recognition for her years of service to the valley's community. She was also named "Associate" by her alma mater, Stanford University. This prestigious title is given to a select few alumni who have demonstrated significant volunteer service to the university.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that we recognize Ms. Peatman on the occasion of her 80th birthday for her years of valued service to the Napa Valley community. We wish her a very happy birthday and many years of health and happiness.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF SOUTH TUCSON

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the City of South Tucson, a community known for the resiliency, determination, and independence of its residents.

As a native of Tucson, Arizona, I am privileged to represent the City of South Tucson in the United States Congress. The support and loyalty I have received from the residents of South Tucson during my entire public life is a great honor for me personally.

Over 6,000 people and 300 businesses call the City of South Tucson home. This square mile city incorporated by its residents, rather than losing its identity to the City of Tucson, continues after 75 years to assert its independence and be the unique and proud community it has always been through its history.

South Tucson is about family and community, offering to the much larger metropolis of Tucson a view of our past and a dynamic view of what a community can do to retain its character while looking forward.

South Tucson boasts the best Mexican cuisine found anywhere; Las Artes, a model for integrating public art and education; and public services from the state of the art San Lena library to excellent public schools Ochoa and Mission View. South Tucson has a sophisticated network of social service providers and City of South Tucson first responders who place the safety of their residents first.

The greatest asset that the City of South Tucson has is its people, a diverse group representing Native-Americans, African-Americans, and Anglos, and families that have contributed so much to the region.

From South Tucson have come generations of political leaders, tradesmen, educators, decorated war veterans, business leaders, civil leaders, and so many hardworking people whose dignity and determination better us all.

Like all small towns and cities in America, the City of South Tucson faces challenges, but the drive to meet those challenges and prosper for the next 75 years is without a doubt the city's future.

I wish to congratulate the Mayor and Council of the City of South Tucson and the residents of the city on its 75th anniversary. The commemoration ceremony on September 19, 2015 at the Music and Arts Festival will be a day in which we pause and acknowledge the history, achievements, and the future of the City of South Tucson. Congratulations to South Tucson.

NICK BERARDINO'S RETIREMENT

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments and contributions of Nick Berardino, the General Manager of Orange County Employees Association.

Born and raised in Los Angeles to Italian immigrants, Nick is a Marine Veteran and served our country for two years in Vietnam.

He became active in the civil rights movement, the first of what would become a lifetime of commitment to those who are oppressed or discriminated against.

I have known Nick for years and he always looked for doing the best for his organization and the people he represented.

From pension reform to workplace rights, he has led OCEA through a series of monumental achievements for the working men and women he represented.

I am honored to recognize Nick Berardino's distinguished career of exemplary service and leadership in strengthening the middle class, fighting for social justice and dignified working conditions for 18,000 public employees and instilling integrity at the Orange County Employees Association.

HONORING MR. ART COVIELLO

HON. C. A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Mr. Art Coviello, an international expert on cybersecurity, on the occasion of his retirement after more than 30 years as a strategic, operating and financial-management expert in high-technology companies.

Mr. Coviello graduated magna cum laude from the University of Massachusetts in 1975 with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. He started his career as a certified public accountant at Deloitte, Haskins & Sells and held positions in financial and operating management at several technology companies.

He joined RSA, the Security Division of EMC, in 1995 and was the driving force in the

company's rapid growth during his tenure, increasing revenue from $25 million to more than $1 billion in 2014. Under his leadership, RSA evolved from its roots in authentication and encryption to a leader in security technology, including forensics, compliance and detection. Among his many acquisitions, Mr. Coviello played a key role in the successful acquisitions of Xcert International, 3G International, TransIndigo and Securant Technologies, and in strategic partnerships with Microsoft and Accenture. He retires as Executive Chairman.

While his well-deserved awards and accolades are too numerous to mention in their entirety, Mr. Coviello in 2013 was named a ''Top 25 Innovator'' by CRN. He has served as co-chair of the National Cyber Security Summit's Corporate Governance Task Force, a public-private effort organized by the Department of Homeland Security and leading industry associations. He is a founding Board Member of the Cyber Security Industry Alliance.

In his retirement, Mr. Coviello works with companies, industries, and governments to continue informing and shaping the evolution of security strategy to meet the challenges facing organizations today and tomorrow. He continues to play key roles in national and international cyber-security initiatives and is a regular speaker at conferences and forums around the world. Mr. Coviello is also a venture partner at Rally Ventures, a Board Observer for Synchrony Financial, and serves on the Board of Directors at EnerNOC.

Mr. Speaker, I have considered Mr. Coviello a friend and colleague for many years. I know him to be a man of intellect and, more importantly, integrity. His expertise has made our country stronger. It is with great pride that I congratulate him on his retirement and wish him continued success and happiness in the next chapter of his life.

VIDEOS ABOUT PLANNED PARENTHOOD ARE GROSSLY MISLEADING

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to share with my colleagues and the American public this insightful editorial from the San Jose Mercury News, ''Videos about Planned Parenthood are grossly misleading.'' This editorial clearly lays out how the Republican Party's embrace of this video ''exposé'' is really just a continuation of their War on Women, in particular low-income women.

Anyone with half a brain can see through the heavily edited ''gotcha'' videos purporting to show Planned Parenthood officials illegally bargaining to sell tissue from aborted fetuses. The videos are grossly misleading and politically irresponsible.

The research that fetal tissue makes possible at respected universities across the country has produced vaccines that have saved millions of lives and now targets Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other fatal, heartbreaking diseases. Planned Parenthood does not profit from it. But Republicans in Congress and in the presidential free-for-all are having a field day with ''facts'' from Fox News.

California Attorney General Kamala Harris fortunately is investigating the videos' producers, the so-called Center for Medical Progress, which may have broken federal and California law in the scheme to bring down Planned Parenthood. As an example, one of the interviews of a California doctor may have been recorded without her consent.

U.S. Rep. Zoe Lofgren of San Jose is pushing U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch to investigate as well. The organization has tax-exempt status as a biomedical charity but appears to be a fake limited liability corporation.

It has never been a secret that Planned Parenthood and many other clinics collect tissue for research. The unedited videos show repeated attempts by Planned Parenthood doctors to explain that they're only trying to recoup costs for their work. Planned Parenthood likely loses money on the whole thing, but the numbers are a tiny part of its budget.

Republicans in the House and the Senate shamelessly are using this supposed exposé to argue that Congress should defund Planned Parenthood.

And so the War on Women continues.

Planned Parenthood and its 800 clinics provide health care, particularly family planning, for nearly 3 million low income women a year. It receives more than $500 million in government funding, but not a penny of that pays for abortions—which make up just 3 percent of the organization's work. Cutting Planned Parenthood funding means cutting health care to poor women, period.

Scientists using cultures from fetal kidney cells won the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1954 for developing the polio vaccine. Fetal tissue research helped produce vaccines for chicken pox and rubella. These advances alone have saved countless millions of lives, particularly children's.

The National Institutes of Health spent more than $70 million on fetal research in 2014, tackling diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. Stem cell research is gradually replacing fetal tissue research, but we can't afford to stop work on these diseases while alternative methods ramp up.

More tapes are expected this week, including possibly showing the process of tissue removal. It's ugly to watch, but so are most significant surgical procedures.

The core political issue here is abortion. The Center for Medical Progress and many Republican officials and candidates want to eliminate the right of American women to choose to end a pregnancy.

In fact Planned Parenthood has done more to prevent abortion than any other organization in this country by giving poor women access to birth control and to prenatal care to have healthy babies. It continues to provide safe abortions because refusing will not stop abortion, it will just drive women to unsafe alternatives. (Speaking of ugly procedures.)

Women's ability to control their own reproductive future is the best way to prevent abortion. A Congress really concerned about women and unborn children would give more, not less, to Planned Parenthood.

TRIBUTE TO MASHAL HUSAIN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mashal Husain for being named a 2015 Woman of Influence honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Before moving to the United States, Ms. Husain was raised all across the globe starting in Pakistan, then Tanzania, followed by Thailand and finally the Philippines. Once in the United States she earned her BA studying psychology and Spanish at the University of Texas at Austin, and she didn't stop there. She moved on to Cornell University where she earned a Master's in Healthcare Administration. Shortly after, Ms. Husain finished a postgraduate Fellowship at the Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

Throughout her life Ms. Husain has taken on a variety of leadership roles, not only in the professional world at businesses, like Iowa Health Systems and Principal Financial Group, but also at a number of philanthropic organizations, like the United Way of Central Iowa and Habitat for Humanity. She is a member of the Board of Directors at both organizations. Now, as Vice President of The World Food Prize Foundation, Ms. Husain serves an integral role in the growth and development of a number of programs within the World Food Prize Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ms. Husain in the United States Congress. It is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better her community and the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE GARAZI FAMILY

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor the continued efforts of a local family in my congressional district who have made extraordinary efforts to improve the lives of our elderly. In a few short weeks, the Garazi family will hold its 5th Annual Solomon Garazi Memorial Day at the Races to benefit the Miami Jewish Health Systems, otherwise known as the Jewish Home. The Jewish Home is a great South Florida institution that has done, and continues to do, so much to improve quality of life for seniors.

Solomon Garazi, who passed away in 2010 at the age of 85, was known for his honor, integrity, and strong spirit. In 1960, the Garazis fled the brutal Castro regime and sought refuge in Miami, where Solomon and his in-laws founded two businesses—the Suave Shoe Corporation and the Oriental Trading Company. Suave later became the first company owned by Cuban refugees to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Solomon was a very prominent member of the Jewish Community. He was one of the founders and a president of Temple Moses. He served on the Board of Directors of the Michael-Ann Russell Jewish Community Center, and was the first Cuban American to be on the board of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation. He also helped establish the Sephardic Jewish Studies Program at the University of Miami.

Additionally, Solomon was extensively involved with the Miami Jewish Health Systems. In 2009 the Jewish Home's Latin Auxiliary, which Solomon helped organize in 1980, bestowed upon him its Lifetime Achievement Award for all his work on behalf of the institution. The Miami Jewish Health Systems serves more than 12,000 patients, participants and residents annually, through more than a dozen varied healthcare programs and services. Its services include rehabilitation assistance, religious programming, and full residential care. It also is at the forefront of innovative research into dementia and other geriatric conditions. Currently, The Mental Health and Memory Center at Miami Jewish Health Systems is running an innovative clinical trial to evaluate medications to treat and potentially cure Alzheimer's.

The Solomon Garazi Memorial Day will directly support the maintenance and the expansion of the Jewish Home's Latin Auxiliary Music Therapy Program. The program offers a full-time board-certified music therapist, musical instruments, and a wide range of music media, recordings, equipment and resources.

Through musical involvement in a therapeutic context, individuals' physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs can be addressed from a unique angle. The music serves as a powerful medium, helping them express themselves in ways words do not allow them to. It opens up a new world of language for them, one that is not bound by the need for precise articulation. The sense of empowerment that this therapy fosters improves lives.

I commend the Garazi family—Esther Garazi, Isaac and Anita Garazi, Blanca and Richard Schoonover, and their families—as well as everyone else involved with the Day at the Races, for their work in putting this event together year after year. Thank you for supporting a pillar of our South Florida community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I was attending funeral services in my state and was not present for three roll call votes on Monday, July 27, 2015. Had I been present, I would have voted in this manner:

Roll Call Vote # 467—Need Based Education Aid Act of 2015—Yes.

Roll Call Vote # 468—Secret Service Improvements Act of 2015—Yes.

Roll Call Vote # 469—Keeping Our Travelers Safe and Secure Act—Yes.

H.R. 1734—IMPROVING COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS REGULATION ACT OF 2015

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last week, I voted against H.R. 1734, the Improving Coal Combustion Residuals Regulation Act of 2015. This dangerous and unnecessary legislation not only fails to improve coal ash regulation, it seriously undermines the EPA's efforts to regulate coal combustion waste to protect human health and the environment.

Coal ash, the waste produced from the burning of coal, contains toxic materials such as arsenic, lead and chromium. According to the EPA, in 2012, coal-fired power plants in the U.S. generated 110 million tons of coal ash. The improper or unsafe disposal of coal ash can lead to catastrophic releases of toxins if a failure occurs at the disposal site or, as is more commonly the case, contaminants slowly leach into groundwater and drinking water sources. We have known for some time of the need to regulate the disposal of coal ash and after several years, extensive consultation, and over 450,000 public comments, the EPA published a final, comprehensive rule to establish national criteria for the disposal of coal ash on April 17, 2015.

H.R. 1734 is an attempt to gut the EPA's final rule before it even has the chance to go into effect. The bill would eliminate restrictions for how close existing surface impoundments can be to drinking water sources and would eliminate liner requirements for existing surface impoundments. It authorizes states to implement coal ash management permitting programs, but these programs do not need to meet national standards. In short, it eliminates, delays or weakens environmental protections and threatens health and public safety.

There is no greater public need than access to clean and safe drinking water. I strongly oppose this legislation because it undercuts national protections and undoes important regulations to safeguard drinking water sources. We must use our legislative prerogative to protect public health and safety and not in a manner that poses risks to our communities and our environment as H.R. 1734 would do.

IN GRATITUDE OF DWIGHT SULLIVAN AND HIS YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dwight Sullivan for twenty years of outstanding service to the House of Representatives, including eight years as a Professional Staffer with the House Judiciary Committee Democrats.

Dwight will be retiring this month and he will be missed by all who know him. I want to especially thank Dwight for his extraordinary work to provide high level communications services to the staff and Members of the Committee; developing and maintaining methods to process, manage and store communications data for the office; trouble shooting computer problems and recommending updated and cost effective resources; helping make the Judiciary Committee web site the envy of Capitol Hill; and serving as a liaison between the Judiciary Committee Democrats and House Information Resources (HIR).

Dwight is a native of North Carolina, where he received his degree from Johnson C. Smith University, and where he met his wife of forty-four years, Cheryl Sullivan. He still calls the Tar Heel state home, and spends his vacations there playing golf. In fact, those who know Dwight know that while his first love may be politics, golf is a close second. From Myrtle Beach to Boca Raton to Pinehurst, his love of golf has become legendary on Capitol Hill, where he has inspired many others to take up the game and shoot for par.

A former project manager for IBM, Dwight began his Capitol Hill career in the office of my friend and former colleague, Congressman Melvin Watt (retired), and later honed his craft at HIR, before joining the House Judiciary Committee staff in 2007.

Dwight will be missed for his ability to use good judgement to solve problems, for meeting technology challenges and keeping staff up to date on the latest and most effective approaches to keep communicating the work of the Committee. He will be missed as well for his wit, good humor, and loyalty. We wish him the best of luck in his retirement and extend to him and his family our deepest gratitude.

IN RECOGNITION OF MAJOR GENERAL NATHANAEL GREENE

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Major General Nathanael Greene, a highly decorated officer in the Continental Army and leader in the fight for independence during the Revolutionary War.

Born August 7, 1742 in Rhode Island to humble beginnings, Nathanael Greene committed his life to public service. He first answered this call when he served as a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly. As a supporter of the Patriot cause, Nathanael Greene helped form a local militia called the Kentish Guards. Although he was unable to become an officer due to a handicap, he volunteered as a private. He saw action in many significant engagements, including Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown and Princeton. Greene's talent allowed him to rise through the ranks, becoming first a Brigadier General and then a Major General—the only one to serve as a general for the entire eight year war for independence besides George Washington. Major General Greene led the Continental troops in the South and helped pave the way for Lord Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown.

The General Society Sons of the Revolution will be designating August 7, 2015 as a Day of Honor for Major General Nathanael Greene. On this day a monument will be dedicated to Greene in Valley Forge National Historic Park. His statue will forever stand there as a reminder of his service to our country during the battle for independence.

Mr. Speaker, the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania owe a great debt of gratitude to Major General Nathanael Greene.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 468.

My flight was delayed due to weather.

Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF MADISON HEIGHTS, MICHIGAN

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the City of Madison Heights, Michigan, as it celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. The City of Madison Heights was incorporated in 1955, and currently has a population 29,694 people.

I have had the pleasure of representing the City of Madison Heights, centrally located in the 9th Congressional District, in Congress for the past thirty-two years. From walking in the annual Memorial Day parade to attending numerous events in the schools, important projects like the 12 Town Drains, now known as George W. Kuhn Retention Treatment Basin and the formation of the Madison Heights Community Family Coalition to combat youth substance abuse I enjoy working in this community.

Known as the ''City of Progress'' Madison Heights residents have always prided themselves on a high level of community spirit, volunteerism, having top-notch city services, a rich heritage, and being known as a warm and family-oriented community. After sixty years of growth and change, the city remains embodied in that local spirit.

Madison Heights originated from pioneering families, such as the Lamphere Family, who gave the community land in 1888 for the school house at 13 Mile and John R, and the Kendal family who donated their land in 1926 when the school was moved. Later, farm families came to Madison Heights in the early 1900s from other countries for the opportunity to start fresh and be self-sufficient, farming their land and often working to buy it. These families gave rise to the life and hope of the community that became Madison Heights.

Today Madison Heights residents take advantage of the city's 13 parks covering over 140 acres; numerous recreational opportunities including a golf course, wave pool and water park, soccer complex, baseball complex, Friendship Woods and nature center, wooded walking trails, sledding hill, bowling lanes, dog park, public library and Heritage Rooms Museum. Residents also benefit from popular community events including a spring 5K run, Art Challenge and Art Exhibit, the annual Festival in the Park with fireworks, Memorial Day parade, Afterglow Car Show in conjunction with the Woodward Dream Cruise, fall Nature Center Open House, and Tree Lighting.

While auto-related manufacturing remains an important component of Madison Heights economy, Madison Heights is quickly developing a multifaceted economy, attracting emerging industries such as defense and aerospace—Navistar Defense and IonBond to name a few. The University of Michigan recently awarded Madison Heights with an eCities 5-Star Rating and ''Best Practice Community'' for the City's Economic Development programs. Madison Heights is proud to now host over 100 major high-tech companies within its borders.

As the City of Madison Heights celebrates this milestone, I ask all my colleagues to join me in congratulating its residents, elected officials, and businesses as they celebrate their history, preserve their rich local heritage, and look forward to growth and prosperity in the future.

CONGRATULATING JESSICA CAVINESS FOR RECEIVING THE PRESIDENTIAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE TEACHING

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Jessica Caviness, a teacher in my district at Coppell High School of Coppell, Texas. Jessica was recently selected to receive the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST), along with 107 other teachers from all 50 states. Each recipient receives an award from the National Science Foundation and is invited to an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. This award is given out annually to outstanding K–12 science and mathematics teachers from across the country. The winners are selected by a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators following an initial selection process done at the state level.

Ms. Caviness, a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University, has just completed her 11th year in Coppell, where she teaches Geometry and Algebra II. Jessica routinely creates innovative and transformative learning experiences for her students. Most notably, Jessica excels in utilizing technology in the classroom, where her classes have utilized Skype, Twitter, and the iPads distributed through Coppell Independent School District's 1:1 iPad initiative. Jessica's work has not gone unnoticed, as she has presented at conferences at the local, state, and even national level. Her ability to integrate Twitter into the learning experience has also been featured in an article for November Learning, which profiled specific ways that Ms. Caviness was able to effectively engage students outside the classroom in a way that supplemented classroom material.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring Jessica Caviness for receiving the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. I wish her and all her students continued success in the classroom and beyond.

MITSUBISHI CORPORATION'S APOLOGY TO AMERICAN WWII PRISONERS OF WAR

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, a member of our greatest generation from Santa Maria, California, James T. Murphy. On Sunday, July 19th, 2015, at the age of 94, Mr. Murphy had the historic honor of being offered the first Japanese corporate apology for his forced labor as an American prisoner of war (POW) in Japan during World War II.

During World War II, Mitsubishi Mining Company Ltd. used the labor of over 900 Americans in four of its coal and copper mines on mainland Japan. Mr. Murphy, one of the last surviving American former POWs to have worked as a slave laborer in one of these mines, graciously accepted an apology from the Mitsubishi Materials Corporation, the successor of Mitsubishi Mining Company, on behalf of his fellow veterans.

A Texas native, Mr. Murphy fought in the Philippines with the U.S. Army Air Corps beginning with the bombing of Nichols Field on December 8, 1941 until surrender in Bataan on April 9, 1942. He endured the Bataan Death March and a ''Hell ship'' to Japan. During the war, Imperial Japan assigned over 13,000 Americans to work in corporate mines, factories, and docks to support the war effort. Mr. Murphy was assigned to POW Camp Sendai #6–B and forced to mine copper at Mitsubishi's Osarizawa mine near the town of Hanawa in Sendai, Japan.

After liberation, he continued to serve with the then-new U.S. Air Force and retired in 1962 after a 23-year career. Captain Murphy later moved to my district in California, working as a civilian contractor with Lockheed Missile & Space Company at Vandenberg Air Force Base and finally retiring in 1986 to Santa Maria.

On July 19th 2015 Mr. Hikaru Kimura, a Senior Corporate Executive of Mitsubishi Materials Corporation and Senior General Manager of Global Business Management at the Paint Finishing System Division of Taikisha Ltd, delivered to him the official apology at a ceremony held at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles.

Mr. Murphy responded, ''it is a glorious day.'' He continued, ''For 70 years, we wanted such action. Today we have it so I'm elated over that, and I hope this historical occasion just spreads out through the world and helps mankind.''

And it is with grateful recognition for all our veterans swept up in the Pacific battles of the first months of World War II, many of whom became POWs of Imperial Japan, that I insert both Mitsubishi Materials' historic apology statement and Captain Murphy's acceptance.

Remembering the stories of these POWs both in Japan and in the United States is important for history, for the U.S.-Japan relationship, and for all those who care about peace.

STATEMENT OF JAMES T. MURPHY, IN RESPONSE TO MITSUBISHI APOLOGY TO WWII POWS, DELIVERED AT THE MUSEUM OF TOLERANCE, SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER—LOS ANGELES, CA, JULY 19, 2015

This is a great day to be here at the Museum of Tolerance because at this place and at this time, history will truly be made.

We have just heard Mitsubishi's [Materials Corporation] representative, Mr. [Hikaru] Kimura, present a stirring, heartfelt, warm and sincere apology to former U.S. Prisoners of War who were forced to work for Mitsubishi Mining during World War II.

His apology meets all the criteria necessary to satisfy the elements of an acceptable apology. It admits to wrongdoing, it makes sincere statements showing a deep remorse for the wrongdoing and it assures that the wrongdoing will not recur.

As a former Prisoner of War of the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces who was forced to work at the Mitsubishi [Osarizawa] copper mine near Hanawa, Japan during part of 1944 and part of 1945 and being one of the few surviving workers of that time, I find it to be my duty and responsibility to accept Mr. Kimura's apology!

Hopefully, the acceptance of this sincere apology will bring some closure and relief to the age-old problems confronting the surviving former Prisoners of War and to their family members.

Additionally, even though the Japanese people and the American people have a longstanding friendly relationship, the action that we are taking today will further enhance, expand and assure an enduring trust and friendship benefitting both nations.

Furthermore, I join others in this group who foster the idea of encouraging the dozens of other Japanese companies who used forced labor by the Allied Prisoners of War to offset their workforce shortage to follow Mitsubishi Materials' progressive leadership.

Solving this long overdue problem would permit the companies and their former laborers to look forward to a better future rather than continue to look backward to their differences. Such actions would have positive results for both of our nations by strengthening our trust, confidence and friendship.

Perhaps other nations with similar problems will follow our example here today with similar actions. Such actions would result in the betterment to all mankind.

Mr. Kimura, we thank you and the other members of your team for your hard work and long hours spent formulating and presenting Mitsubishi Materials' apology.

STATEMENT BY MITSUBISHI MATERIALS CORPORATION, SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER HIKARU KIMURA IN THE MEETING WITH A FORMER AMERICAN POW AND FAMILIES OF FORMER POWS

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, speaking on behalf of Mitsubishi Materials, thank you very much for this opportunity to meet with you today at the Museum of Tolerance.

Mitsubishi Mining Company Limited, the predecessor of Mitsubishi Materials, was engaged in coal and metal mining during World War II. As the war intensified, prisoners of war were placed in a wide range of industries to offset labor shortages. As part of this, close to 900 American POWs were allocated to four mines operated by Mitsubishi Mining in Japan.

I joined Mitsubishi Materials as a postwar baby-boomer and have worked in the company for 34 years. I have read the memoirs of Mr. James Murphy, who is present here at this ceremony, and those of other former POWs, as well as records of court trials. Through these accounts, I have learned about the terrible pain that POWs experienced in the mines of Mitsubishi Mining.

The POWs, many of whom were suffering from disease and injury, were subjected to hard labor, including during freezing winters, working without sufficient food, water, medical treatment or sanitation. When we think of their harsh lives in the mines, we cannot help feeling deep remorse.

I would like to express our deepest sense of ethical responsibility for the tragic experiences of all U.S. POWs, including Mr. James Murphy, who were forced to work under harsh conditions in the mines of the former Mitsubishi Mining.

On behalf of Mitsubishi Materials. I offer our sincerest apology.

I also extend our deepest condolence to their fellow U.S. POWs who worked alongside them but have since passed away.

To the bereaved families who are present at this ceremony, I also offer our most remorseful apology.

This cannot happen again, and of course, Mitsubishi Materials intends to never let this happen again.

We now have a clear corporate mission of working for the benefit of all people, all societies and indeed the entire globe. Respecting the basic human rights of all people is a core principle of Mitsubishi Materials, and we will continue to strongly adhere to this principle.

Our management team wishes for the health and happiness of our employees every day, and we ask that all of them work not only diligently, but also with a sense of ethics.

Mitsubishi Materials supplies general materials that enrich people's lives, from cement to cellphone components and auto parts, all of which are closely related to people's lives. We also place a strong emphasis on recycling for more sustainable societies, such as recovering valuable metals from used electrical appliances and other scrapped materials.

Here in the United States, we have plants for cement and ready-mixed concrete, and a sales headquarters for our advanced materials and tools business, all in California, as well as a polysilicon plant in Alabama. We believe that our company provides fulfilling jobs for local employees and contributes to host communities through its business.

The American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor Museum in Wellsburg, West Virginia archives extensive records and memorabilia of POWs. These records and memorabilia will be handed down to future generations for educational purposes.

I will visit the museum the day after tomorrow to view the exhibits and visualize how POWs were forced to work under harsh conditions. For now, however, I am pleased to announce that Mitsubishi Materials has donated 50,000 US dollars to the museum to support its activities.

Finally, I sincerely thank Ms. Kinue Tokudome and the members of the American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor Memorial Society for creating this opportunity to meet with you today. I also express my sincere thanks to Rabbi Abraham Cooper for offering the Museum of Tolerance as a venue for the ceremony. And I express my deep gratitude to all others involved in arranging this gathering.

I would also like to thank the family members of a non-U.S. POW [Mr. Stanley Gibson from Scotland, whose father also was a slave laborer in the Mitsubishi Osarizawa mine] who have come from very far away to attend this ceremony.

I truly hope that this gathering marks the starting point of a new relationship between former POWs and Mitsubishi Materials.

Thank you very much.

HONORING CARMEN "DOLLY" VAZQUEZ FOR HER YEARS OF SERVICE TO WORCESTER COUNTY AND CONGRATULATING HER ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Carmen "Dolly" Vazquez. Next month Dolly will retire from Centro Las Americas after 23 years of service to the Latino community in Worcester County.

Dolly was born and raised in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. She came to Central Massachusetts from San Francisco, California and began her cultural involvement in Worcester by volunteering at WCUW community radio station. At WCUW, she hosted a bi-weekly radio show, Herencia Puertoriqueña for 13 years.

Dolly was first hired in 1993 by Centro Las Americas to help manage their Latin American Festival, and she was later asked to head the organization's new Cultural Department.

Since that Dolly has co-produced the annual Latin American Festival, the annual Latino Film Festival and the biennial Viva El Arte art show, among other endeavors.

Dolly has been an active member of our community through her involvement with Hispanics Achieving and Celebrating Excellence of QCC, and Latino Dollars for Scholars. She is also an incorporator of the Worcester Art Museum, YWCA, the Joy of Music Program, and the Worcester Historical Museum. For eleven years she also served as board member of the Mass Cultural Council and is a former board member of You Inc.

I want to thank Dolly for her years of service to Worcester County and I wish her the best of luck in the future. She is a remarkable person who has done so much for the community. I'm also proud to call her a close and treasured friend.

CELEBRATING THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF MCABW

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to honor the 10th anniversary of The Montgomery County Association of Business Women of Montgomery County, Texas. Founded by my good friend Carol Gooch in 2005, the MCABW not only provides a forum for business women to develop and enhance professional and personal relationships with their peers, the group actively works to improve Montgomery County.

After graduating from Leadership Montgomery County in 2003, Carol decided to form a group so that women could network and grow their businesses. The group was one of the first womens' networking associations in Montgomery County and its success has spurred the creation of many more similar groups.

In addition to providing an invaluable forum for women to network, the group has continued to give back to their community. MCABW

sponsors college scholarships for women graduating high school in Montgomery County and supports members who wish to continue their education. At their inaugural fundraising event this year, the group raised $12,000 which will be used to fund additional scholarships and charities.

Not only does the group mentor women, MCABW has helped virtually every non-profit organization in Montgomery County including: Interfaith of the Woodlands, Montgomery County United Way, Children's Safe Harbor, Humane Society, and the Montgomery County Food Bank, just to name a few.

While the ranks of MCABW have grown far beyond the original 52 members in the ten years since its founding, the mission of the group has continued to focus on a team effort. By working together, the group has grown to the largest nonprofit business women's networking association in Montgomery County. Members enjoy monthly coffees, luncheons and evening mixers while continuously mentoring new members who want to start their own business, learn more about networking or social media, or who just want to meet other like-minded women in the community.

MCABW has helped organize the annual WISE (Women Inspiring, Supporting, Empowering) Conference. These conferences have given female entrepreneurs access to tremendous speakers and learning opportunities while raising money for charity. This year's WISE Conference has partnered with Rettsyndrome.org to raise funds for research for treatments and a cure for Rett Syndrome.

The women of MCABW represent all walks of life—there are members returning to the world of work, young members who are just starting their careers, and seasoned professionals willing to pass on their wisdom and knowledge.

Today, I ask all of America to join me in congratulating the dynamic Carol Gooch, and all members of the MCABW, on ten years of excellence. I can't wait to see what the future holds for the Montgomery County Association of Business Women.

CONGRATULATING PIKE COUNTY

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Pike County on their bicentennial anniversary and celebration.

For 200 years Pike County has stood proudly at the heart of Southern Ohio.

Created by the Ohio General Assembly in 1815, Pike County was named after American Brigadier General and explorer Zebulon Pike. Over the next 200 years, the people of Pike County have lived up to Pike's relentless American spirit.

Throughout its two century-long history, Pike County has proudly contributed to the strength, prosperity, and growth of our state and our nation.

Pike County residents fought and died for the United States in defense of this nation since the days of the Civil War. That service continued into the Cold War, where their hard work and industriousness in the heartland provided the nuclear technology and tools that continued to secure our blessings of freedom.

Pike County fostered the freedom and economic prosperity that are pillars of the American Dream, from an active role in the Underground Railroad to a key link in the Ohio-Erie Canal that connected commerce across Ohio.

I am honored to represent Pike County today, an area of the state with a rich history and strong community. Again, I congratulate Pike County on this historic milestone and I wish them the best over their next 200 years.

AGNES FENTON

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Agnes Fenton, who will be turning 110 years old this Saturday, August 1, 2015. Mrs. Fenton will be the oldest person living in the City of Englewood, New Jersey.

Mrs. Fenton was born in 1905 on a farm in Mississippi. After her father passed away when she was only an infant, her mother raised her alone. Upon the age of 14, Mrs. Fenton moved to Memphis, Tennessee.

It was in Memphis where Mrs. Fenton ran a restaurant called Pal's Duck Inn, which specialized in serving southern comfort food. Mrs. Fenton would be one of the first African-American women in the city to own and operate a restaurant. The days were long and the work was tiring, as she would often work from 6 a.m. to midnight on a regular basis, but Mrs. Fenton always kept her spirits high.

During her time running the restaurant, Agnes got married to Vincent Fenton. But sadly after contracting pneumonia, Mr. Fenton passed away in 1970.

Following many years of running her successful restaurant, Mrs. Fenton decided to get a new job in the kitchen of an Emerson, New Jersey company, and eventually worked for the Chapman family in nearby Oradell for many years afterwards. It was hard work and self-reliance that forged her into the strong person she has been throughout her life.

Mrs. Fenton moved to Englewood in the early 1950's. She has resided there ever since, and is known to have a remedy for any health concern that you can think of. She is also well-known for her Lemon Ice Box Pies and Apple Lattice Pies, which she has given to her family and neighbors during the Christmas holiday seasons.

Mrs. Fenton has always made room for God in her life, as she has been a member of the St. Mark's United Methodist Church in New York City since moving to Englewood. Mrs. Fenton was honored to be indoctrinated into the Centenarian Society, where she is an active participant in the New England Centenarian Study being conducted by the Boston School of Medicine. Although the study may credit Mrs. Fenton's 110 years to her genetics, she partly attributes this to her daily regimen of consuming a shot of Johnnie Walker and three Miller High Life's a day.

Throughout her entire life, Mrs. Fenton has been able to live independently, even through hard times. She continues to cook her own meals and bake for her family and friends during the holiday season. Mrs. Fenton's life is one we can all look upon and recognize as one lived through hard work and sacrifice, but most importantly, a life filled with so much happiness and love.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the life achievements of individuals such as Mrs. Agnes Fenton.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Mrs. Fenton's family and friends, all those whose lives she has touched, and me, in recognizing the 110th birthday of Mrs. Agnes Fenton.

CONGRATULATING FRED AND BETTY WILLIAMS ON THEIR 70TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Fred and Betty Williams, of Carrollton, Texas on achieving this incredible milestone of 70 years of marriage on August 30th, 2015.

While Fred and Betty both grew up in east Texas, they moved to Carrollton after retiring and reside there today. As long time members of the Nazarene Church, serving on the church board and in missions, they are beloved members of the community and strong role models. It is an honor to be able to call them my constituents and friends.

In their successful marriage, Fred and Betty have been blessed with a family of three children, eleven grandchildren, and fourteen great-grandchildren. It is my sincere hope that their family may gain much joy and wisdom from Fred and Betty's wonderful journey together. May their lives and inspiring story pass down through generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Fred and Betty Williams on their prosperous 70th wedding anniversary.

RECOGNIZING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Centennial Anniversary of the Okaloosa County, Florida Sheriff's Department.

As a former Deputy Sheriff, I understand the important and sometimes underappreciated role that law enforcement officers play in local communities across the Nation. In Northwest Florida, we are fortunate to have many world-class Sheriff's Departments and Police Departments that are working each and every day to protect their neighbors and community. For the last 100 years, the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Department has served a thriving community that has grown from a population of less than 10,000 when the department was created to a home for nearly 200,000 people today.

Yet, while the population has increased nearly twentyfold over the past century, the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Department has always upheld their mission to ''ensure fair and equal administration of the law, safeguarding civil liberties and preserving public safety and doing so with professionalism and unity of purpose, while being good stewards of the public's trust.''

From the first Okaloosa County Sheriff, Benjamin Haywood Sutton, who initially funded the department with his own money, through to the current Sheriff, Larry Ashley, 15 different men have served as Sheriff, while countless have joined the force as deputies. Each and every one of those selfless men and women chose to stand up and serve their communities as officers of the law, and while they do not ask for any recognition in return, they certainly deserve our gratitude and thanks. There is no greater honor than to swear an oath to our Constitution to serve and protect the lives of your fellow man at the risk of your own either at home or abroad, and the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Department has shown over its 100 year history that it is dedicated to serving the people of Okaloosa County.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize the accomplishments and the service the Okaloosa County Florida Sheriff's Department has provided to the community over the last 100 years.

HONORING COMMUNITY ACTION OF VENTURA COUNTY

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Community Action of Ventura County on the occasion of their 50th anniversary. For five decades, this remarkable organization has promoted economic equality through an array of efforts to combat poverty in Ventura County.

Community Action of Ventura County was established in 1965 under the Economic Opportunity Act, one of the first federal anti-poverty programs in the United States. To this day, the organization's mission continues to be to serve as an auxiliary to assist poverty-stricken citizens in achieving self-sufficiency. Today, the organization has proven its effectiveness by reducing poverty rates across the region, and is a recognized leader among community-based organizations.

The services that Community Action of Ventura County provides to residents of our community have been invaluable in assisting those who live below the poverty line. Serving approximately 8,000 clients every year through impactful programs, Community Action of Ventura County has been instrumental in the effort to reduce poverty and economic inequality in Ventura County. With committed and steadfast board members, staff, and volunteers, all working toward the goal of lifting people out of poverty, this organization positively impacts our community through partnership building and advocacy for measures to help low-income individuals and families survive and rise up above poverty.

In its fifty years of service, Community Action of Ventura County has also implemented other important programs such as Los Compadres and Successful Living. Los Compadres and Successful Living aim to work with high risk youth by providing mentors and instructional sessions that teach young people to make responsible decisions and achieve economic success. The organization has not only granted financial assistance to the community, they provide resources to those in need to promote upward mobility, be self-sufficient, and lead successful lives.

For these reasons, I am honored to recognize Community Action of Ventura County on their 50th anniversary. It is with sincere gratitude that I commend Community Action of Ventura County for its continued success and service to our community.

TRIBUTE TO DANNY AND JOYCE WESTLAKE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Danny and Joyce Westlake of Prescott, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. Danny and Joyce were married on July 10, 1965 in Massena, Iowa.

Danny and Joyce's lifelong commitment to each other and their children Jeanette, Doug, Paul and Pamela, along with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren truly embodies our Iowa values. I commend this devoted couple on their 50th year together and I wish them many more. I know my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating them on this momentous occasion.

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed two important programs into law: Medicare and Medicaid.

These two critical programs provide Americans much needed access to healthcare.

They were created out of the truth that healthcare is a right, not a privilege, and no one should fall into poverty due to a lack of healthcare or treatment.

Over the last 50 years, Medicare has helped millions of American families maintain independence and security.

Medicaid provides a health care safety net for senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and children and young adults from working families.

For example, in 2013, in my district, Ohio's third congressional district, 85,313 of the residents received Medicare and 173,991 of the residents received Medicaid.

That is why I applaud Governor Kasich for his decision to expand Medicaid in Ohio.

Our path forward should build upon President Johnson's vision by strengthening Medicare and Medicaid, improving essential benefits, and containing costs.

By closing the prescription drug ''doughnut hole'' and curtailing waste and fraud, the Affordable Care Act lowers costs to beneficiaries and improves benefits.

There are definitely ways to improve Medicare and Medicaid programs, and cut waste, fraud, and abuse.

But, these changes should not be on the backs of our seniors and most vulnerable citizens.

We must work in a bipartisan way to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid and ensure enhanced access to affordable, quality healthcare.

Fifty years later, Medicare and Medicaid continue to save lives, help Americans live healthier, and provide the peace of mind that comes with access to healthcare and treatment.

I will continue to support and improve these two critical programs that are an integral part of our social safety net.

RECOGNIZING MR. RANDY SHAW, KREM 2 NEWS ANCHOR ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Mr. Randy Shaw, Spokane's KREM 2 News anchor for his years of service to Eastern Washington. As a broadcast journalist, Mr. Shaw has faithfully served Spokane, Washington and the entire Inland Northwest for over thirty-three years. Mr. Shaw is retiring at the end of September and I am pleased to recognize his accomplishments and contributions to our great community in Eastern Washington.

Throughout his distinguished career, Mr. Randy Shaw covered the presidencies of Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and George H.W. Bush. Reporting overseas in Asia, Africa, and South America, Mr. Shaw received more than three dozen journalism awards and brought a wide range of news into the homes of the people of Eastern Washington.

Making his journalistic debut in newspaper, Mr. Shaw transitioned to radio and television where he spent the majority of his career. During his time in Spokane, Mr. Shaw was awarded a Regional Edward R. Murrow award for investigative reporting and the National Association of Television Arts and Science Silver Circle for his service to our community.

As the longest serving news anchor in Spokane broadcast history, Mr. Shaw worked diligently to ensure that our citizens are well informed. Moreover, he also endeavored to serve local causes throughout our community.

Through the years, Randy supported numerous local charities and fundraising efforts, including the Inland Northwest Honor Flight, the Alzheimer's Association, the Children's Miracle Network, and the American Red Cross. Off camera, Mr. Shaw is an author, explorer, musician, singer and entertainment producer. He integrates these passions into many of his efforts.

I would like to thank Mr. Randy Shaw for his years of dedication to Spokane and to the Inland Northwest. I applaud his commitment to

the citizens of Eastern Washington and wish him the best of luck in the next chapter of his life.

RECOGNIZING THE 51ST PASSAGE OF THE ''FOOD STAMP ACT''

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 51st anniversary of the ''Food Stamp Act'' of 1964, an act that strengthened the agricultural economy and improved levels of nutrition among low income households.

This impactful legislative achievement was passed by the historic 88th Congress of the United States, and signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 31, 1964.

During the 1960's our nation was in the midst of the biggest legislative civil rights battle since the ratification of the 14th amendment of the Constitution, which addressed citizenship rights and equal protection under the law.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to imagine that during a time where the country was experiencing its largest uninterrupted period of economic expansion, American families were battling a war on poverty.

Leaders like President Johnson, who himself grew up in a poverty stricken family in Stonewall, Texas, had a firsthand account of these struggles that many American families faced on a daily basis.

President Johnson took action and pursued an agenda, which he called ''The Great Society.''

The ''Food Stamp Act'' is a legislative victory for his agenda that benefits those Americans who are living below the poverty line, by providing a sustainable source of food.

The impact of this legislation was simple; it helped put food on tables.

In my city of Houston, Texas, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has helped establish nine major Food Banks that serve the city and its citizens with providing the much needed access to nutrition for families and individuals who otherwise would be unable to afford it without programs created by the ''Food Stamp Act.''

As President Johnson remarked when he signed this act that it, ''weds the best of the humanitarian instincts of the American people with the best of the free enterprise system.''

The most important benefactors of this program have been the children of this nation.

The ''Food Stamp Act'' at the time when it was signed into law assisted 17 million children by giving them access to hot lunches in their schools.

For many of these children this was the first time they had a lunch while at school.

Mr. Speaker, hunger in our nation does not see color or sex or religion. This is a problem that affects us all no matter our background.

While simultaneously strengthening our markets for the farmers, the ''Food Stamp Act'' has immeasurably improved the volume of retail food sales in our nation and around the world.

Our national food abundance should be continuously used constructively not only to combat hunger in our communities but also to help other nations through trade as well as to assist them in providing lunches for some 40 million school children throughout the developing world.

Mr. Speaker, this is why I am proud to remember the positive impact that the ''Food Stamp Act'' has had on our communities, and nation as a whole, along with the millions of lives it has improved over the decades.

IN RECOGNITION OF WILLIAM GRIGGS' SERVICE AS WYANDOTTE CITY CLERK

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize William Griggs for his forty two years of service to the city of Wyandotte. First elected in 1973, Bill is one of the longest serving public officials in the Downriver communities.

Bill is described by his colleagues as dedicated and kind, and is praised in the community for the dignity and professionalism he has brought to the clerk's office. His presence as a leading voice in Wyandotte has been recognized by generations of residents, and with the dedication of the City Council chambers in his honor will be recognized by many more.

Bill has served as a role model in our community, serving as the director of Wyandotte's adaptive recreation program and on the Board of Directors for the National Wheelchair Athletics Committee. He inspired people with disabilities with his participation in the 1968 and 1972 Paralympics Games, and was inducted into the Michigan Athletes with Disabilities Hall of Fame in 2002.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor William Griggs for his forty two years of service and his lasting impact on the Wyandotte community. I thank him for his leadership, and wish him many years of success.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. JESSICA BUTLER

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Jessica Butler for her service to my office and the 21st Congressional District of California over the past two and a half years.

Ms. Butler was born in Wharton, Texas to Robert and Carol Butler and spent her youth in Bay City, Texas with her siblings, Sarah and Sam. After completing her high school education, Ms. Butler studied poultry science and food safety at Texas A&M University and Auburn University.

After college, Jessica accepted a Fellowship with Congressman DEVIN NUNES through the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Federation of Animal Science Societies. Her work in Mr. NUNES' office led her to discover her passion for policy. After completing her fellowship, she joined my office as my Legislative Assistant and became one of the few individuals who can say they worked for every Portuguese Republican from California in the House of Representatives. During her time in my office, she handled several legislative portfolios, including agriculture, energy, healthcare, homeland security, immigration, trade, and water. Last year, she was promoted to Legislative Director and handled my work on the Appropriations committee.

On August 1, 2015, Ms. Butler's time in my office will come to an end. Ms. Butler is returning to Texas, where she will marry Mr. Nathan Russell, a nuclear plant operator who has loved her since their freshman year of high school, on September 19, 2015. While I know her family will be happy to have her back in the Lone Star State, she will be greatly missed as a member of my team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Jessica Butler for her public service to the people of the Central Valley and wishing her well in this next chapter of her life.

TO HONOR THE TEXAS JOB CORPS GRADUATES

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the hard work and dedication of the recent graduates of the Texas Job Corps Centers.

The four Job Corps centers in Texas have served the people of our great state for over 50 years, providing a no-cost education and career technical training program that helps young Texans from ages 16 to 24 improve the quality of their lives through career technical and academic training.

By graduating from the Job Corps, these young men and women have proven that they have skills and determination to succeed and be valuable contributors to communities throughout Texas and the country.

On behalf of the people of the 29th Congressional District of Texas, I would like to congratulate the 2015 Job Corps graduates of all four centers in our state—David L. Carrasco Job Corps, Gary Job Corps, Laredo Job Corps, and North Texas Job Corps.

I would also like to recognize the Texas Job Corps for their half century of success and say thank you for the service the Job Corps Program and its graduates have provided to Texas.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF ADMIRAL JAMES A. WINNEFELD, JR.

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Admiral James A. Winnefeld, Jr., who is retiring July 31, 2015, after serving with distinction for more than 37 years, culminating

his career as Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Throughout his service as a senior military leader, Admiral Winnefeld has provided this body, and in particular the House Armed Services Committee, with invaluable testimony and candid military advice. Over the last four years, Admiral Winnefeld has served as the ninth Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I think I speak for all of my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee when I say his vast experience, knowledge, outstanding leadership and professionalism combined with his deep respect and consideration for all of our service men and women will be greatly missed.

During his tenure as Vice Chairman, he provided military advice to not only the legislative branch, but also to the President of the United States, Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on a wide range of complex military and national security issues during an extremely challenging period in our country's history.

In this challenging fiscal and security environment, Admiral Winnefeld helped lead our military through global events and threats to include the Department of Defense's rebalance to the Pacific, Iraq troop withdrawal, Afghanistan transition, the global threat of ISIL, instability in Syria and Russia's provocative actions in Eastern Europe. In addition, the Vice Chairman played key roles in advising our nation's leaders on and formulating plans for various counterterrorism efforts.

As Vice Chairman, he led the development and implementation of the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, an effort that involved thousands of senior leadership man-hours. Pivotal to his role as the Vice Chairman he also chaired the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (or JROC), where he worked tirelessly to transform the requirements processes to become more agile, transparent and inclusive. He focused its efforts on the immediate capability needs of the Combatant Commanders and the most pressing military issues of the Joint Warfighter. As co-chair of the Defense Acquisition Board, Admiral Winnefeld worked to link the requirements, resource and acquisition communities in developing programs to deliver appropriate capabilities to the Joint Warfighter at the right time and for the right price. Admiral Winnefeld's work as a co-chair of the nuclear weapons council ensured our military's nuclear enterprise and number one priority remained viable and relevant as a strategic deterrent to our nation's adversaries.

Admiral Winnefeld graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology and received his commission from the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps program. He subsequently served with three fighter squadrons flying the F–14 Tomcat and as an instructor at the Navy Fighter Weapons School. Admiral Winnefeld's unit commands at sea include Fighter Squadron 211, USS *Cleveland* (LPD 7) and USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65). He led "Big E" through her 18th deployment, which included combat operations in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom immediately after the terrorist acts of Sept. 11, 2001. As Commander, Carrier Strike Group TWO/Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group, he led Task Forces 50, 152 and 58 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and maritime interception operations in the Arabian Gulf. He also served as Commander, United States SIXTH Fleet, Commander NATO Allied Joint Command Lisbon and Commander Striking and Support Forces NATO.

His shore tours include service in the Joint Staff Operations Directorate (J–3), as Senior Aide to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and as Executive Assistant to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations. As a flag officer he served ashore as director, Warfare Programs and Transformational Concepts, United States Fleet Forces Command, as Director of Joint Innovation and Experimentation at United States Joint Forces Command and as the Director for Strategic Plans and Policy (J–5) on the Joint Staff. Prior to becoming the Vice Chairman, Admiral Winnefeld served as the Commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM).

As the Commander of NORAD and USNORTHCOM, Admiral Winnefeld led historic advances in the working relationship between USNORTHCOM, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Drug Enforcement Administration, Customs and Boarder Protection and the National Guard, specifically with the Dual-Status Commander concept. In addition, he led the U.S.-Mexican military-to-military relationship to a historic level of collaboration and brought very tangible results to our Nations' important struggle against the fast-growing transnational criminal organizations. Through his distinctive accomplishments, Admiral Winnefeld culminated a long and distinguished career in the service of our nation and his tenure leaves a lasting positive legacy to the Armed Forces. I appreciate his extraordinary reflected great credit upon himself, the United States Navy, and the Department of Defense.

For nearly forty years Admiral Winnefeld has performed his duty professionally, honestly and with great dedication. Our nation will miss his leadership and expertise.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in wishing him and his family all the best as he moves to the next phase of his life.

RECOGNIZING COL. CHUCK HODGES' SERVICE TO JOINT BASE LEWIS-McCHORD AND THE UNITED STATES

HON. DENNY HECK

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor my good friend and Commander of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, U.S. Army Colonel Charles Hodges, Jr.

COL Hodges will leave command next month after a tremendously successful three years at JBLM. He has played a critical role in the implementation of joint basing and has proved the success of the program to both the Department of Defense and the Army. In addition, his partnership with the surrounding community is unprecedented. He has strengthened an already robust relationship between the base and community by finding creative solutions to issues such as traffic congestion and noise abatement.

COL Hodges has also been instrumental in ensuring our separating troops can pursue job training and career opportunities. He has worked to develop resources in the surrounding community and at the state and federal levels to provide transition assistance for all veterans.

The Army will be losing a strong leader when COL Hodges retires later this year after a long and impressive career in the Army. He started his service in the summer of 1985 when he enlisted in the Florida National Guard as an 11B Infantryman. After being commissioned as an Infantry Officer and Distinguished Military Graduate from the University of Central Florida (UCF) he completed the Infantry Officer Basic Course, Airborne School and Ranger School. He was then assigned to Germany and 3–5 Cavalry in the 3rd Armored Division. While there he participated in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. After returning from Germany and completing the required military schooling, he commanded A Company, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry (ASSLT) in the Republic of Korea; and Company H, the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) in Arlington, Virginia.

In 2001–2002, COL Hodges attended the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth and was then assigned to Fort Lewis, where he served as a Battalion Operations Officer and Executive Officer in 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry, (Tomahawks); and as the Operations Officer of 3–2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team. While there, he was part of the team that certified the Army's first Stryker Brigade Combat Team and deployed as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

After promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, he served as the Chair of the Military Science Department at Duke University. In 2007, he returned to Fort Lewis and took command of 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry, 3–2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team. He commanded the battalion for three years, and he deployed it to participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom. After command, he was selected to serve as the Director of Training, G3, for I Corps. After attending the United States Army War College, COL Hodges took command of the newly created Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) in August of 2012.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize COL Hodges' successful and decorated career. I commend him for his service, leadership, and dedication. I also wish to recognize the sacrifices and contributions made by his family including his wife Kathy and their children Shelby and Sam.

The State of Washington and our country owe COL Hodges a debt of gratitude for his work and dedication to our country. We thank him for his service to our country and congratulate him as he begins the next chapter of his career.

COMMENDING UNITED STATES-TURKEY MILITARY COOPERATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear the announcement made last Thursday that Incirlik Air Base in Turkey will now be made available for both unmanned and manned airstrikes

against the Islamic State. The announcement indicates a substantial increase in cooperation with our longstanding NATO ally, the Republic of Turkey. The enhanced operations will include the direct involvement of the Turkish Air Force in conjunction with our own military.

In recent days, Islamic State terrorists have stepped up their attacks on Turkey. On July 20, a suicide bomber took the lives of 32 innocent civilians near a cultural center in Suruc, Turkey. On July 23, a non-commissioned Turkish officer was killed in an armed attack at a military border post at Elbeyli, Turkey. I wish to express my sincere condolences to our friends in Turkey for these losses, which provide further evidence of the barbaric nature of the terrorist forces now dominating much of Syria and Iraq.

It is more essential than ever that we deepen our cooperation with key allies like Turkey as we seek to bring peace and security to a troubled region. I wish to commend the continued cooperative efforts of the military leadership in both the United States and the Republic of Turkey. It is essential that this bond between our countries remains strong as we confront this strategic challenge.

TRIBUTE TO KATIE ROTH

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Katie Roth for being named the 2015 Woman Business Owner of the Year by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a group of standout female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Ms. Roth got her start in the news business after earning her Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Journalism from the University of Iowa. With hard work and her natural leadership qualities, Ms. Roth quickly worked her way up in the ranks, until ultimately she decided to open the doors of Portico Staffing. Since founding Portico Staffing, Ms. Roth has continued to grow the business through hard work and determination to succeed.

Ms. Roth has selflessly dedicated her time and talents to improving the lives of others. When she isn't busy expanding the size and scope of her business she invests her time in mentoring others, helping to foster the next generation of Iowa's leaders. Ms. Roth's high ethical standards and level of achievement have given her the necessary qualifications to receive this prestigious award.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ms. Roth in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this distinguished award, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING BASF ON THEIR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize BASF on their 150th Anniversary. Their longevity as a company is a testament to their innovative products, the drive of their leaders, and the hard work of their employees. BASF's presence in the United States goes back to the 1950s, and today they employ over 15,000 Americans in more than 30 states. They deserve to be commended for this milestone anniversary.

BASF is a pillar of our community in Southeast Michigan. Specifically, their plant in Wyandotte, Michigan employs over 1,000 people in good paying, high skilled jobs. Notable is their dedication to community relations and charitable activities. The company played a critical role in the founding of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, the only international wildlife refuge in this country. They worked to restore Fighting Island in the Detroit River so it is suitable for wildlife habitat, and they contributed to the trails in the Humbug Marsh unit, among numerous other activities. Their dedication to conservation, and giving back to the community, is to be commended.

When BASF was founded 150 years ago, nobody would have imagined how large the company would grow or the impact they would have on the world. Today, they continue to produce innovative products while also being responsible corporate stewards. This is significant in today's world and deserves praise. Congratulations to everyone at BASF as you celebrate your 150th Anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 150 years of success and community contributions of BASF.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, from Friday, July 24, 2015 through Tuesday, July 28, 2015, I was out of the country participating in the congressional delegation accompanying President Obama on his diplomatic visits to Kenya and Ethiopia. Had I been present I would have voted as follows:

On Roll Call 467 I would have voted Aye (S. 1482, Need-Based Education Aid Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 468 I would have voted Aye (H.R. 1656, Secret Service Improvements Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 469 I would have voted Aye (Amendment to H.R. 2770, Keep Our Travelers Safe and Secure Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 470 I would have voted No (On Ordering Previous Question for H. Res. 380, providing for consideration of H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 471 I would have voted No (On H. Res. 380, providing for consideration of H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 472 I would have voted Aye (H.R. 675, Veterans Compensation Cost of Living Adjustment Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 473 I would have voted No (Young Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 474 I would have voted No (Smith of Missouri Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 475 I would have voted Aye (Johnson of Georgia Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 476 I would have voted Aye (Capps Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 477 I would have voted Aye (Cicilline Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 478 I would have voted Aye (Jackson Lee/Cicilline Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call 479 I would have voted Aye (Nadler Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call No. 480 I would have voted Aye (Pocan Amendment to H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call No. 481 I would have voted Aye (Motion to Recommit H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

On Roll Call No. 482 I would have voted No (On Passage of H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015).

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICAID AND MEDICARE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid.

In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Social Security Act into law—establishing the groundbreaking programs of Medicare and Medicaid and guaranteeing that a wide range of health and medical services would be available to millions of Americans previously ineligible or unable to attain basic healthcare.

Prior to this law, over half of our nation's seniors did not have access to health insurance. Yet one year after its establishment, 19 million seniors and disabled individuals were provided coverage. That figure has grown dramatically; for the last half century, Medicare and Medicaid have provided vital healthcare

services to countless seniors, individuals with disabilities and low-income families. By 2014, 54 million Americans relied on Medicare for quality health care and economic security, while 69 million—including one in three children—are benefited by Medicaid and its services.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid. I look forward to continuing to strengthen and protect Medicare and Medicaid to ensure that the promise of health and economic security will be there for generations to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 469 my flight was delayed due to weather. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye.

CONGRATULATING FIVE STUDENTS FROM THE 24TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS FOR RECEIVING FULBRIGHT AWARDS DURING THE 2014–2015 ACADEMIC YEAR

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Andrew Hasson of Coppell, Afshan Kamrudin of Carrollton, Matthew Lenzen of Farmers Branch, Abhishek Raj of Carrollton, and Amanda Kathleen White of Farmers Branch, who were selected to be 2014–2015 Fulbright Grantees. This is an incredibly illustrious achievement, and I am honored that these came from my Congressional District in Texas.

The Fulbright Program was established in 1946 by Congress. These five join the already 360,000 past participants over seven decades in the Fulbright Program, a prestigious group selected through open, merit-based competitions. Their destinations and universities are as follows:

Andrew Hasson to Malaysia through the University of Pennsylvania. Afshan Kamrudin to South Africa through Southern Methodist University. Matthew Lenzen to Taiwan through Texas A&M University. Abhishek Raj to Germany through the University of Texas at Dallas. Amanda Kathleen White to Japan through the University of North Texas.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in honoring Andrew Hasson, Afshan Kamrudin, Matthew Lenzen, Abhishek Raj, and Amanda Kathleen White for this tremendous achievement.

HONORING H. GRAYSON COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR JONATHAN SWEET

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. GRIFFITH. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks in honor of Grayson County Administrator Jonathan Sweet, who was recently named 2015 County Leader of the Year by Penton Media's "American City and County" magazine.

As is noted in the magazine's story, "Sweet started his professional career as the Director of Economic Development of Carroll County, Va., and then served Danville, Va., in their office of economic development. Sweet then moved to Bland County, Va., to become County Administrator at the age of 24—one of the youngest in the state to hold that position. However, he was tied to Grayson [County], where many of his friends and family lived. It's where he felt most at home."

Jonathan returned to Grayson in 2009 to serve as County Administrator and began addressing several difficult challenges, among them returning financial stability to the county and encouraging the growth of jobs and the economy. "As the furniture industry shrank and textile jobs moved overseas, the county really began to suffer, ultimately hitting an unemployment rate of 14.6 percent," Derek Prall wrote in the magazine. "By the time Sweet came on board, the county had taken on $18.3 million in debt, and was relying on credit to stay afloat."

He immediately began working at the tasks at hand. In part because of Jonathan's efforts, "Grayson county went from one of the most financially challenged and distressed counties in Virginia, to becoming one of the most financially stable and well managed in the region," David Sexton, Chairman of the Grayson County Board of Supervisors, told the magazine. Further, the magazine notes, "The unemployment rate now stands at 6.9 percent, less than half of what it was at its peak."

Jonathan Sweet is a hardworking, dedicated, and passionate public servant, and I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating him on being named the 2015 County Leader of the Year. I commend Jonathan for his accomplishments and for his ongoing efforts to make Grayson County a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE OPEN AND TRANSPARENT SMITHSONIAN ACT OF 2015

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Open and Transparent Smithsonian Act of 2015 to further ensure that the Smithsonian Institution is accountable to the public for the taxpayer funds it receives. The bill provides that, for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act, the Smithsonian should be considered a federal agency. This bill is necessary because there is no reason why the Smithsonian should not be accountable to the public for the annual federal appropriations it receives, which account for 70 percent of its budget. Although the Smithsonian was created by Congress as a federal trust, it receives the great majority of its funding from the federal government, much like federal agencies, and has always been treated as a federal agency except for FOIA and other open government laws. In the 1990s, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit found under the current act that the Smithsonian is not a federal agency for purposes of FOIA and the Privacy Act. The Smithsonian's website states that it is "not an Executive Branch agency, and FOIA does not apply to the Smithsonian."

This bill would amend FOIA and the Privacy Act to apply to the Smithsonian, which would require the institution to make administrative staff manuals, interpretations of law or regulations, final opinions, policies, and other records available to the public. The bill would also require the Smithsonian's Board of Regents and other boards to hold meetings to the public.

The current absence of transparency at the Smithsonian should be of concern, particularly in light of its recent history of secrecy and corruption. In 2007, an independent review found that the Smithsonian Board of Regents had violated many principles of good management Regents during the tenure of Lawrence Small as Secretary of the Smithsonian. The report indicated that the Board had failed to provide the needed oversight, had over-compensated the Secretary, and had allowed the creation of an "insular culture." The report further found that the Smithsonian's deputy secretary and chief operating officer, Sheila Burke, was frequently absent from her duties because of outside activities, including service on corporate boards, for which she earned more than $1.2 million over six years. Importantly, the report indicated that Smithsonian leaders took great measures to keep secret these missteps and mismanagement.

While the Smithsonian has since had new leaders, who are moving away from the mistakes of the past, Congress has not ensured that the Smithsonian is a transparent entity, which should not depend on who is in charge. An entity supported primarily by federal funds must be accountable to the American people.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD J. TRACY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Donald J. Tracy of Cedar Park, TX. A pillar of this bustling community nestled in the heart of my congressional district, Donald recently resigned from the Cedar Park City Council to start a challenging doctoral program at Texas State University.

Daily life in Cedar Park rests upon the shoulders of dedicated public servants like Donald Tracy. First elected to the City Council in 2010, Donald served as mayor pro tem and as a critical member of several city committees. Widely admired and respected for his

leadership, Donald has been a public servant both his colleagues and constituents could rely upon.

Donald's dedication to service extends to his professional endeavors as well. For over 15 years, he has worked in Central Texas as a human resource management and workforce education professional, where he has led community- and state-wide skills development initiatives focused on training workers in high-growth, high-opportunity industry clusters. He currently works for Austin Community College, where he serves as Director of Business Operations and Marketing in the Continuing Education Division. Donald's doctoral work will directly support his critical efforts to develop certification programs for adults who want to transition into new jobs.

Donald Tracy's extraordinary commitment to service reflects the best values of Central Texas. There's no doubt that Cedar Park is a better place because of him. I heartily salute his work and wish him the best of luck in all his new endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR SARA KUROVSKI

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Sara Kurovski, Mayor of Pleasant Hill, for being named the 2015 Meredith Woman of Influence honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a group of standout female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Mayor Kurovski's passion for public service began when she attended Drake University and received her Master's degree in public administration. Since graduation she has dedicated her time and talents to serving others and improving her community.

Elected in 2013 as Mayor of Pleasant Hill, she has worked tirelessly to improve her community. Mayor Kurovski initially was involved in a number of boards for the city of Pleasant Hill, where her passion for public service and improving the lives of others grew. But running the city of Pleasant Hill is only one aspect of her life, and her work does not stop there. She also works for Iowa based Kum & Go as their manager of sustainability. I admire her dedication to the State of Iowa and believe it is hard working people like Mayor Kurovski that will lead our future generations.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Mayor Kurovski in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING CONGRESSMAN KEN HECHLER AND CAROL HECHLER

HON. ALEXANDER X. MOONEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Congressman Ken Hechler and Carol Hechler on reaffirming their commitment to each other in their marriage on August 8th. Congressman Hechler has honorably served the amazing state of West Virginia for over fifty years, first as a combat historian in the United States Army during World War II, then as the Representative of the 4th district and as West Virginia's Secretary of State. I am overjoyed that Congressman Hechler has decided to honor and uphold the sacred institution of marriage with his wife, Carol.

I join with their families, friends, and loved ones in congratulating Congressman Hechler and his wife Carol on this momentous occasion. I wish the reaffirmed couple the best of luck, and long, happy lives together.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. CHAD AUDI'S SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Chad Audi's years of service to our community and the State of Michigan.

The Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries started as a soup kitchen in 1909. It had a reputation for serving hot meals, providing canned goods, and other necessities to feed many people who had so little. Today, they offer numerous services including substance abuse treatment, transitional and permanent housing, job preparation, and educational courses. Starting as a volunteer in 1994, Dr. Audi has worked tirelessly to transform this organization.

After 10 years of service, Dr. Audi became the President and CEO of the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries in 2004. Since then, he has helped to make this community institution into the largest rescue mission in the United States. The resources they offer to women, children, senior citizens, and veterans, have made the Detroit Metropolitan Area a better place to work and live. Dr. Audi's tenure and contributions reflect his passion for service, his commitment to his community, and his calling to improve the lives of others. Dr. Audi deserves our utmost respect and admiration and this world would be a better place with more people like him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the work of Dr. Chad Audi and the strength he has given to the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. ALEXIS JOY MARIE HAYES

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Alexis Joy Marie Hayes for her service to my office and to the people of the 21st Congressional District of California.

Alexis Hayes was born and raised in Visalia, California to Mr. and Mrs. James and Kristin Hayes on February 5, 1994. Six years later, in 1999, Alexis was blessed with the birth of her sister, Rileey Hayes.

Ms. Hayes attended Mountain View Elementary and Divisadero Middle School prior to attending Mt. Whitney High School, where she graduated in 2012. Following high school, Alexis began her general studies at the College of the Sequoias in Visalia, California. While in school, Ms. Hayes served as the President of the local College Republicans Chapter.

Since high school, Ms. Hayes has been an active member of her community. From an early age, she has demonstrated a strong interest in politics and an unwavering commitment to public service.

She has held positions as Office Manager for Valadao for Congress, Intern for Congressman DEVIN NUNES, and most recently, as a Constituent Services Representative in my Hanford, California office.

Friday, July 31, 2015, will be Ms. Hayes last day as a member of my staff. In August, Ms. Hayes will begin attending the University of California, Berkeley. While I am proud of her academic achievements, she will be greatly missed as a member of my team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Alexis Hayes for her public service to the people of the Central Valley and wishing her well as she begins the next chapter of her life.

TRIBUTE TO WORLD WAR II VETERAN CARL CRISP

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of a remarkable war hero from Indiana's 6th Congressional District—World War II Veteran, Carl Crisp.

Carl honorably served in the United States Army Air Corps from 1943 to 1945. He flew numerous missions with the allied forces throughout the Ardennes and played a critical role in liberating France from Nazi occupation.

It's been a long time coming, but on Saturday, August 1, 2015, Carl will be presented the French Legion of Honor Medal during a ceremony at the Henry County Historical Society Museum. This distinguished honor is given only to those who have served France or the ideals it upholds, and Carl's service in World War II makes him more than deserving.

I congratulate Carl on this recognition and thank him for his service on behalf of our great nation. The entire free world owes him a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid.

GUTHRIE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Guthrie's Chicken based in my hometown of Haleyville, Alabama for 50 years in the 4th Congressional District, Alabama and the southeastern United States.

In 1965 Hal Guthrie opened a drive-in restaurant in Haleyville serving hamburgers, barbeque, fish and fried chicken.

Eighteen years after opening, Hal Guthrie decided to add chicken fingers to the menu, which included a family created dipping sauce. Guthrie did not know at the time that his decision would make his name known from one side of Alabama to the other.

In 1982, the Guthries opened a second restaurant, this one just off campus of Auburn University. Not only was the Guthrie's chicken finger box popular with college students, people visiting Auburn for football games wanted a location in their hometown as well.

The Guthries answered that demand by opening several more stores across Alabama and also in places like Athens, Georgia, Tallahassee, Florida and even Cleveland, Ohio. If there is one thing that comes close to being as big as football in the south, it's a love for Guthrie's chicken.

A half-century after the first restaurant was opened by the Guthrie family, they are still a family owned and operated business. They are a shining example of American entrepreneurship. Having grown up in Haleyville and being in the 4th Congressional District, I am particularly proud of this great tradition and wish the Guthries another 50 years of great success.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT

HON. MARTHA McSALLY

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, legislation that has helped countless Americans maintain their independence and dignity as they grow older.

The modest programs under the Older Americans Act make a big difference in communities across our country by providing nutrition and transportation assistance to seniors and helping them meet their daily needs.

In Pima County in my district, the Older Americans Act provides: 800 people a day with a home delivered meal; 1,200 people with assistance with bath, laundry, and other household needs; transportation to senior meal sites; and many other services.

Nearly 130,000 seniors live in the Second District, and they deserve the opportunity to live out their retirement without worrying about how they will meet basic needs.

Recently we saw the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act as well as the Senate unanimously pass legislation to reauthorize these critical programs. I urge my colleagues in the House to support reauthorization, so we can help give seniors the retirement security they deserve.

CANCEL AUGUST RECESS

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that Congress plans to adjourn for August recess without addressing critical issues important to the American people.

I appreciate that district work periods allow Members to visit with folks back in their community, but it is now becoming a habit for Congress to abandon a long ''to do'' list in the rush to get out of town. This August is no exception.

Unfortunately, Congress has not done its job. It has not completed the work of the people; including budgeting and critical national security legislation. Our constituents expect us to stay and finish the job.

Let's clear our schedules and—in the strongest possible terms—request the Speaker to call Congress back to Washington for the month of August and to finish the business of the people.

As I have said in previous years on the eve of August recess, I'm prepared to stay in Washington as long as it takes.

These issues are too important to delay.

TRIBUTE TO KATHRYN KUNERT

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kathryn Kunert for being named a 2015 Woman of Influence honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a group of standout female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Ms. Kunert is a true testament to hard work, dedication and commitment. She has spent the last 19 years at MidAmerican Energy and now serves as the Vice President of Business and Community Development. Throughout her time at MidAmerican she has focused on forging lasting relationships in the community and with businesses, helping to grow the size and scope of MidAmerican. Through her leadership and expertise, Ms. Kunert has had a positive and lasting impact on all she has worked with.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ms. Kunert in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this distinguished award, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO HOWARD KELLER

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Howard Keller for his many years of service to the community of Adrian, Michigan.

On July 21, Mr. Keller retired after 34 years as a board member of the Lenawee Intermediate School District, most recently as board president. As an advocate for students and teachers alike, Mr. Keller's vision and dedicated servant leadership has been instrumental in moving the school district forward.

In addition to his role on the school board, Mr. Keller's tireless leadership has been evident in a number of causes. Earlier this year, Mr. Keller stepped down as a board member of the Lenawee Community Mental Health Authority after 26 years of service. He also continues to serve as the treasurer of the Maurice Spear Campus corporation board, a juvenile detention facility, a position he has held for 25 years.

Mr. Keller has left an indelible impact on our community through his dedication to promoting quality education, providing for those with developmental and emotional disabilities, and helping youth in need. He will be sorely missed, but I trust he will enjoy spending his newfound freedom with his family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Howard Keller for his many years of dedicated public service and wish him the best in his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for roll call votes 467–482 due to congressional travel.

Had I been present, I would have voted yes on #467, yes on #468, yes on #469, no on #470, no on #471, yes on #472, no on #473, no on #474, yes on #475, yes on #476, yes on #477, yes on #478, yes on #479, yes on #480, yes on #481, and no on #482.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. JOE BOB McGINNIS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and Christian ministry of Dr. Joe Bob McGinnis. The residents of Roanoke and surrounding communities were blessed to have had such a wonderful Pastor, neighbor, and friend.

Dr. Joe Bob McGinnis was born September 30, 1947 in Brownwood to Dr. Robert W. and Joyce McGinnis He earned his B.S. degree and doctor of divinity degree from Dallas Baptist College and his master of divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

For the past 44 years, Dr. McGinnis preached and brought the Word of God to people all over Texas. He pastored several churches including Northrich Baptist Church in Richardson, First Baptist Church in McAllen, as well as the church that he founded, Rockhaven Church in Roanoke. Joe Bob loved the Lord and his entire congregation. He offered words of comfort and peace to those who were suffering while also preaching The Word boldly and fervently.

Dr. McGinnis is survived by his wife, Brenda, daughter, Taylor Hubbard, and son Josh. Dr. McGinnis' efforts to spread the Gospel of Christ will not be forgotten as he leaves behind his beloved church and thriving congregation in Roanoke. Each year he led Trophy Club's National Day of Prayer event and delivered thoughtful and timely devotions recognizing the faith foundation of our country. I personally appreciated his prayers for myself and other public officials. It is an honor to have represented such an esteemed constituent in the U.S. House of Representatives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr Speaker, on Monday, July 21, 2015, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

''Yes'' on roll call vote No. 448 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1557), and

''Yes'' on roll call vote No. 449 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2256, as amended).

CONGRATULATING COLONEL TODD MAYER

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Military, I congratulate Colonel Todd Mayer on 30 years of valued service and dedication to his country.

Since 1985, Col. Mayer has upheld the core LDRSHIP values that are near and dear to the National Guard: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-Service, Honor, Integrity, & Personal Courage.

A highly decorated soldier, Col. Mayer was awarded the Purple Heart in 1991 after being wounded in Operation Desert Storm and the Bronze Star in 2003 for his heroic achievement. His time in uniform is celebrated by these courageous leadership efforts. He has brought incomparable virtue to himself, his family, his uniform, and his nation.

Col. Mayer, congratulations again on your retirement and thank you for your longstanding service to the United States Army National Guard.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF KAREN IGNAGNI

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Karen Ignagni for her more than two decades of leadership as President and CEO of America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and to wish her every success in her new position as President and CEO of EmblemHealth.

Karen Ignagni served with great distinction at AHIP. Her intellect, broad policy knowledge and experience helped shape some of the most consequential national health policies for our country, including the Affordable Care Act. Her ability to see the benefits the Act would bring to insurers and consumers was extraordinarily important and contributed to the successes now being realized by millions of Americans.

Jay Gellert, the highly regarded President and CEO of Health Net praised Karen, saying that

''She was the face of the industry when it was attacked. Without compromising her beliefs, she handled all of that with integrity and dignity, and I think that was because from the start she was committed to the end point.'' He opined that after all she had done to frame the Affordable Care Act's regulatory infrastructure, she probably took on the challenges of leading EmblemHealth as a way to ''play it out on the ground.''

Karen Ignagni, a native of Providence, Rhode Island, is a graduate of Providence College and earned her MBA at Loyola College. Prior to her work at AHIP, she served as Director of the AFL–CIO's Department of Employee Benefits, and worked for the U.S. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and in the office of Senator Claiborne Pell. She has written about health policy issues and has received many honors for her leadership, including the Second Century Award for Excellence in Health Care.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire House of Representatives to join me in paying tribute to Karen Ignagni and wishing her every success in her leadership of EmblemHealth. We are a stronger, better country because of Karen Ignagni and her distinguished work and I'm privileged to have worked with her and call her my friend.

EXEMPLARY VOLUNTEERISM: TOBIAS GEIGER

HON. RICHARD M. NOLAN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and thank Tobias Geiger from East Central Electric Cooperative in my district for his service and sacrifice to put into action cooperative principle #6—cooperation among cooperatives. In March this year, Tobias traveled to Haiti as a volunteer for the NRECA International Foundation where he helped build the country's first electric cooperative. This work is part of a rural electrification project managed by NRECA International and funded by the United Nationals Environmental Program, USAID, and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Electricity is a critical element in improving the quality of life and to providing healthcare, education, access to clean water and economic opportunity. In Haiti, less than 15 percent of the population has regular access to electricity. Tobias spent two weeks in the town of Coteaux to help build a distribution system that will interconnect three towns. Upon completion, the diesel-solar hybrid electric system will provide safe, affordable and reliable power to 1600 consumers. His contribution included upgrading and installing new power lines, training locally hired linemen in proper construction methods, pole climbing techniques, proper handline use, and important safety practices.

Thank you Tobias Geiger, for your dedication and commitment.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORY OVER JAPAN DAY

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Yankee Air Museum's observance of the 70th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day. Because of the bravery of the Greatest Generation, this day marks the end of humanity's darkest time, the spreading of liberty to many peoples across the world, and the start of the greatest peace time economic boom in American history.

On August 15th, 1945, the Empire of Japan surrendered to the United States aboard the USS *Missouri.* Seventy years after the end of the Second World War, we celebrate this historical event and honor the sacrifices of the brave men and women who served this country.

We are honored to have the Yankee Air Museum commemorate this event. Since the formation of the Yankee Air Museum in 1981, it has done excellent work to restore and preserve artifacts from World War II. Through its commemoration of Rosie the Riveter, the museum has tirelessly highlighted the efforts of the women who were the heartbeat of the Arsenal of Democracy.

Mr. Speaker, as the World War II era aircrafts fly over Yankee Air Museum, I hope my colleagues will join me to celebrate the freedom of the many because of the sacrifices of the men and women of the greatest generation.

275TH ANNIVERSARY OF CORNWALL, CONNECTICUT

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 275th anniversary of Cornwall, Connecticut.

This weekend, Cornwall will begin its celebration of this historic milestone. Over the past 275 years, Cornwall has stayed true to its roots as a small agricultural New England town. Its rich history has endured and remains evident in its rolling farmlands and colonial era architecture.

Though small in size, the town of Cornwall has been making a big impact since it was incorporated in 1740. During the 1800s, Cornwall's rich natural resources made it an ideal location for iron production. Two of Cornwall's iron firms formed part of the nationally recognized Salisbury Iron District. Cornwall is also home to the historic Covered Bridge. Built in 1864, this is one of the last standing covered bridges in Connecticut, and is still functional today. The bridge serves as an enduring symbol of Cornwall's rural New England legacy.

Cornwall exemplifies the type of small agricultural community on which our country was built. As we have grown as a nation, this community has continued to demonstrate its ability to adapt and prosper. I am honored to represent Cornwall in Congress.

Congratulations to Cornwall on its 275th anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ''END OIL AND GAS TAX SUBSIDIES ACT OF 2015''

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the ''End Oil and Gas Tax Subsidies Act of 2015'' that will save American taxpayers more than $40 billion over the next decade.

American taxpayers are subsidizing some of the largest and most profitable companies in the world with their tax dollars. These subsidies underwrite the costs of oil and gas production, including offsetting intangible drilling costs, the cost of tertiary injectants, and costs associated with domestic production. There are also subsidies that offset foreign taxes, provide tax shelters disguising active income with passive losses, and subsidies that allow major oil companies to discount the value of their inventories.

The ''End Oil and Gas Tax Subsidies Act of 2015'' would end 10 of the most egregious tax loopholes enjoyed by the oil and gas industry—tax loopholes that have helped companies like Chevron, ExxonMobil and Shell add to the billions in profits they already make every year. The legislation is very similar to President Obama's proposal to eliminate oil and gas tax preferences in his FY 2016 Budget.

Instead of padding the bottom line of oil and gas companies, taxpayer dollars could be better spent renewing and rebuilding our nation's infrastructure and investing in emerging clean resources like wind and solar that will help us combat climate change and transition to a clean energy future.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this important legislation.

TRIBUTE TO ELISABETH BUCK

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Elisabeth Buck for being named a 2015 Woman of Influence honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Ms. Buck has served in a wide-range of leadership roles throughout her career. At Iowa State University, where she earned a BA in political science, Ms. Buck and her peers realized her leadership abilities when she was elected student body president. That was just the beginning. She went on to serve as Deputy Chief of Staff for Iowa Governors Tom Vilsack and Chet Culver. Following her time in the Governor's Office she took on the role as Director of Iowa Workforce Development (IWD). As Director of IWD, Ms. Buck changed the culture of the state agency, creating a more efficient and effective department through the implementation of new, innovative programs.

After her work in state government, Ms. Buck joined United Way of Central Iowa in 2011 as Senior Vice President of Community Impact. Since then, she has risen through the ranks and now serves as the Chief Community Impact Officer. Her time at United Way has been concentrated on advancing their overall mission of improving lives through the mobilization of the community and rallying around a common goal. As the Chief Community Impact Officer she oversees a sizeable budget, utilizing the resources given to her in a cost-efficient and effective manner.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ms. Buck in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her abilities to better her community and the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

HONORING MR. LANCE GROMME, RECIPIENT OF THE 2015 VETERAN OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR THE STATE OF WASHINGTON VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Lance Gromme of Colville, Washington for receiving the 2015 Veteran of the Year Award for the State of Washington Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). I want to recognize Mr. Gromme for his contributions and his tireless effort to improve the lives of our Eastern Washington veterans.

This annual award honors a veteran from Washington State who has committed him or herself to the ideals of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and who shows an undying devotion to bettering the lives of the veterans within their community. Through the years, Mr. Lance Gromme has demonstrated this commitment and is well deserving of this award.

Mr. Gromme's devotion to serving his fellow veterans began forty years ago when he became a life member of the American Legion while still active duty in the United States Army. After his retirement, Lance continued to show his dedication by becoming a life member of the VFW. After joining the Colville, Washington post in 2009, Mr. Gromme quickly became a leader among his peers. After just one year of involvement at the Colville post he assumed the positions of Quarter Master, Service Officer, and Fundraising Coordinator. In addition to meticulously managing finances and running all major fundraising events, Mr. Gromme spends countless hours diligently working for veterans.

In his role, Mr. Gromme was instrumental in encouraging the Stevens County Commissioners to establish a Veterans Resource Phone line to assist veterans with a wide range of needs and issues. Moreover, when it came to his attention that some veterans were not receiving the services they needed, he joined with the Northeast Washington Hunger Coalition to help those veterans in need. Mr. Gromme is a true testament to what an involved and devoted community member looks like and continually goes above and beyond to better the lives of his fellow veterans.

So today I acknowledge these accomplishments and congratulate Mr. Lance Gromme on being a constant leader in his community and on receiving the distinct award of Veteran of the Year for the Washington State Veterans of Foreign Wars. I applaud your work and continued advocacy for the veterans in Northeastern Washington.

RETIREMENT OF COLLEEN KELLEY, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL TREASURY EMPLOYEES UNION

HON. DONNA F. EDWARDS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of Colleen Kelley who is retiring as President of the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU). Her resignation will become effective in August, following NTEU's National Convention in Hollywood, Florida.

Colleen Kelley has provided the NTEU and federal employees with skilled leadership over the past 16 years, while always advocating in an honest and forthright manner with Congress. Having served at the IRS and in various NTEU roles, her experience and unique perspective on the impacts of proposals on

federal employees was vital in educating lawmakers and constituents on the important role federal employees play in keeping our nation safe and growing our economy.

During her national presidency, federal employees have contributed $159 billion toward deficit reduction over 10 years in pay freezes, increased pension retirement contributions, and furloughs. She has relentlessly educated the public on the important contributions made by federal employees and how cutting employee pay and benefits hurts our government's ability to recruit and retain the best workforce possible to serve the American people.

As someone who has the honor of representing over 51,000 federal employees from the 4th Congressional District of Maryland, I have been fortunate to work closely with Colleen for several years. I thank her for her dedication to federal employees and our country, and I look forward to coordinating closely with Colleen's successor to ensure America's federal employees receive the pay and benefits they deserve.

I wish Colleen continued success, happiness, and hopefully some well-earned rest. She leaves behind a legacy of service that others can and should aspire to.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $18,151,851,139,012.51. We've added $7,524,974,090,099.43 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $7.5 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

RECOGNIZING COLONEL H. CHARLES ''CHUCK'' HODGES JR.

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the service of Colonel H. Charles ''Chuck'' Hodges Jr., a decorated and active leader in our Armed Forces.

For the past several years, Chuck has commanded Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) with passion, courage, and dedication. With unparalleled determination to forge stronger ties with the surrounding communities, improve the on-base education system, and assist with the transition from military to civilian life, Chuck has tirelessly worked to improve the lives of those both on and off the base.

During his command, Chuck has been fully aware that his influence and work extends beyond JBLM's fences. He has been recognized on numerous occasions for his work, including with the Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber Military Citizen of the Year award, which honored his tireless efforts to cultivate a stronger bond with the base's host community.

Chuck has also helped to facilitate the renovation and replacement of five aging on-base schools. These schools, modernized with Congressional funding following the efforts of the Military Child Education Initiative, are the foundation for the growth and development of the next generation of leaders, both military and civilian.

Furthermore, Chuck's focus on smoothing the transition from military to civilian life is a major asset to the Puget Sound region and our military veterans. He assisted thousands of service members by helping to facilitate job fairs, training, and career-counseling services on base. His hard work is paying off: between December 2011 and April 2014, the employment rate of service members transitioning from JBLM rose from 18 to 42 percent. While there is still work to be done, Chuck's efforts have undoubtedly left a mark in providing for our past, future and present service members.

It is with great honor that I recognize Chuck as he moves on from his position as Base Commander of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, and more importantly for his 30 years of service in the United States Army. I wish him the best and am confident that he will continue to do outstanding work in his civilian life.

HONORING THE STAFF OF THE COLUMBIA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working and dedicated staff of the Columbia County Department of Social Services.

The good people of Columbia County, New York are well served by this outstanding group of high minded professionals whose sole purpose is to serve the public. Rarely do these fine individuals receive any sort of public acclaim; nonetheless, they remain steadfast in their commitment to providing timely and effective human services. Whether it be providing funding for fuel oil to needy families each winter, finding shelter for families during hard times, protecting children from the horrors of child abuse, or reuniting a family torn apart by the ravages of substance abuse, Commissioner Jablonka and his staff are relentless in their pursuit of the public welfare.

Commissioner Jablonka, who began his illustrious career in public service as a DSS caseworker more than forty years ago, is blessed to have an outstanding staff assisting him. Deputy Commissioner Michelle Ublacker has made a tremendous contribution to the agency in the few short months since coming on board. She brings with her a strong background in human services, years of experience as a DSS caseworker and a tenacious work ethic. Her commitment to excellence is apparent to all who serve with her. Under Michelle is an exemplary group of Directors who oversee the day to day operations of the agency: Lynn Kutski, Judy Richards, Deborah Amerling and Valerie Caruso make up this exceptional team and together they have worked hard to help move the agency forward into the twenty-first century. With leadership such as this, it is easy to see how the Department continues to excel in its efforts to serve our community.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the most important group of individuals who contribute to the success of Columbia County's Department of Social Services—the caseworkers, investigators and the clerical and legal staffs who are the backbone of the agency. They lead the way in the ongoing struggle to end poverty, child abuse, substance abuse, and domestic violence. They protect the young and the old alike, and they do so without fanfare. But today we acknowledge our caseworkers and thank them for all that they do.

May God bless each member of this team.

HONORING EDWARD ''SANDY'' MOTON DAVIS III ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE

HON. TOM PRICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. VAN HOLLEN of Maryland, and I would like to recognize the career and retirement of Sandy Davis, the associate director for legislative affairs for the Congressional Budget Office [CBO] and thank him for his distinguished service to the Budget Committee and the Congress.

Sandy is retiring after 36 years of dedicated service to the federal government. Sandy first joined CBO in 1996 as a senior analyst focusing on Congressional budget procedures and practices. Since 2003, he has served as the associate director for legislative affairs. In this role, Sandy has diligently served as CBO's chief liaison to the Congress and has worked closely with the Budget Committee. He has been invaluable in assisting committee members and staff in fulfilling our responsibilities under the Congressional Budget Act. During his time at CBO, Sandy has served under six Directors and in both Republican and Democratic Congresses. Prior to joining CBO, he served as an analyst and senior budget process specialist at the Congressional Research Service.

As the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Budget Committee, we greatly appreciate Sandy's exceptional service to the Budget Committee and the Congress. Sandy exemplifies CBO's high standard of professionalism, expertise, and nonpartisanship. We wish him all the best in his retirement and future endeavors.

RECOGNITION OF THE JUSTICE FOR CONGO VICTIMS AND CONGO REFORMS PEACE CONVENTION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wish to submit the following

statement in recognition of the Justice for Congo Victims and Congo Reforms Peace Convention hosted at University of Texas at Arlington. I would like to express my gratitude to Richard Millsap for asking me to participate in this Peace Convention. I would also like to thank those of you who were involved in making this event happen and all of the participants who have taken time out of their schedules to be a part of such a momentous conference.

I have been a longtime advocate for peace and diplomacy over armed conflict. As many of you know, I began my A World of Women for World Peace initiative in 2001. Throughout my time in office, I have seen first-hand the pillage of war. Shortly after experiencing the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, I saw on the cover of Newsweek magazine, two boys from Liberia who were 12 and 14 years old dressed in military gear with machine guns, and I just thought enough was enough. I wondered how our world had come to this place of aggression, and I knew that I had to do something to be a part of bringing a culture of peace to the world.

My efforts started with women who are the mothers of young boys like the ones I saw on the cover of that magazine, whose lives are sacrificed in the name of war. We must recognize and empower these women to facilitate peace-building, peacemaking, and peacekeeping activities across the world. We must also recognize the experts and leaders who help us to plant the seeds of peace.

I recently participated in my A World of Women for World Peace conference in Taipei, Taiwan, where we discussed ways to build peace through culture. One panelist in particular spoke about the necessity of compassion and healing the wounds of civil wars and genocides before peace can be achieved on the ground. I strongly believe that this is the case in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The global community must recognize the tragedies of the Congo before the Congolese people can truly move forward to a place of peace. Thank you for allowing me to provide written remarks and I hope you have a productive Peace Convention.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of this week's 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which was signed into law July 26, 1990.

This milestone piece of legislation marked a positive step forward in affording Americans with disabilities the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It represented a significant change in national anti-discrimination laws, making discrimination against Americans with disabilities in the private sphere illegal, and requiring reasonable public accommodation. However, there is still work to be done to improve the lives of Americans with disabilities. Some still trail the population in many economic indicators, as they are twice as likely to be poor and one-fifth as likely to be employed. The ADA was a major step toward ensuring economic independence.

In my district, the Disability Student Support Services project at Queens College was recently awarded a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education that will help fund that program. This program aids a group of 100 students in their studies at Queens College, and provides them the support they need to ensure that they graduate.

I would like to commend my constituent, Charmaine Worthy, for her efforts in the CUNY system serving disabled students. As the University Coordinator of Student Activities, she has worked tirelessly to empower CUNY students. Thank you, Ms. Worthy, for your important work. You are a shining example of the importance of giving back to one's community.

Educational and economic gaps that persist between disabled Americans and their peers shrink through people like Ms. Worthy, institutions like CUNY, and the grants that fund these important programs.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY OF SOS COMMUNITY SERVICES

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize SOS Community Services for its 45th anniversary. For 45 years, SOS has worked to end homelessness for families in Washtenaw County by providing resources and support to the community. As a result of their dedicated service and their mission to promote housing stability and self-sufficiency, SOS has immensely bettered Washtenaw County.

SOS Community Services was started in 1970 by students and faculty at Eastern Michigan University. Originally, the group provided a 24-hour crisis phone line to EMU students. It has grown into an effective and critical nonprofit organization committed to ending familial homelessness in all of Washtenaw County.

SOS Community Services provides a wide range of services and support. They run a food pantry, provide temporary shelter and rehousing services, and work with families to find employment, pursue further education, and after-school and tutoring programs for children and young people. They also provide struggling families with everyday necessities such as utility assistance, bus tokens and access to computers and phones.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor 45 years of ardent service to their community. With compassion and respect, vital services are provided to maintain and raise the quality of life for approximately 4,700 people. I look forward to seeing further inspiring work from SOS Community Services.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. TYLER WILLIAM BECK

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Tyler William Beck for his service to my office and to the people of California's 21st Congressional District.

Tyler Beck was born in Salinas, California on September 14, 1991 to Mr. and Mrs. Steven and Alice Beck. Tyler and his two younger brothers, Zachary Beck and Benjamin Beck, grew up in Hanford, California, where they reside today.

Prior to high school, Mr. Beck attended St. Rose McCarthy for his elementary and middle school education. In 2006, he began high school at Hanford High School, where he graduated in 2010. Following his primary education, Mr. Beck attended the College of the Sequoias Hanford as well as West Hills College Lemoore.

Throughout his college education, Mr. Beck has served California's 21st Congressional District as an Administrative Assistant in my Hanford, California office. Mr. Beck's commitment to public service and strong ties to the community have made him an invaluable asset to my team.

Friday, August 21, 2015 will be Mr. Beck's last day as a member of my staff. With a passion for agriculture and teaching, Mr. Beck will be attending Fresno State University. While I am proud of his academic ambition, Tyler will be greatly missed by my entire team.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in commending Tyler Beck for his public service to the people of the Central Valley and wishing him the very best as he begins this exciting chapter of his life.

TRIBUTE TO PAT BODDY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Pat Boddy for being named a 2015 Woman of Influence honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Ms. Boddy started a career in journalism after moving from the St. Louis area to Des Moines. After working at WHO radio, where she found her passion for environmental engineering, she attended Iowa State University. It was there that she graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Engineering and

shortly thereafter a Master's degree in Water Resources.

Ms. Boddy has a long history of leading and serving others in a number of different roles. She has served as the Director of Polk County Conservation, the Deputy and Interim Director of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and now serves as the Stewardship Director at RDG Planning and Design in Des Moines. She has worked tirelessly to support the sustainability of not only her community, but the entire state.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Ms. Boddy in the United States Congress, and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better her community and the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

THE 240TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MILITARY CHAPLAINCY FOUNDING

HON. TIM HUELSKAMP

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, military life is filled with unspoken hardships, extraordinary demands—physically, mentally, spiritually, and relationally—and constant sacrifice by both our military members and their families. Recognizing this tremendous cost on our soldiers and the need to lighten their burdens, at the request of George Washington, the continental Congress created the military chaplaincy 240 years ago today. In fact, George Washington believed chaplains were so essential he asked for an increase in their pay in order ''to encourage men of Abilities'' to become chaplains. In the anniversary of the Chaplain Corps founding, I want to take this opportunity to honor our military chaplains who courageously serve the ongoing spiritual, religious, and emotional needs of our men and women in uniform.

Since 1775 more than 25,000 chaplains have served in every major war and combat engagements our nation has fought, while hundreds have paid the ultimate sacrifice—including the late Father Emil J. Kapaun. Called a ''shepherd in combat boots,'' Father Kapaun was an Army captain and Roman Catholic priest from Pilsen, Kansas who died a prisoner of war in the Korean War. His surviving comrades noted how he selflessly risked his life to rescue wounded soldiers, nursed the sick and wounded, and stood steadfast in his faith and his lifesaving ministerial responsibilities despite horrific persecution. In 2013, I had the honor of witnessing this saintly chaplain be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism posthumously.

Additionally, The Diocese of Wichita and the Vatican have begun the formal process that could lead to Father Kapaun's canonization. In 1993, it was announced that Fr. Kapaun would receive the title of ''Servant of God.''

The following account of Father Kaupan's Korean War service is provided by the United States Army:

> Kapaun moved fearlessly from foxhole to foxhole under direct enemy fire in order to provide comfort and reassurance to the outnumbered Soldiers. He repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to recover wounded men, dragging them to safety. When he couldn't drag them, he dug shallow trenches to shield them from enemy fire. As Chinese forces closed in, Kapaun rejected several chances to escape, instead volunteering to stay behind and care for the wounded. He was taken as a prisoner of war by Chinese forces on Nov. 2, 1950. After he was captured, Kapaun and other prisoners were marched for several days northward toward prisoner-of-war camps. During the march Kapaun led by example in caring for injured Soldiers, refusing to take a break from carrying the stretchers of the wounded while encouraging others to do their part. Once inside the dismal prison camps, Kapaun risked his life by sneaking around the camp after dark, foraging for food, caring for the sick, and encouraging his fellow Soldiers to sustain their faith and their humanity. On at least one occasion, he was brutally punished for his disobedience, being forced to sit outside in subzero weather without any garments. When the Chinese instituted a mandatory re-education program, Kapaun patiently and politely rejected every theory put forth by the instructors. Later, Kapaun openly flouted his captors by conducting a sunrise service on Easter morning, 1951. When Kapaun began to suffer from the physical toll of his captivity, the Chinese transferred him to a filthy, unheated hospital where he died alone. As he was being carried to the hospital, he asked God's forgiveness for his captors, and made his fellow prisoners promise to keep their faith. Chaplain Kapaun died in captivity on May 23, 1951.

As Chaplain Kapaun's compelling leadership and powerful story attests, our chaplains are vital to the wellbeing and morale of our troops—especially in the face of possible injury and death. The chaplaincy has endured for over two hundred years because of the singular and widespread recognition of its unique role in the defense and support of our nation. It is essential to ensure that those brave men and women who live out their promise to protect our sacred freedoms and guard our religious heritage are paid the proper respect. Rest assured, as long as I have a voice in Congress, I will continue to defend and protect the religious freedom of those who served and still serve our nation in the Armed Forces.

RECOGNIZING SUZANNE KUBIK FOR HER OUTSTANDING WORK AS A MATHEMATICS TEACHER

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of Suzanne Kubik, a dedicated mathematics teacher who has received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is the highest honor that a K–12 mathematics or science educator can receive for outstanding teaching in the United States, and I can think of no one more deserving than Suzanne. For the past nine years, Suzanne has served as a full-time teacher at Middleborough High School in Middleborough, Massachusetts. Certified to teach mathematics and chemistry, Suzanne is particularly known for her dedication to AP Statistics—a challenging course that students have come to love thanks to her sincerity.

Through dedication, creativity, and unwavering patience, Suzanne has mentored countless students and left a lasting and meaningful impression on many more. Her energetic lessons, passion for the material, and commitment to simplifying and translating complex concepts have served as a model for students and teachers, alike. Last year, Suzanne's outstanding attitude and impact was recognized across the Commonwealth when she received the 2014 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Award.

Suzanne's work as an educator does not end with the last bell of the school day. She enjoys speaking at the Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative's Statistics Saturday Study Sessions, and serves on numerous organizations across the Commonwealth, including as advisor to the New England Champion Rubik's Cube Club, as co-advisor to the National Honor Society, and as co-chair to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges' Committee on Instruction. Her passion to mathematics, the sciences, and, most importantly, to her students is unparalleled.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Suzanne Kubik for receiving this prestigious award. I know all my colleagues in the House join me in congratulating her and wishing her nothing but success in the future.

THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DODD-FRANK ACT

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, last week, House Democrats celebrated the 5th anniversary of Dodd-Frank—the most sweeping financial regulatory reform in the United States since the 1930s.

Signed into law by President Obama on July 21, 2010, Dodd-Frank has changed—for the better—the way consumers, investors, and other market participants interact with our financial system.

It has provided oversight to Wall Street, giving regulators the tools to end the era of ''too big to fail'' entities and outrageous taxpayer bailouts, and has eliminated loopholes that allowed risky and abusive practices to go unnoticed and unregulated.

But how did we get here?

Five years ago, Dodd-Frank was enacted in the wake of profound economic devastation as our nation was reeling from the impact of the 2008 financial crisis.

Millions of Americans suffered job loss, many small businesses closed down, foreclosures skyrocketed, the stock market suffered large drops, and a looming repeat of the Great Depression was feared.

Specifically, in the six months before President Obama took office in February 2009, our economy lost a total of nearly 4 million private sector jobs—an unimaginable average of 650,000 jobs per month.

Nearly $13 trillion in economic growth and $16 trillion in household wealth simply disappeared while close to 9 million individuals were displaced from their homes.

2008 was truly one of the lowest economic points in U.S. history.

Yet, the American people weathered this storm and Congressional Democrats took action by passing legislation to restore responsibility and accountability in our financial system, and to give Americans confidence that we were the tools in place to avoid another economic crisis.

In fact, since Dodd-Frank's passage in July 2010, the American economy has experienced vast improvement in private sector job growth with nearly 12 million jobs added; a lower unemployment rate, to 5.3 percent from the peak of 10.0 percent in October 2009, and a recovering housing market.

Indeed, because of Dodd-Frank, financial regulators are now empowered to identify and address risks to our financial system through increased monitoring and stricter rules for our nation's biggest banks in a timely way.

Dodd-Frank also provided new authority to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which, since 2011, has recovered more than $9.3 billion in civil fines and penalties despite Republicans' repeated budget cuts to the agency.

Like all comprehensive reform bills, however, Dodd-Frank is not perfect.

There are a few areas that I believe can be improved.

Nonetheless, it is important that we do not let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

I believe we also have a responsibility to build upon and improve this legislation when needed.

One area of concern for many stakeholders in my district, and across the country, is the manner in which Dodd-Frank requires the Federal Reserve to subject bank holding companies with more than $50 billion in consolidated assets to enhanced regulatory supervision.

However, if we are to subject smaller, regional bank holding companies to the same or similar supervisory requirements, then we should do so in a way that balances our nation's financial stability without placing excessive burdens on non-systemically important institutions by using a more deliberative assets-and-activities-based test should be considered in determining the "systemic importance" of bank holding companies.

Earlier this month, Chair Yellen testified that she was open to raising a threshold for determining a bank's systemic importance.

I look forward to working with her on this issue as this is at the top of my priority list for improving Dodd-Frank.

Another area of concern for me lays in the development of diversity assessment standards under Section 342 of Dodd-Frank, also known as OMWI.

Though Section 342 is not very long, it is a very significant step in the effort to improve the hiring of women and minorities in the financial services industry in which these groups remain woefully underrepresented.

However, due to misinterpretations of congressional intent, I am concerned that after five years the federal financial regulators have not developed standards requiring the disclosure of diversity data, which would provide much needed transparency to this industry regarding the promotion of diversity in its workplace.

In order to continue being a successful nation, we must capitalize on our diversity and tackle the inequality in wage and job growth in African-American communities.

Today, I celebrate substantial achievements of Dodd-Frank and look forward to working with my congressional colleagues to find the appropriate tweaks to further facilitate its positive lasting effects on the financial markets and for consumers far beyond this five-year anniversary.

CONGRATULATING BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID T. BUCKALEW

HON. ALEXANDER X. MOONEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Brigadier General David T. Buckalew on a successful career in the West Virginia National Guard. Brigadier General Buckalew has honorably and selflessly served the people of West Virginia for over 44 years, and will be retiring on August 1, 2015. During those many years, Brigadier General Buckalew worked his way up in rank from an enlisted Guardsman to the Director of the Joint Staff of the West Virginia National Guard, and earned numerous awards and decorations in this time as well. We are all grateful for Brigadier General Buckalew's devoted service in protection of the freedoms we so enjoy as West Virginians.

I join with West Virginia National Guard and Brigadier General David Buckalew's friends and family in wishing him a happy retirement, and thanking him for his service to our state, and country.

HONORING MINNESOTA POLICE AND PEACE OFFICERS

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA), the largest association representing Minnesota's rank-and-file police officers, recently met for its annual conference in Alexandria, Minnesota.

During that conference, MPPOA recognized several outstanding police officers, including Sergeant Mark Ficcadenti of the St. Paul Police Department who was named Police Officer of the Year. In addition, Officer Mark Ross of the St. Paul Police Department received an Honorable Mention Award.

Both Sergeant Ficcadenti and Officer Ross are constituents of mine and both serve with brave women and men in the St. Paul Police Department.

Sergeant Ficcadenti received this distinguished honor because of his steadfast efforts in forging a relationship between police and the local community. During his more than 30 years of service with the St. Paul Police Department, Sergeant Ficcadenti has helped organized community events that provide an opportunity for people to meet and socialize with local police officers. Some of these events include the "Safe and Sound" program and a Ramadan celebration with the local Somali community. Last year, Sergeant Ficcadenti was responsible for organizing the First Annual East African Junior Police Academy in 2014, which involved East African women and men between the ages of 14 and 22 who were interested in pursuing law enforcement careers.

Officer Ross is a former school resource officer who subsequently became a St. Paul patrol officer. Last year, Officer Ross noticed a young female high school student who was frequently absent from school. After some investigation, Officer Ross discovered that the student's father had been abusing and neglecting her for years. Today, the young woman has graduated from high school and plans on attending college in the fall. Her father is currently serving a 25 year prison sentence.

I join MPPOA and all of my fellow Minnesotans in applauding these two distinguished public servants. I would like to take this opportunity to thank not only these two outstanding police officers, but all of MPPOA's brave women and men who keep our communities safe.

REMEMBERING DONALD CHIN

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Donald "Donnie" Chin, an unsung hero who was both a protector and savior in the International District of Seattle.

Early on the morning of Thursday, July 23rd, Seattle activist Donnie Chin was taken from our community in a senseless act of violence. A strong force for positive change in Seattle, he was doing what he had done tirelessly for the previous five decades: patrolling the streets of the International District and caring for those in need.

Throughout his years of service and as the Director of the International District Emergency Center, Donnie acted as the International District's guardian. At a young age Donnie recognized the delayed emergency response times in his community, and became well known as an effective first responder and frontline hero. From assisting with medical emergencies, to finding lost children and feeding the homeless, he took it upon himself to better the lives of those around him and earned the respect of medical professionals, residents, area business owners, and local leaders.

Guided by a love for his community and a desire to assist others, Donnie made the International District and Greater Seattle area a more welcoming and caring place with his unrivaled dedication and courage. While his passing is a tragedy, his life is an inspiration: an inspiration for us all to reach out in our own communities and lend a helping hand.

Donnie will be remembered as an active and caring member of the International District who was always ready to give of himself for his neighbors. He will be greatly missed.

HONORING RAYMOND SIMONDS

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I along with Congressman MIKE THOMPSON rise today to recognize Raymond Simonds, an outstanding member our community and our friend, for his 40 years of service as a member and past president of the Solano County Fair Association Board of Directors.

Over the years, Raymond has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the diverse and changing needs of the county fair. Following his original appointment to the Board of Directors, Raymond has revitalized the county fairgrounds by consistently recruiting new and innovative attractions.

In addition to his thirty years of leadership on the county fair's racing committee, Raymond has repeatedly distinguished himself as a true supporter of vibrant local traditions and community involvement. Raymond's service will stand as an enduring inspiration to the next generation of Solano County's leaders.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate that, on behalf of the grateful residents of California's Third and Fifth Congressional Districts, we recognize Mr. Simonds for his forty years of dedicated service, and we wish him well as our best wishes for his continued success in the years ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF MISS ABIGAIL EVELYN SUZAL

HON. BARRY LOUDERMILK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Miss Abigail Evelyn Suzal from Georgia's 11th District for her efforts to recognize and appreciate children all over the world. Children are the future of this nation, and we must work hard to preserve freedom, prosperity, and hope for the generations to come.

I would like to thank Miss Suzal for her letter to my office requesting that Universal Children's Day on November 20th be added to the calendar with the possibility of the school day off and breakfast in bed. I applaud Miss Suzal for her advocacy for children worldwide.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE RETIREMENT OF DR. RUSTY STEPHENS, PRESIDENT OF WILSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and congratulate Dr. Rusty Stephens, my friend and an exemplary educator, as he retires as President of Wilson Community College located in my hometown of Wilson, North Carolina.

Before embarking on a life of service to a number of community colleges, Dr. Stephens himself attended Miami-Dade Community College in Miami, Florida. Furthering his education, Dr. Stephens later obtained a Bachelor's and Master's degree from Florida State University. He went on to earn an Education Doctorate from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. Dr. Stephens' experiences with his own community college education would later give him the unique perspective that allowed him to lead one of the premier community colleges in North Carolina.

Prior to moving to Wilson, North Carolina, Dr. Stephens served numerous community colleges throughout the country beginning in 1971. He has held positions ranging from instructor to his current post as president and has educated young people from Ohio to Georgia and places in between. Dr. Stephens is truly the embodiment of the American success story. He now resides in Wilson, North Carolina, with his wife, Sandra. They have been blessed with a beautiful daughter, Heather, son-in-law Alex, and two grandsons.

As President of Wilson Community College, Dr. Stephens has overseen the completion of myriad advancements and improvements to the school. He worked with then-Wilson County Schools' Superintendent Larry Price to launch Wilson Early College Academy. That program is now in its seventh year and boasts an enrollment of nearly 300 students.

In addition to his passion for education, Dr. Stevens has an immense interest in sustainable energy and sustainable environmental practices. He is a member of the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association and the Wilson Sustainable Community Council. He was the driving force behind the addition of the 70,000 square foot Student Center LEED Building to the campus of Wilson Community College. The College, the City and County of Wilson, and our state has greatly benefitted from his work and interest in environmental stewardship.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Rusty Stephens has impacted and positively influenced the lives of countless people over his nearly 44 years in education. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Dr. Stephens for his dedication to generations past and present and in offering him best wishes as he embarks on the next chapter of his life.

HONORING JIM THEOFELIS

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the work and achievements of Jim Theofelis, Founder and Executive Director of The Mockingbird Society.

With an eye towards the future, Mr. Theofelis founded The Mockingbird Society in 2001—which has worked to improve the foster care system as well as end youth homelessness for the past 14 years. The organization stands on the principle that all young people deserve the right to reach adulthood in a healthy, supportive environment with the opportunity to thrive in life.

As Executive Director of The Mockingbird Society, Jim and his team successfully advocated for a number of policies aimed at reforming the child welfare system. Under Jim's leadership, The Mockingbird Society pushed for legislation that allowed youth to seal their juvenile records, so they will not be automatically disqualified in obtaining employment and housing. The Mockingbird Society also advocated for extended foster care and access to medical care for youth, which established the organization as a strong national presence on juvenile policy issues.

Prior to his work at The Mockingbird Society, Jim earned a MAEd from Seattle University and served in various positions dedicated to helping youth and families ranging from direct service to senior management. Overall, he has spent nearly 35 years working with and advocating for disadvantaged children and youth—specifically in mental health—and has been widely recognized for his hard work and selfless commitment to youth causes. Of his many awards, Jim received the 2011 Jefferson Award, our country's longest standing and most prestigious celebration of public service—a testament to his commitment to the community.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize the work Mr. Theofelis has done to reform the child welfare system in our state and in our nation. Jim's unrelenting and passionate dedication to advocating for vulnerable youth serves as an example of the tremendous impact one outstanding person can have on his community.

IN RECOGNITION OF TEACHER AND MUSICIAN WILLIAM DEWITT

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, allow me to add to the record of the U.S. House of Representatives the story of Mr. William DeWitt, a teacher, who has brought the art of music in the Northern Mariana Islands to an unprecedented level of excellence and who has given to thousands of our young people the joy of finding within themselves their own musical talents.

Mr. William DeWitt first came to the Northern Mariana Islands in 1993, beginning his career in middle and junior high school, teaching a variety of subjects, including band, piano, and choir. He then accepted an offer to teach at Marianas High School and was successful there at reviving its band program. Enthusiasm for instrumental music education began to crescendo, and in 2002 Mr. DeWitt was invited to join the faculty of the newly inaugurated Saipan Southern High School, which was designed to be a magnet school for students with an interest in the arts and technology. He has now spent thirteen years at Saipan Southern, helping countless students fulfill their dream to make music and share it with the world. In doing so, Mr. DeWitt and the students he has guided have created a legacy, the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band, that is certainly one of the greatest sources of pride for the Northern Marianas Public School System and, indeed, for our entire community.

When Mr. DeWitt came to Saipan 22 years ago, he could not have known what he would accomplish. Our island community has always

teemed with multi-generational musical talent and held a deep love for singing. But band music and its array of instruments—the trumpet, flute, trombone, and clarinet—were less well known. Mr. DeWitt changed that.

Mr. DeWitt also oversaw the incorporation of a growing diversity of students into our schools using music as a unifying influence and adding the international flavor of this new student body to its musical sensibility. Up to 250 students now participate in some aspect of the Manta Ray Band program at Saipan Southern. They come from many ethnicities and cultures—Chamorro, Carolinian, Palauan, Marshallese, Filipino, Korean, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Indian—and William DeWitt has helped them learn to join together as one, making music.

Perhaps, this very diversity is key to the success and world-wide recognition the Manta Ray Band has achieved under the baton of Mr. DeWitt. Five times in the last seven years the Manta Ray Band has earned the Tumon Bay Music Festival Sweepstakes Award, the most wins by any organization in the festival's history. The Manta Rays have been invited to and performed at two Olympic Games: Beijing in 2008 and London in 2012. The Band has showcased its talents at the Sydney Opera House, Carnegie Hall, Westminster Abbey, and Disneyland. And just last month, at the Los Angeles Musical Festival the Manta Ray Band earned the Gold Award as the highest scoring ensemble in festival competition.

This Gold Award is something of a fairy-tale ending to Mr. DeWitt's career. His band executed its performance with a new precision and intensity. His students displayed an infectious enthusiasm and rhythmic jaunt that gave their concert an element of variety and versatility no other ensemble could match. But backstage after the event amidst the triumph, while cameras clicked, tears flowed and hugs abounded, as the Manta Rays dealt with the recognition that this pinnacle also marked the end of an era—for Mr. William DeWitt had taken his final bow with the band.

William DeWitt and his family will now be able to spend time with his parents in California, where he will also pursue a post-graduate degree. We wish him well. And we will always be grateful to him for the way that he drew from a very small population of students their maximum talent, so inculcating them in the fundamental elements of musicianship that they were able to soar on international stages.

We will also remember as significant as what he gave to each individual student is what Mr. William DeWitt gave to the larger communities of which we are part: the pride and honor his musicians brought to Saipan Southern High School, to the Public School System, and to the Northern Mariana Islands as a whole. This musical venture he has led became a partnership for all of us. Individuals and businesses gladly supported the Manta Ray Band with contributions totaling more than a million dollars over the course of the past decade. And, as a community, we should honor William DeWitt's legacy by continuing to give our young musicians the opportunity to develop, master, and showcase their talents.

Thank you, Mr. William DeWitt. May the richness of island life always flow in your blood, just as your accomplishments will always be engraved into our island history.

TRIBUTE TO DR. SUSAN BECK

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. Susan Beck for being named a 2015 Woman of Influence honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Dr. Beck's interest in leadership and the health field began at Iowa State University, where she earned her Bachelor's degree before moving on to receive her Medical degree at the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences (now Des Moines University). Dr. Beck has been with the Katzmann Breast Center since 2000, beginning her current role as medical director in 2007.

Dr. Beck has served in a variety of leadership roles over the years at places like Mercy Medical Center, Des Moines University, Susan G. Komen, and Innervision Health Center. Dr. Beck has proven her leadership abilities time and time again. She has the special talent of bringing people together to achieve one common goal in a way that few are able to mirror. She continually strives for the best and in her spare time she continues working toward her Master's degree in Public Health.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Dr. Beck in the United States Congress. It is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better her community and the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPH ROSSMANN

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joseph Rossmann, who will be retiring after decades of service to our country as a leader in helping countless Merit Shop construction companies provide high quality health insurance and benefits to their employees.

Mr. Rossmann has led the Associated Builders and Contractors Insurance Trust for almost three decades. Throughout that time, he has worked tirelessly to help ensure that ABC member contractors are able to provide best in class benefits to their employees.

Through his advanced industry designations, testimony in Congress on health insurance issues and well-recognized thought leadership, he has helped move forward the cause of making healthcare affordable for tens of thousands of construction workers.

Mr. Rossmann's distinguished record of service to the Merit Shop construction industry and in his local community are to be commended. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Mr. Joseph Rossmann on this well-deserved occasion. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing him a wonderful retirement and many years of happiness.

HONORING WARREN K. ASHE, PH.D.

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the House of Representatives to join me in remembering and honoring Warren K. Ashe, Ph.D., who passed away at the age of 85 this week after a lifetime of demonstrating what an African American can achieve, despite being denied the opportunities that were routinely available to other Americans. For purposes of disclosure, Dr. Ashe was my cousin and I am proud of the relationship.

Although born in Halifax, North Carolina, Dr. Ashe was educated in the District of Columbia public schools, including the famed Dunbar High School, in those days of segregation, the college preparatory high school in the nation's capital for Black students. Dr. Ashe served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Korean War and was honorably discharged as a sergeant.

Dr. Ashe's achievements were outstanding by any measure. He received his Bachelor of Sciences degree, as well as his M.A. and Ph.D. in microbiology from Howard University, and his M.A. in Religious Studies.

He rose from grade GS–1 medical biology technician at the National Institute of Health to become the first African American to be a senior research scientist at the National Institute for Dental Research, a research microbiologist in the Laboratory of Oral Microbiology, and a health scientist administrator in the Soft Tissue Stomatology Program. While at NIH, Dr. Ashe also served as equal opportunity officer. His selfless dedication to equality for others led him to take considerable risks to ensure that he did not become a token African American. As a result of Dr. Ashe's work in equal opportunity, the employment of Blacks at NIH and their promotion to scientific and administrative leadership increased significantly.

In 1971, Dr. Ashe was appointed the first dean for research at Howard University. His accomplishments at Howard were remarkable: leadership in the establishment of the first clinical research center in the world with NIH funding at Howard University and establishment of the National Human Genome Center at Howard that helped in the sequencing of human genomes to tackle diseases that disproportionately affect the African diaspora. Dr. Ashe's professional accomplishments were matched by his dedication in preparing high school students for the health sciences, his activities as a member of the most distinguished professional organizations in his field, and his devotion, in particular, to his church, Turner Memorial AME, where he was a steward until his passing.

Mr. Speaker, as an African American born in 1929, when segregation nationwide barred the doors to success, Dr. Ashe could hardly have dreamed of achieving these accomplishments. Dr. Ashe did more than dream—he worked until he moved 20th century discrimination out of his way.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life and work of Warren K. Ashe, Ph.D. and in sending condolences to his wife, Grace and to Dr. Ashe's entire family.

HONORING MS. TATYANA KALINGA

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Tatyana Kalinga, a senior and critical member of my staff. In the coming days, Tatyana will be leaving my office after 11 years to pursue the next steps in her career.

Like many Congressional staff members, Tatyana started in my office as an intern and joined the team full-time in June of 2004.

Since she started in the office, I have relied on her professionalism, judgement and superior work product as my executive assistant, scheduler and office manager.

For the past 11 years, she has also served as my key liaison to the Congressional Black Caucus, which I had the privilege of chairing during the 111th Congress.

During her years of dedicated service, Tatyana's most valuable skill has been her ability to step up and perform nearly any task, including assisting with media interviews, making policy recommendations and representing my office in high-level meetings, including with Heads of State.

She has been and remains a consummate professional who is truly dedicated to her work and serving my constituents.

In fact, Tatyana's work has been so exemplary in my office that she is often asked to train new staffers in the offices of my colleagues.

On a personal note, I have witnessed Tatyana's growth and development from a young intern into a mature and brilliant young woman. She has a very promising future, which my staff and I look forward to witnessing. We all intend to keep Tatyana as a valued member of Team Lee within our hearts and in our deeds.

On behalf of myself and the people of California's 13th Congressional district, I'd like to thank Tatyana for her years of dedicated service.

Tatyana, we will miss you as you start this new chapter in your life but we wish you every success. We cannot wait to see all that you will accomplish!

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF STANLEY AND VIRGINIA SZEJNAR

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 70th wedding anniversary of Stanley and Virginia Szejnar, of Hanover, Massachusetts. The Szejnars celebrate seventy years of marriage on Wednesday, July 29, 2015.

Stanley and Virginia's story is one of romance, dedication, and patience. Their love has endured from Quincy, Massachusetts to the high seas of the Pacific theater; Norfolk, Virginia to Hanover, Massachusetts. Born in Buffalo, New York, Stanley was stationed at the U.S. Naval Air Station in South Weymouth, Massachusetts during the early years of World War II. It was during this time, in 1941, that he was nervously set up on a blind date with Virginia by her friend and, later, maid of honor. After meeting in the town of Quincy, a trip for ice cream was followed by a long walk—the start of many more dates and conversations to come.

As their relationship blossomed, Stanley learned that he was being transferred to the newly commissioned USS Ticonderoga. He asked Virginia to come with him to Norfolk, Virginia, where the aircraft carrier was docked, and stay at the local USO. When Virginia returned home to Boston, she excitedly called her mother with a joyous announcement: she and Stanley were engaged to be married. Shortly thereafter, Stanley shipped out on the USS *Ticonderoga*. During his time at war, during which Stanley survived severe damage to the *Ticonderoga* and a deployment on the Navy destroyer, USS *Dyers,* Stanley and Virginia stayed in close contact. They may have been separated by oceans between them, but their love remained strong.

Upon his return, Stanley and Virginia were at last married in 1945. They spent their honeymoon enjoying the mists and impressive waterfalls at Niagara Falls near Stanley's hometown. Following the end of the war, they moved to Hanover, Massachusetts where they reside today. A proud veteran, Stanley is the former commander of the Post #149 American Legion and V.F.W. #178804, as well as a retired member of the Local #537 Pipe Fitters Union. After more than seventy years of love, their most precious gift and proudest achievements are their daughter, Candace Finnie, and granddaughter, Ericka, who live in Ocala, Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Stanley and Virginia Szejnar on the joyous occasion of their 70th anniversary. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing them many more years of happiness.

HONORING THE LIFE AND WORK OF BISHOP RANDY BROWN ROYAL

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and remember my good friend and a cornerstone of eastern North Carolina, Bishop Randy Brown Royal, a resident of Greenville, North Carolina who was called to be with God on Sunday, July 26, 2015 at the age of 63.

Bishop Royal was born on January 6, 1952, in Craven County in New Bern, North Carolina to George Emerson and Sarah Louise Royal. He spent his formative years being educated in the Craven County School system and later attended Shaw University in Raleigh where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and Religion and a Master's degree in Divinity.

Following his matriculation at Shaw, Bishop Royal attended my alma mater of North Carolina Central University in Durham and earned a Master's Degree in Psychology. He completed his education by attaining a Doctoral degree in Religion and Clinical Psychology from the Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse School of Religion in 1979.

Bishop Royal served as pastor in many churches throughout his career, including New Greenleaf Church of Christ in Goldsboro from 1973 until 1978 and Philippi Church of Christ in Greenville, North Carolina beginning in 1982. Under Bishop Royal's leadership, Philippi Church of Christ has expanded several times to accommodate the growing number of parishioners which now tops 2,500. Just last year, Bishop Royal celebrated his 36th Pastoral anniversary.

In addition to his service as a pastor, Bishop Royal was also a community activist and dedicated public servant in Pitt County, North Carolina. He served as a Pitt County Commissioner and on the board of many local organizations, including the Pitt County United Way, Pitt County Health Department and Pitt County Memorial Hospital. Bishop Royal also worked with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Bishop Royal is survived by his three adult children Bryan, Onica, and Stephanie; three brothers, Rev. Daniel Royal, Rev. George J. Royal, and Erroll Royal; four sisters, Rev. Barbara Davis, Brenda Middleton, Vonshelia Bacon, and Cathy Bacon Lyons; and six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Bishop Randy Brown Royal meant so much to so many people. His lasting contributions to his church family as Bishop and to his community and its citizens as County Commissioner will always be remembered. His community, our state of North Carolina, and our great nation are better because of Bishop Randy Royal.

I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our deepest condolences to the family of Bishop Randy Brown Royal, his congregation, and his community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 467, my flight was delayed due to weather. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO LT. GOVERNOR KIM REYNOLDS IN THE FIRST SESSION IN THE 114TH CONGRESS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds for being named a 2015

Woman of Influence honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, the Des Moines Business Record.

Since 2000, the Des Moines Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a group of standout female leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities either personally or professionally, forging a path for other women to follow. The women given this prestigious award are individuals who have selflessly dedicated their time and proven their leadership abilities across a variety of professional fields.

Lt. Governor Reynolds began her political career by serving four terms as the Clarke County Treasurer. She was then elected State Senator of Iowa's 48th Senate District, where she served until 2010. During her time in the Senate, the Republican nominee for Governor, Terry Branstad, asked then Senator Kim Reynolds to serve on his ticket as the nominee for Lt. Governor. She accepted his request and the rest is history.

Lt. Governor Reynolds has dedicated her life to serving the people of Iowa. As Lt. Governor she has leveraged her unique understanding of small rural communities and their governments to bring good, high paying jobs to the state. Lt. Governor Reynolds has also built strong, lasting relationships with some of Iowa's most important global trading partners. Her long list of accomplishments is a testament to her hard work, dedication and willingness to selflessly serve all Iowans.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to better the State of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating her on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, July 22, 2015, I was detained in a meeting and unable to make the first vote in a series. I would have voted ''No'' on roll call vote No. 450 (on ordering the previous question on H. Res. 369).

IN RECOGNITION OF JANET SIKES' SERVICE AS FIRE CHIEF OF THE CITY OF WOODHAVEN

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Janet Sikes for her 29 years of service to the Woodhaven Fire Department, 18 of those served as Fire Chief. During her career, Janet has saved many lives, and enriched countless others.

Janet has served as a role model in our community as Woodhaven's first female fire chief. Her qualifications and professionalism as an emergency medical technician, paramedic, and arson investigator have inspired others towards public service and her ability to coordinate with the department's partners is much-praised among her colleagues. Her dedication and good humor has been a tremendous asset for the city, and has helped the Fire Department offset budget restrictions and foster a greater sense of community in Woodhaven and beyond. Janet is a true gem in our community and Woodhaven is fortunate to call her their own and grateful for her contributions.

Janet's commitment to education has been evidenced by her annual trips to each elementary school in the city to teach fire safety. ''Firefighter Jan'' is no stranger to the classroom, and has used her experience as a physical education instructor to promote fire prevention techniques that students find as exciting as they are informative. Jan has also promoted higher education in Woodhaven, partnering with Wayne County Community College to provide two full scholarships for students in her community to pursue a career in public safety.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Chief Janet Sikes for her twenty-nine years of service and her lasting impact on the Downriver communities. I thank her for her leadership, and wish her many years of success.

URGING AWARD OF CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO PRESIDENT LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON FOR HIS EXTRAORDINARY RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE FIELD OF DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute and revise and extend my remarks.

Today I introduced legislation awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th President of the United States whose vision and leadership secured passage of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Social Security Amendments Act (Medicare) of 1965, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Higher Education Act of 1965, and the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965.

The awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal is long overdue recognition of the remarkable record of achievement in the field of domestic affairs of the person most responsible for several of the nation's landmark laws that mark their 50th anniversary this year.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress from the Tenth Congressional District of Texas, as Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate, Vice-President and President of the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson's domestic accomplishments in the fields of civil rights, education, and economic opportunity rank among the greatest achievements of the past half century.

As President, Lyndon Johnson proposed, championed, led to passage, and signed into law on August 6, 1965 the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which swept away barriers impeding millions of Americans from meaningful participation in American political life.

On July 30, 1965, President Johnson signed into law the Social Security Amendments Act of 1965, which we today know as Medicare, which has transformed the delivery of health care in the United States and which, along with Social Security, reduced the rate of poverty among the elderly from 28.5 percent in 1966 to 9.1 percent in 2012.

On July 2, 1964 President Johnson secured passage and signed into law the most sweeping civil rights legislation since Reconstruction, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination in employment, education, and public accommodations based on race, color, religion, or national origin.

On November 8, 1965, President Johnson signed into law the Higher Education Act, which provided need-based financial aid to students in the form of scholarships, work-study grants, and loans, and thus for the first time made higher education more accessible to populations of persons who were previously unable to attend college because of economic circumstances.

On October 3, 1965, President Johnson signed into law the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965, which transformed the nation's immigration system by abolishing the racially based quota system that had defined American immigration policy for the previous four decades and replaced it with a policy whose central purpose was family reunification, with a preference for immigrants with specific skillsets.

According to Robert A. Caro, the preeminent biographer of Lyndon Baines Johnson, with the single exception of Abraham Lincoln, Lyndon Johnson was the greatest champion of the poor and underprivileged in the history of the Republic and was the President ''who wrote mercy and justice into the statute books by which America was governed.''

I invite all Members to join me in sponsoring this legislation awarding the Congressional Gold Medal and recognizing the extraordinary domestic achievements of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th President of the United States.

HONORING DAVID FINKEL

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the remarkable life of David B. Finkel, an honorable veteran, a distinguished civil rights attorney, an esteemed elected official, and someone I was privileged to call a friend. David deeply impacted countless lives by standing up for civil rights, freedom of speech, affordable housing, and educational equality for over six decades. David was also a longtime and devoted member of the Sholem community and will be remembered for his integrity and compassion as a ''warrior for justice.''

David, the son of Jewish immigrants fleeing persecution in Europe, lived through historical events such as the Great Depression and World War II. These heavy experiences

shaped David into a lifelong advocate for social justice by instilling deep values within him of humility and humanitarianism. In his youth, David served as Bal Torah at Temple B'nai Abraham under Rabbi Joachim Prinz, who advocated for equality as a speaker at the 1963 March on Washington. This experience gave David a deeper understanding of human rights that he carried with him throughout his life.

During the Cold War, David served in the U.S. Army and refused to sign the loyalty oath when his mother was brought before the House Un-American Activities Committee. David won a case before the U.S. Supreme Court when he argued that a son should not be forced to choose between the 10th Amendment to honor country and the 10th Commandment to honor family. David's involvement in this case carved a path for him to follow a career in law and justice.

Through discipline and dedication, David obtained his undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago in 1951 and earned his Juris Doctorate from the University of Southern California in 1959. In the 1960s, David worked during the Freedom Summer in Mississippi, as well as a defense lawyer of conscientious objectors during the Vietnam War.

In his noteworthy legal career, David was known for his work ethic as he tried cases representing labor unions advocating for working families, freedom of speech cases for professors and students, and discrimination cases promoting racial equality and protecting civil rights.

David began his notable political career when he became a founding member of Santa Monicans for Renters Rights in 1981 and was elected to the Santa Monica Rent Control Board in 1983. David was first elected to the Santa Monica City Council in 1986, where he served a period as Mayor Pro-Tempore. David was then elected to the Los Angeles Superior Court in Santa Monica in 1984. Upon retirement from the bench, David began to humbly teach at Santa Monica City College in 2002 as he wanted to contribute more to the community. In 2006, David was recruited and elected to the Santa Monica College Board of Trustees, where he served until 2014.

Those who knew David, remember him fondly as a compassionate, thoughtful, and brilliant advocate for his community. David worked with a great spirit and it was his steadfast commitment to serving his community that made for a particularly extraordinary career and life.

In heartfelt recognition and appreciation of the outstanding impact and contributions that David made to his community and country, I wish to send my sincere condolences to his wife, Bruria, his family, and to all who knew him. His work and legacy are immeasurable, and his presence in the community will be greatly missed.

CONGRATULATING THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE RAIDERS' BASEBALL TEAM AS NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Northwest Florida State College Raiders' baseball team on their victory in the 2015 JUCO World Series, bringing home the school's first NJCAA Baseball National Championship. This hard-earned title is a testament to their dedication to excellence, commitment to teamwork, and unwavering work ethic, and all of Northwest Florida celebrates their tremendous success.

While the Raiders capped their season with a dominant 15–1 victory over McLennan Community College in the championship game, the Raiders' players, coaches, and staff proved throughout the season that they had the mettle of true champions as they persevered through difficult stretches early in the season. Despite tough early season losses that saw the team drop to 4–5 in conference play, Raiders' Head Coach Doug Martin and his players were undeterred, and they continued to work hard each day in pursuit of a championship.

Even after an impressive late season run—which saw the Raiders win 14 of their last 16 games, including a seven-game winning streak that included a sweep of the Gulf District/FCSAA State Tournament that qualified them for the World Series—the Raiders came into the JUCO World Series ranked 14th in the Nation. But, despite being an underdog, the Raiders pulled off impressive victories—defeating three top ten teams, including the number one ranked team in the country by a margin of 10–0—en route to a rematch in the National Championship game with the only team that defeated them during the World Series: McLennan Community College. In the rematch, the Raiders put in a true team performance and in the end they earned a well-deserved 15–1 victory to bring the national title back to Northwest Florida.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize the Raiders players—Aaron Palmer, Onix Martinez, Danny Blanco, Corderias Dorsey, Tra'Mayne Holmes, Will Luft, Mack Hathcock, Hunter Beard, Avery Geyer, Evan Hebert, Ryan Leone, Dakota Dean, Andrew Deramo, James Granat, Tanner Halstead, Ross Goforth, Shawn Feltner, Rex Rutledge, Carlos Alayon, Brian Browning, Lukas Holub, Trey Lang, Jarren Pinkney, and Hunter Bening—Head Coach Doug Martin, Assistant Coaches Andrew Franco and Brett Stewart, Athletic Director Ramsey Ross, and the entire Raiders staff and fans on their national championship. My wife Vicki and I congratulate the entire Raiders baseball program and wish them all the best for continued success in the future.

CONGRATULATING EDWARD LEE McCLAIN HIGH SCHOOL

HON. BRAD R. WENSTRUP

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Edward Lee McClain High School of Greenfield, Ohio, on their 100-year anniversary and celebration.

For a century, McClain High School has stood proudly at the heart of Greenfield, educating the community's next generation and preparing them for the future.

Originally donated by Edward Lee McClain and his wife Lulu in 1915, McClain High School has since fulfilled its stated mission of "producing graduates who are well equipped to meet the challenges of education, work, and life."

Alongside the 100 years of quality education it has provided to the children of Greenfield, McClain has become famous for the historic art contained within its walls.

Truly a jewel of culture, students are immersed in a rich history of art and tradition, including murals, statues, and architecture.

The institution and its graduates owe a debt of gratitude to the community of Greenfield, for the continued support in preserving and maintaining the magnificent building.

McClain High School is a living legacy of Edward McClain's hopes that the Greenfield school would be an institution which encouraged "higher education, purer morals, and broader and better citizenship."

I am honored to represent a district which contains such a quality and historic educational institution within its borders. I applaud Edward Lee McClain High School on this historic milestone, and I wish the school the very best over their next 100 years.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF CLARKDALE FRUIT FARMS

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on July 19th, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Centennial Event at the Clarkdale Fruit Farm in Deerfield, Massachusetts and celebrate 100 years of family business.

The Clarkdale Fruit Farm has generated tremendous good will and contributions to our community. I love this farm and all it stands for. Locally grown fresh fruit—apples, peaches, nectarines, plums and pears—all on beautiful land preserved for farming.

The Clark family are not only great farmers and great business people. They are not only great community activists. They're really incredible, nice people.

This is a family who works hard and cares deeply about the community.

I want to say a special thanks to Tom and Ben Clark for inviting me to join them on their beautiful farm—truly a gem in the Pioneer Valley. I also want to thank the rest of the Clark family: Becky Clark—Ben's mother and Tom's wife, Lori Clark—Ben's wife, and Emerson Clark—Ben and Lori's son. The farm is a wonderful place and they have so much to be proud of.

It was a thrill to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Clarkdale Fruit Farms, which has a rich history and a special place in the agricultural heritage of Central Massachusetts.

Clarkdale Fruit Farms is also a leading example of what sustainable agriculture can accomplish, supporting many of our region's local businesses and communities.

As we commemorate the 100th anniversary, we are not just celebrating the past. We are also celebrating the future.

Clarkdale Fruit Farm is helping to keep Massachusetts agriculture vibrant and strong and I look forward to their continued success in the years to come.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POW/MIA FLAG

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the upcoming 25th anniversary of the POW/MIA flag.

In May of 1970, the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia was founded in Washington, D.C. One year after the first official meeting, Mary Hoff, the wife of a service member designated as missing in action during the Vietnam War, introduced the idea of creating a flag to remember and honor military men and woman like her husband.

Twenty-five years ago, on August 25, 1990, Congress designated the POW/MIA flag as ''the symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia.'' Now, the POW/MIA flag flies for every man and woman who has given his or her life for our great country and remains captured or missing.

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the recognition of this flag, Wheeler-Young VFW Post 201 from Waterbury, Connecticut will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery on August 10, 2015. VFW Post 201 is a vibrant post involved in numerous activities in the Waterbury community. They recently celebrated the grand opening of their new location. Wheeler-Young VFW Post 201 exemplifies the promise of leaving no man behind and the mission to educate and promote veterans' issues. Post 201 is a pillar of our community.

Thank you to Post 201 for recognizing and honoring our nation's Prisoners of War and personnel Missing in Action. I stand with you to ensure that they are not forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO MERCY CORNING HOSPITAL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mercy Corning Hospital of Corning, Iowa, for receiving a Silver Safety Award.

Each year the National Safety Council Greater Omaha Chapter recognizes businesses, organizations, and individuals who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to safety. Mercy Corning Hospital was given this prestigious award for continuously promoting a culture of safety and accountability. Their hard work and commitment to serving others through a safe and healthy hospital environment truly embodies our Iowa values.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent the members of the Mercy Corning Hospital in the United States Congress, and it is with great pride that I congratulate them today. I know my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating them for receiving this award and thanking them for their commitment to serving others. I wish all the employees at Mercy Corning Hospital nothing but the best moving forward.

REGULATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE IN NEED OF SCRUTINY ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 28, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 427) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law:

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Chair, yesterday, the House voted on H.R. 427, Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2015. I was unavoidably detained, but if I had been present, I would have opposed this legislation. While the bill claims to accomplish well-meaning goals such as increasing ''accountability for and transparency in the federal regulatory process,'' it only threatens the historic separation of legislative and executive powers.

By requiring a joint resolution of approval from Congress before any ''major'' rules set forth by a federal agency come into effect, the REINS act attempts to undermine executive power and expand congressional regulatory authority. This partisan bill is a thinly vailed attempt to score political points by attacking the Obama Administration. And as Republican leaders take another ideological swipe at the Obama administration, a number of more pressing issues go unaddressed, especially as we leave for our District Work Period.

Second-guessing agency standards and rules that are supposed to be governed by Congressional laws is not only redundant but is reflective of the Republican's relentless pursuit of removing important and necessary regulations. Given that the bill also has a 70-day requirement to approve any new standards, the potential for delays in enacting public safeguards is steep, particularly if bipartisan coalitions can't quickly draft joint resolutions.

We have seen efforts to push this legislation through three times previously, and each time it has failed to pass both houses. I urge my fellow Members of Congress to reject this harmful piece of legislation once more.

REGULATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE IN NEED OF SCRUTINY ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 28, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 427) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 427, the so-called ''Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act of 2015.''

The REINS Act is yet another attempt by House Republicans to limit the ability of federal agencies to enforce commonsense rules and regulations. This legislation would require Congressional approval before an agency can issue any major new rule. Congress relies on agencies to promulgate rules, because they have expertise in a given area. However, this bill would require that congressional politics play a part in deciding complicated rules and regulations. As a result, this legislation is designed to protect special interests while undermining the ability of federal agencies from doing their jobs and working to ensure there are safeguards in place to protect the public's health and safety.

Moreover, Congress already has considerable power to review and reject the rules issued by executive agencies. For the past two decades, Congress has had the authority to pass a joint resolution disapproving any rule within 60 days of receiving the rule. If the President signs the resolution of disapproval, the regulation is not implemented. In addition, President Obama has implemented significant reforms to the rulemaking process. In January 2010, he signed an Executive Order requiring agencies to determine if the benefits of proposed rules are justified considering their cost to society.

At a time when Congress should be doing everything it can to create jobs and improve the economy, this bill is nothing but a distraction. I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

CONGRESSWOMAN SEWELL URGES IMMEDIATE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to urge the immediate reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank. The Ex-Im Bank has become a crucial driver of our economy by offering loans, capital insurance, and other financial services to businesses who wish to invest in American products and grow their businesses. It fills the gap between domestic capital and domestic investment, ensuring that each and every opportunity to expand our economy has the financial backing to do so. Furthermore, the Ex-Im Bank is an exceptional government institution insofar that it both improves our economy and makes money.

For these reasons, Ex-Im Bank reauthorization has been relatively uncontroversial in the past. During the 112th Congress, my first term in office, we reauthorized the Ex-Im Bank with a vote that crossed party lines. However, I have witnessed the agreement and goodwill surrounding this issue deteriorate during my tenure. On July 1st, 2015, this burgeoning partisanship brought the Export-Import Bank to a screeching halt. Members of this congressional body refused to renew the charter for the Ex-Im Bank, allowing it to shut down entirely.

Since the first day of this month, our obstinacy has cost our nation over fifty million dollars. Every day that we allow this shut down to continue, we are shortchanging our taxpayers another two million dollars. This inaction is irresponsible, short-sighted, and detrimental to our economy. The American people want us to create jobs and help small businesses grow, not play political games.

I urge my colleagues to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank immediately.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, July 30, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

AUGUST 4

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Environment and Public Works

Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight

To hold an oversight hearing to examine litigation at the Environmental Protection Agency and Fish and Wildlife Service, focusing on impacts on the United States economy, States, local communities, and the environment.

SD–406

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine the back-end of the nuclear fuel cycle and related legislation, including S. 854, to establish a new organization to manage nuclear waste, provide a consensual process for siting nuclear waste facilities, ensure adequate funding for managing nuclear waste.

SD–366

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine preserving families and reducing the need for foster care.

SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, focusing on non-proliferation, inspections, and nuclear constraints.

SD–419

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Bureau of Prisons, focusing on first-hand accounts of challenges facing the Federal prison system.

SD–342

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ann Calvaresi Barr, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, United States Agency for International Development, and David Malcolm Robinson, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Conflict and Stabilization Operations), and to be Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization.

SD–419

3 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

AUGUST 5

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the implications of sanctions relief under the Iran agreement.

SD–538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, focusing on opportunities to improve student success.

SD–430

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the Department of Justice's legal obligation to ensure Inspector General access to all records needed for independent oversight.

SD–226

AUGUST 6

9 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold hearings to examine agency progress in retrospective review of existing regulations.

SD–342

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the procurement, acquisition, testing, and oversight of the Navy's *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carrier program.

SD–G50

2:30 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

SEPTEMBER 10

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Adam J. Szubin, of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, Department of the Treasury.

SD–538

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S6089–6146

Measures Introduced: Seventeen bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1882–1898, and S. Res. 234–235. **Page S6136**

Measures Reported:

S. 373, to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards governing discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 114–96)

S. 284, to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, with an amendment.

S. 1596, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the "Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building".

S. 1632, to require a regional strategy to address the threat posed by Boko Haram, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

S. 1826, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James "Maggie" Megellas Post Office. **Page 6134**

Measures Passed:

Authorize Printing: Senate agreed to S. Res. 234, to authorize the printing of a collection of the rules of the committees of the Senate. **Page S6144**

National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month: Senate agreed to S. Res. 235, designating September 2015 as "National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month". **Page S6144**

Measures Considered:

Hire More Heroes Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 22, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, after taking action on the following motions and amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S6091–92**

Adopted:

McConnell (for Inhofe) Amendment No. 2533 (to Amendment No. 2421), relating to Federal-aid highways and highway safety construction programs. **Page S6092**

McConnell Amendment No. 2421 (to Amendment No. 2266), of a perfecting nature. **Page S6091**

By 62 yeas to 38 nays (Vote No. 258), McConnell Modified Amendment No. 2266, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S6092**

Rejected:

McConnell Amendment No. 2417 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2266), to change the enactment date. (Senate tabled the amendment.) **Page S6091**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

McConnell Amendment No. 2418 (to Amendment No. 2417), of a perfecting nature, fell when McConnell Amendment No. 2417 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2266) (listed above), was tabled. **Page S6091**

By 65 yeas to 35 nays (Vote No. 259), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the bill. **Page S6092**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill, post-cloture, at approximately 10:00 a.m., on Thursday, July 30, 2015; that the time until 12:00 p.m. be equally divided in the usual form; and that all time during the adjournment of the Senate count post-cloture on the bill. **Pages S6144–45**

Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that if the Senate receives the papers for H.R. 3236, to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, that

at 1:45 p.m., on Thursday, July 30, 2015, Senate begin consideration of the bill and vote on passage, with no intervening action of debate, and that there be a 60 affirmative vote threshold for passage of the bill. **Page S6144**

Message from the President: Senate received the following message from the President of the United States:

Transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the continuation of the national emergency that was originally declared in Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–22) **Page S6132**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Allison Beck, of the District of Columbia, to be Federal Mediation and Conciliation Director. **Page S6146**

Carol Fortine Ochoa, of Virginia, to be Inspector General, General Services Administration. **Page S6146**

Jeffrey Michael Prieto, of California, to be General Counsel of the Department of Agriculture. **Page S6146**

1 Marine Corps nomination in the rank of general. **Page S6146**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

2 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

1 Navy nomination in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Air Force and Army. **Pages S6145–46**

Messages from the House: **Page S6132**

Measures Referred: **Page S6132**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S6132**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S6132**

Executive Communications: **Pages S6132–34**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S6134–36**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S6136–38**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S6138–43**

Additional Statements: **Pages S6130–32**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Pages S6143–44**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S6144**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—259) **Page S6092**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:28 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, July 30, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S6145.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the impacts of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on United States interests and the military balance in the Middle East, after receiving testimony from John F. Kerry, Secretary of State; Ashton B. Carter, Secretary, and General Martin E. Dempsey, USA, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, both of the Department of Defense; Jacob J. Lew, Secretary of the Treasury; and Ernest J. Moniz, Secretary of Energy.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SHIPYARDS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support concluded a hearing to examine best practices at public and private shipyards, after receiving testimony from Ray Bagley, Huntington Ingalls Industries Newport News Shipbuilding, Newport News, Virginia; and Paul O'Connor, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Maine.

BANKRUPTCY REFORM

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection concluded a hearing to examine the role of bankruptcy reform in addressing too-big-to-fail, including S. 1840, to amend title 11, United States Code, to provide for the liquidation, reorganization, or recapitalization of a covered financial corporation, after receiving testimony from Randall D. Guynn, Davis Polk and Wardwell LLP, New York, New York, on behalf of the Bipartisan Policy Center Financial Regulatory Reform Initiative Failure Resolution Task Force; John B. Taylor, Stanford University Hoover Institution, Palo Alto, California; Thomas H. Jackson, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York; and Simon Johnson, MIT Sloan School of Management, Cambridge, Massachusetts, on behalf of the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

WIRELESS BROADBAND

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine wireless broadband and the future of spectrum policy, after receiving testimony from Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission; Meredith Attwell Baker, CTIA—The Wireless Association, and Thomas M. Lenard, Technology Policy

Institute, both of Washington, D.C.; J. Pierre de Vries, University of Colorado Silicon Flatirons Center for Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship Spectrum Policy Initiative, Boulder; and Blair Levin, Brookings Institute Metropolitan Policy Program, Chevy Chase, Maryland.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee continued consideration of an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, but did not complete action thereon, and will meet again on Thursday, July 30, 2015.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Vanessa Lorraine Allen Sutherland, of Virginia, to be Chairperson of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, Kristen Marie Kulinowski, of New York, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, Gregory Guy Nadeau, of Maine, to be Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, and Eric Martin Satz, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 284, to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, with an amendment;

S. 1632, to require a regional strategy to address the threat posed by Boko Haram, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1875, to support enhanced accountability for United States assistance to Afghanistan, with an amendment; and

The nominations of Michele Thoren Bond, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary (Consular Affairs), Sarah Elizabeth Mendelson, of the District of Columbia, to be Representative on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador, and to be an Alternate Representative to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Sheila Gwaltney, of California, to be Ambassador to the Kyrgyz Republic, Perry L. Holloway, of South Carolina, to be Ambassador to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Laura Farnsworth Dogu, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Nicaragua, Peter F. Mulrean, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti, Kathleen Ann Doherty, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus, James Desmond Melville, Jr., of New Jersey, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia, Samuel D. Heins, of Minnesota, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway, Hans G. Klemm, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to Romania, Paul Wayne Jones, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Poland, all of the Department of State, Gayle Smith, of Ohio, to be Administrator, and Thomas O. Melia, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator, both of the United States Agency for International Development, and routine lists in the Foreign Service.

JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, after receiving testimony from Mark Dubowitz, Foundation for Defense of Democracies Center of Sanctions and Illicit Finance, Washington, D.C.; and Nicholas Burns, Harvard Kennedy School, Boston, Massachusetts.

FINANCIAL CRISIS IN GREECE

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation concluded a hearing to examine the financial crisis in Greece, focusing on implications and lessons learned, after receiving testimony from John B. Taylor, Stanford University Hoover Institution, Stanford, California; and Robert B. Kahn, Council on Foreign Relations, Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1864, to improve national security by developing metrics to measure the effectiveness of security between ports of entry, at points of entry, and along the maritime border;

S. 1846, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to secure critical infrastructure against electromagnetic threats, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1869, to improve federal network security and authorize and enhance an existing intrusion detection and prevention system for civilian federal networks, with amendments;

S. 1073, to amend the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, including making changes to the Do Not Pay initiative, for improved detection, prevention, and recovery of improper payments to deceased individuals, with amendments;

S. 1868, to extend by 15 years the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the quarterly financial report program, with an amendment;

S. 1808, to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a Northern Border threat analysis, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 779, to provide for Federal agencies to develop public access policies relating to research conducted by employees of that agency or from funds administered by that agency, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1170, to amend title 39, United States Code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research;

H.R. 1531, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide a pathway for temporary seasonal employees in Federal land management agencies to compete for vacant permanent positions under internal merit promotion procedures;

S. 1596, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2082 Stringtown Road in Grove City, Ohio, as the ''Specialist Joseph W. Riley Post Office Building'';

S. 1826, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 99 West 2nd Street in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, as the Lieutenant Colonel James ''Maggie'' Megellas Post Office; and

The nomination of Denise Turner Roth, of North Carolina, to be Administrator of General Services.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported S. 383, to provide for Indian trust asset management reform, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE OVERSIGHT

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the true costs of alcohol and drug abuse in Native communities, after receiving testimony from Robert G. McSwain, Principal Deputy Director, Indian Health Service, and Mirtha Beadle, Director, Office of Tribal Affairs and Policy, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, both of the Department of Health and Human Services; Melanie Benjamin, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Onamia, Minnesota; John P. Walters, Hudson Institute Center for Substance Abuse Policy Research, Washington, D.C.; and Sunny Goggles, White Buffalo Recovery Center, Arapahoe, Wyoming.

IRS TARGETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Oversight, Agency Action, Federal Rights and Federal Courts concluded a hearing to examine Internal Revenue Service targeting, focusing on progress of agency reforms and congressional options, including S. 273, to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service, after receiving testimony from John Koskinen, Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury; Cleta Mitchell, Foley and Lardner LLP, Stephen Spaulding, Common Cause, Lawrence M. Noble, Campaign Legal Center, Diana L. Aviv, Independent Sector, Gregory L. Colvin, Adler and Colvin, on behalf of the Bright Lines Project, and Jay Alan Sekulow, American Center for Law and Justice, all of Washington, D.C.; Edward D. Greim, Graves Garrett, LLC, Kansas City, Missouri; Toby Marie Walker, Waco Tea Party, Waco, Texas; and Jenny Beth Martin, Tea Party Patriots, Inc., Woodstock, Georgia.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1400, to amend the Small Business Act to direct the task force of the Office of Veterans Business Development to provide access to and manage the distribution of excess or surplus property to veteran-owned small businesses, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1756, to help small businesses take advantage of energy efficiency;

S. 1857, to amend the Small Business Act to provide for expanded participation in the microloan program;

S. 1866, to establish the veterans' business outreach center program, to improve the programs for veterans of the Small Business Administration, with an amendment;

S. 1870, to amend the Small Business Act to require the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to carry out a pilot program on issuing grants to eligible veterans to start or acquire qualifying businesses, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

An original bill entitled, ''A Sense of the Committee on the Small Business Tax Compliance Relief Act of 2015''.

VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine ending veteran homelessness, after receiving testimony from Lisa Pape, Executive Director, Homeless Programs, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs; Jennifer Ho, Senior Advisor on Housing and Services, Department of Housing and Urban Development; Lisa Tepper Bates, Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, Hartford; Michael Blecker, Swords to Plowshares, San Francisco, California; Baylee Crone, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, and Jeff

Steele, The American Legion, both of Washington, D.C.; and Edward Powers, HOPE Atlanta, Atlanta, Georgia.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 160 public bills, H.R. 3273–3432; and 18 resolutions, H.J. Res. 62; H. Con. Res. 67–69; and H. Res. 392–405 were introduced. **Pages H5762–70**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H5775–77**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 9, to amend title 35, United States Code, and the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act to make improvements and technical corrections, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–235);

H.R. 1992, to reduce temporarily the royalty required to be paid for sodium produced on Federal lands, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–236);

H.R. 3116, to extend by 15 years the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the quarterly financial report program (H. Rept. 114–237);

H.R. 1759, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the publication, by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, of information relating to rulemakings, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–238, Part 1); and

H.R. 1759, to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for the publication, by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, of information relating to rulemakings, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–238, Part 2). **Page H5762**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Fleischmann to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H5595**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:30 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H5605**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by voice vote. **Pages H5605, H5653**

VA Accountability Act of 2015: The House passed H.R. 1994, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, by a yea-and-nay vote of 256 yeas to 170 nays, Roll No. 489.

Pages H5653–40, H5650–53

Rejected the Takano motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 184 ayes to 241 noes, Roll No. 488. **Pages H5651–53**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Veterans Affairs now printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule. **Page H5631**

Agreed to:

Benishek amendment (No. 1 printed in H. Rept. 114–234) that reforms and improves the VA Inspector General's ability to report on problems and problem employees at the VA; requires the IG to release reports including employee misconduct to the public and explain what changes the VA has requested, requires the IG to identify a manager responsible for fixing an identified problem, makes it easier to fire an identified employee, and targets the bonuses of employees that fail to solve problems. **Pages H5635–40**

Rejected:

Takano amendment in the nature of a substitute (No. 2 printed in H. Rept. 114–234) that sought to provide VA Secretary the authority to immediately suspend without pay any employee whose performance or misconduct is a threat to health or safety; ensure back pay for whistleblowers unfairly terminated, and cap the payment of administrative leave to 14 days; make effective date of back pay provision October 1, 2015 (by a recorded vote of 191 ayes to 233 noes, Roll No. 487). **Pages H5650–51**

H. Res. 388, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1994) and (H.R. 3236) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 243 ayes to 183 noes, Roll No. 484, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 242 yeas to 180 nays, Roll No. 483. **Pages H5610–23**

Question of Consideration: The Chair announced that the bill (H.R. 3236) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, contained an emergency designation pursuant to section 4(g)(1) of the Statutory Pay-

As-You-Go Act of 2010. Subsequently, the House agreed to consider H.R. 3236 by voice vote.

Page H5640

Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015: The House passed H.R. 3236, to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, by a yea-and-nay vote of 385 yeas to 34 nays with one answering ''present'', Roll No. 486. **Pages H5640–50**

H. Res. 388, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1994) and (H.R. 3236) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 243 ayes to 183 noes, Roll No. 484, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 242 yeas to 180 nays, Roll No. 483. **Pages H5621–22**

Suspension—Proceedings Resumed: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure which was debated on Monday, July 27th:

First Responder Anthrax Preparedness Act: H.R. 1300, amended, to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to make anthrax vaccines and antimicrobials available to emergency response providers, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 424 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 485. **Page H5623**

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 1 p.m. on Friday, July 31. **Page H5653**

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure—Communication: Read a letter from Chairman Shuster wherein he transmitted copies of resolutions to authorize nine alteration projects, two reprogramming prospectuses, two construction prospectuses, and two lease prospectuses, included in the General Services Administration's FY2015 and FY2016 Capital Investment and Leasing Programs. The resolutions were adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 23, 2015. **Page H5664**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency with respect to Lebanon that was declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond August 1, 2015—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–53).

Page H5664

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate appears on page 5601.

Senate Referrals: S. 614 and S. 242 were held at the desk. S. 764 was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources. S. Con. Res. 20 was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Energy and Commerce. **Page H5761**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Four yea-and-nay votes and three recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H5621–22, H5622–23, H5623, H5650, H5651, H5652–53, and H5653. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Committee Meetings

DODD-FRANK TURNS FIVE: ASSESSING THE PROGRESS OF GLOBAL DERIVATIVES REFORMS

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Dodd-Frank Turns Five: Assessing the Progress of Global Derivatives Reforms''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS IN THE REGION OF THE IRAN DEAL

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Potential Implications in the Region of the Iran Deal''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee concluded a markup on H.R. 985, ''Concrete Masonry Products Research, Education, and Promotion Act of 2015''; H.R. 3154, ''E-Warranty Act of 2015''; H.R. 1344, ''Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2015''; H.R. 1462, ''Protecting Our Infants Act of 2015''; H.R. 1725, ''National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Authorization Act of 2015''; and H.R. 2820, ''Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act of 2015''. The following bills were ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 1462, H.R. 1725, H.R. 2820, and H.R. 3154. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 1344 and H.R. 985.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee concluded a markup on H.R. 766, the ''Financial Institution Customer Protection Act of 2015''; H.R. 1210, the ''Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act''; H.R. 1317, to amend the Commodity Exchange Act and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to specify how clearing requirements apply to certain affiliate transactions, and for other purposes; H.R.

1553, the "Small Bank Exam Cycle Reform Act of 2015"; H.R. 1737, the "Reforming CFPB Indirect Auto Financing Guidance Act"; H.R. 1839, the "Reforming Access for Investments in Startup Enterprises Act of 2015"; H.R. 1941, the "Financial Institutions Examination Fairness and Reform Act"; H.R. 2091, the "Child Support Assistance Act of 2015"; H.R. 2243, the "Equity in Government Compensation Act of 2015"; H.R. 2643, the "State Licensing Efficiency Act of 2015"; H.R. 2912, the "Centennial Monetary Commission Act of 2015"; H.R. 3032, the "Securities and Exchange Commission Reporting Modernization Act"; H.R. 3189, the "Fed Oversight Reform and Modernization Act of 2015"; and H.R. 3192, the "Homebuyers Assistance Act". The following bills were ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 766, H.R. 1210, H.R. 1941, H.R. 1553, H.R. 2091, H.R. 3192, H.R. 3032, H.R. 2912, H.R. 1737, and H.R. 2643. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 2243, H.R. 1839, H.R. 3189, and H.R. 1317.

WOMEN UNDER ISIS RULE: FROM BRUTALITY TO RECRUITMENT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Women Under ISIS Rule: From Brutality to Recruitment". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THREATS TO PRESS FREEDOM IN THE AMERICAS

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere held a hearing entitled "Threats to Press Freedom in the Americas". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

AVIATION SECURITY CHALLENGES: IS TSA READY FOR THE THREATS OF TODAY?

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Aviation Security Challenges: Is TSA ready for the threats of today?". Testimony was heard from Peter V. Neffenger, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department Homeland Security.

INTERNET OF THINGS

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet held a hearing entitled "Internet of Things". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

FEDERAL AGENCIES' SELECTIVE ENFORCEMENT OF ESA CONSULTATION

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Federal Agencies' Selective Enforcement of ESA Consultation". Testimony was heard from Michael Bean, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior; and Sam Rauch, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries.

EPA MISMANAGEMENT, PART II

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "EPA Mismanagement, Part II". Testimony was heard from the following Environmental Protection Agency officials: Ronald Harris, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist; Carolyn Bohlen, Chief, Enforcement Services Section #2, Superfund Division; Ross Tuttle, Senior Advisor; and Gina McCarthy, Administrator; and a public witness.

DATA ACT IMPLEMENTATION

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Information Technology; and Subcommittee on Government Operations, held a joint hearing entitled "DATA Act Implementation". Testimony was heard from Gene L. Dodaro, Comptroller General of the United States, Government Accountability Office; David Mader, Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget; David A Lebryk, Fiscal Assistant Secretary, Department of the Treasury; and Robert A. Taylor, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audit, Department of the Treasury.

A REVIEW OF THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION'S LICENSING PROCESS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Energy held a hearing entitled "A Review of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Licensing Process". Testimony was heard from Stephen Burns, Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D865)*

H.R. 2499, to amend the Small Business Act to increase access to capital for veteran entrepreneurs, to help create jobs. Signed on July 28, 2015. (Public Law 114–38)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 30, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine whistleblower claims at the Department of Veterans Affairs, 10:30 a.m., SD–124.

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Admiral John M. Richardson, USN, to be Chief of Naval Operations, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: business meeting to continue consideration of an original bill to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, S. 133, to approve and implement the Klamath Basin agreements, to improve natural resource management, support economic development, and sustain agricultural production in the Klamath River Basin in the public interest and the interest of the United States, S. 145, to require the Director of the National Park Service to refund to States all State funds that were used to reopen and temporarily operate a unit of the National Park System during the October 2013 shutdown, S. 146, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into agreements with States and political subdivisions of States providing for the continued operation, in whole or in part, of public land, units of the National Park System, units of the National Wildlife Refuge System, and units of the National Forest System in the State during any period in which the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture is unable to maintain normal level of operations at the units due to a lapse in appropriations, S. 329, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Farmington River and Salmon Brook in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, S. 403, to revise the authorized route of the North Country National Scenic Trail in northeastern Minnesota and to extend the trail into Vermont to connect with the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, S. 521, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of President Station in Baltimore, Maryland, S. 583, to establish certain wilderness areas in central Idaho and to authorize various land conveyances involving National Forest System land and Bureau of Land Management land in central Idaho, S. 593, to require the Secretary of the Interior to submit to Congress a report on the efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation to manage its infrastructure assets, S. 610, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of P.S. 103 in West Baltimore, Maryland and for other purposes, S. 720, to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, S. 873, to designate the wilderness within the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve in the State of Alaska as the Jay S. Hammond Wilderness Area, S. 1103, to reinstate and extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving Clark Canyon Dam, S. 1104, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project involving the Gibson Dam, S. 1240, to designate the Cerro del Yuta and Rio San Antonio Wilderness Areas in the State of New Mexico, S. 1305, to amend the Colorado River Storage Project Act to authorize the use of the active capacity of the Fontenelle Reservoir, S. 1483, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the James K. Polk Home in Columbia, Tennessee, as a unit of the National Park System, S. 1694, to amend Public Law 103–434 to authorize Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project for the purposes of improving water management in the Yakima River basin, and an original bill to provide for reforms of the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf of the United States, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine sanctions and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Lucy Tamlyn, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Benin, Jeffrey J. Hawkins, Jr., of California, to be Ambassador to the Central African Republic, David R. Gilmour, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Togolese Republic, Daniel H. Rubinstein, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Tunisia, and Carolyn Patricia Alsup, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of The Gambia, all of the Department of State, 2 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, to hold hearings to examine the impact of the United States tax code on the market for corporate control and jobs, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 1814, to withhold certain Federal funding from sanctuary cities, and S. 32, to provide the Department of Justice with additional tools to target extraterritorial drug trafficking activity, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Livestock and Foreign Agriculture, hearing entitled ''Examination of Federal and State Response to Avian Influenza'', 8:30 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, July 30

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 22, Hire More Heroes Act, post-cloture, and vote on passage of the bill at 12 p.m.

If Senate receives the papers for H.R. 3236, Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act, Senate will begin consideration of the bill and vote on passage at 1:45 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1 p.m., Friday, July 31

House Chamber

Program for Friday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 1 p.m.

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