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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. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 21, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr., 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.

DRUG CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, my State of West Virginia is experiencing a crisis. West Virginia is leading the country in a rather grim category: drug overdoses. This issue goes beyond party lines, and it is ripping our State apart.

President Obama is bringing national attention to our drug crisis by coming to my district this afternoon to discuss the prescription drug and heroin epidemic.

The statistics are disturbing. Overdoses in West Virginia increased by 134 percent between 2012 and 2013, which accounts for about 34 drug overdose deaths per 100,000 West Virginia residents. This overdose rate is more than double the national average.

There is no magical solution to this epidemic. We need local, State, and Federal officials to work together to effectively fight back. One of the ways that we can do this is to have the Federal Government support the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program, also known as HIDTA. The HIDTA program provides needed funds to law enforcement to combat drug trafficking while also helping local treatment and prevention efforts.

I have been hosting roundtable discussions across my district to hear directly from communities that are affected by the drug epidemic. I recently held one of these discussions in the town of Romney, West Virginia, in September, to talk about the ongoing issues they face in that community.

Officials at the meeting agreed that we need to utilize all resources available at the local, State, and Federal levels, and we agreed that HIDTA was a key tool in fighting back. It was also pointed out that foster parents are needed to help care for children whose parents are struggling with drug addiction issues.

So you can help, too.

But addressing drug trafficking is not the only thing that needs to be done to help fight the epidemic. We need to help the youngest victims of our shared battle with this crisis: infants who are born addicted.

That is why I cosponsored and voted for H.R. 1462, the Protecting Our Infants Act of 2015, which passed the House unanimously and is awaiting action in the U.S. Senate. This bill addresses a condition called neonatal abstinence syndrome by helping to find the best way to diagnose, evaluate, and coordinate Federal efforts to help research and respond to this debilitating condition. Infants who suffer from neonatal abstinence syndrome can experience seizures, respiratory impairments, tremors, fever, and difficulty feeding.

Research published by the Journal of Perinatology found that the number of infants suffering from withdrawal grew nearly fivefold from 2000 to 2012. Evidence also shows that an infant is born with drug withdrawal every 25 minutes in the United States.

In West Virginia, it is estimated that, in 1 out of every 13 births, a baby is addicted to drugs. This is a problem that needs serious attention immediately, but this is just one crucial step.

To help fight addiction, one of the latest tools available to the public in West Virginia is a new 24-hour call line that has been launched to help people battling substance and mental health issues in West Virginia.

The call line is 1–844–HELP4WV. The line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with the promise of never being put on hold. We must continue to work together to fight this epidemic.

LEGALIZING MARIJUANA

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, advocates from the new emerging marijuana industry in Oregon are descending on Capitol Hill at a very critical time for this fledgling industry.

They have a report about the implementation of Oregon's Ballot Measure 91—overwhelmingly approved by voters last year—to legalize, tax, and regulate marijuana at the State level. Possession became legal July 1. Retail sales were authorized in existing dispensaries on the 1st of October to significant interest around the State.

Printed on recycled paper.

The first week saw an estimated $11 million in sales.

They are working hard to implement the spirit and the letter of the measure, working closely with the Oregon legislature to refine it, learning from the experience of States like Washington and Colorado that have already legalized adult use.

Theirs is a positive story of economic opportunity, product development, tax revenues, more freedom for individuals, and eliminating the racial disparities in the enforcement of a failed policy of prohibition that comes down heavily against young men of color, especially African Americans.

At the same time, there was a scathing report this week from Brookings Institution researchers John Hudak and Grace Wallack that called out the roadblocks that are being put in place by law enforcement and Federal policies that stifle medical marijuana research, that interfere with the science and the doctor-patient relationship in ways that are completely unwarranted, counterproductive, and destructive.

They come at a time when the Federal Government has told the Drug Enforcement Agency to stop harassing medical providers after Congress clearly passed legislation to protect the industry and, more importantly, a patient's right to medicine.

The Rohrabacher-Farr amendment passed with strong bipartisan support, clearly specifying that the Federal Government should not interfere with State-legal medical marijuana operations.

The Department of Justice, unfortunately, took an outrageously flawed position, which infuriated those of us who authored these provisions and have worked to pass them over the last 2 years. The DEA ignored the law, and the Department of Justice defended them in this unfortunate action.

It is the latest example of how far out of touch the Federal Government agencies are with the reality on the ground, with the will of the majority of the American people, who think that marijuana should be legal, and with the policies of the President himself.

President Obama has declared marijuana no more harmful than other perfectly legal substances, like tobacco, which is, in fact, true, and that he had bigger fish to fry than fight against State legalization. Unfortunately, some parts of his Federal Government are still frying those fish.

The good news is that the tide has turned. As I mentioned, the majority of the American people now think marijuana should be legal, as 23 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam now have medical marijuana and 17 more have authorized a limited version of medical marijuana. We have 4 States and the District of Columbia that permit outright adult use, with more States considering this over the course of the next year.

All the Federal Government has to do, as Secretary Clinton recently said in Colorado, is just stay out of the way. Stop interfering. Let legal marijuana businesses have bank accounts. Don't force them to be all cash. Let them deduct their business expenses from their taxes instead of penalizing them with grotesquely punitive levels of tax. Let the States continue in their efforts at reform. Let them treat it just like we do alcohol.

The day is fast coming when the Federal policy will be to robustly research and, ultimately, deschedule—or remove—marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act, no longer pretending that it is or should be a Schedule I controlled substance, and, instead, tax and regulate it at the Federal level.

In the meantime, the States will continue marching forward; the public will continue to request that we, at the Federal level, stop interfering with medical marijuana; and Congress will continue our efforts with increasingly large, bipartisan majorities to make this policy work to replace the failed attempt at marijuana prohibition.

CONGRESS AND ISRAEL MUST STAND TOGETHER

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, the United States and Israel share the same principles and values: fundamental ideas like freedom, democracy, respect for the rule of law, and human rights.

Our nations also share, sadly, the same security concerns, like fighting terrorism and seeing stability in the Middle East, two issues that seemingly grow worse for the entire region day by day, but especially for Israel. Many of the recent tragic terror attacks and incidents of violence in Israel have been incited by both the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, with Abu Mazen openly inciting the violence himself.

Tomorrow the Foreign Affairs Committee will mark up a resolution that I introduced alongside my south Florida colleague, Congressman TED DEUTCH, which condemns the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement by Abu Mazen and the Palestinian Authority. When Israeli citizens cannot walk out of their homes to go safely to work or to go to the grocery store for fear of another terrorist attack, we must hold the Palestinian leadership accountable.

Abu Mazen is also threatening Israel at the United Nations, where he seeks to delegitimize Israel and seeks unilateral Palestinian statehood. Just last month, Abu Mazen told the U.N. General Assembly that Palestinians would not abide by past agreements, proving, once again, that he is no partner for peace.

This morning a maneuver was foiled at UNESCO when the P.A. attempted to include incendiary text in a resolution that claimed the Western Wall was part of a Muslim holy site; and, next week, Abu Mazen is scheduled to speak at a special meeting at the U.N. Human Rights Council.

You have got to be kidding: Abu Mazen speaking at a Human Rights Council.

President Obama must hold Abu Mazen accountable instead of continuing to give him a pass for his actions and show that actions have consequences.

But these aren't the only challenges that Israel faces. In addition to the terror inside Israel, it remains surrounded by threats like ISIL, Iran, Syria, challenges that are shared by the United States.

The Iran deal is riddled with loopholes, with ambiguities, and with outright dangerous provisions, including a sunset clause that paves the way for a nuclear-armed Iran in as little as 15 years—just bide the time. It also includes the lifting of the arms embargo against Iran and the lifting of sanctions on Iran's ballistic missile program.

In addition, the Iran deal releases billions of dollars that is allowing the regime to increase its terror financing and helps fulfill its destructive ambitions in the Middle East.

For years, Congress, not the administration, has led the charge to push back against Iran and to sanction it through an effective sanctions program that constricts its energy, transportation, and financial sectors.

It is now up to Congress to be proactive again, to get out in front of the Iranian deal, and to ensure that the administration holds Iran accountable and will not allow incremental cheating, because it is almost impossible to see this administration scuttling the deal for anything less than a major violation on Iran's part. We need to develop stronger sanctions against Iran for its illicit behavior and ensure that the administration fully enforces the sanctions on the books.

While the U.N. resolutions implementing an arms embargo and restricting Iran's ballistic missile program are still in place, Iran is already testing our resolve. It is violating these resolutions. It test-fired a ballistic missile, and it continues to ship arms to Assad and Hezbollah to use against the people of Syria and against Israel.

□ 1015

Congress must move to enact additional sanctions against Iran, and we must designate and sanction Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Quds Force, because they will be the big winners in this sanctions relief. We must target Hezbollah and Iran's other proxies because you can be sure that, with Hezbollah, it is only a matter of when, not if, it decides to attack Israel.

We must ensure that Israel has what it needs to defend itself from Hezbollah and from other outside threats. With Iran providing Hezbollah with more advanced rockets and missiles, even with precision-guided systems, Israel is facing an enemy with almost 150,000 rockets pointed at every major city in

Israel. Congress needs to get more funding to Israel for its David's Sling system, for its Iron Dome system; and we need to do it sooner, rather than later.

Israel is an oasis of freedom in a desert of tyranny, a desert of terror and instability; and it is absolutely vital, Mr. Speaker, that Congress and Israel stand together to face these challenges united. The President won't do it. The Congress must.

COMMUNITY VOICES: WHY NUTRITION ASSISTANCE MATTERS

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I recently had the pleasure of speaking with a group of people involved with Community Voices: Why Nutrition Assistance Matters. It was inspiring to hear about the real and positive impacts our Federal nutrition programs have in the daily lives of Americans all across this country.

Community Voices is a summer-long national campaign launched by the Center for American Progress, the Coalition on Human Needs, Witnesses to Hunger, the Food Research and Action Center, Feeding America, and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

It was started to share the personal stories of individuals and service providers who experienced firsthand programs like SNAP or WIC or school meals. These contributors are the real experts when it comes to the importance and effect of our vital nutrition assistance programs.

The Community Voices campaign culminated in this booklet, a compilation of many of these personal stories. I would like to take a moment and share a few of these stories.

Jonetta, from Sacramento, California, says:

''Several years ago, I left an abusive relationship, and now I am raising my daughter by myself. My daughter participates in the school meal program and the after-school snack program. The snack program really helps so that my daughter isn't as hungry when she gets home from school.

''We also receive $356 a month in SNAP. This money is supposed to supplement my food budget, but it is really all of my food budget because my income barely covers my rent. Right now, I'm homeless, and it is hard to find a place to live for less than $500 a month.

''Because of SNAP, we are not starving. As a mom, I try to cut out a lot of bad food from my family's diet, but it is a difficult task to buy the healthier food because it is expensive. It's also very difficult because we have been homeless for a couple of months, so I have to use other people's refrigerators.

''I am very thankful for these programs and to all the people who are trying to make all these programs better. They really helped me and my daughter.''

Let me share another story from Linda from the Massachusetts Coalition of the Homeless:

''Several years ago, I volunteered at a summer program at a park in Morgantown, Kentucky, assisting with skill-building activities. Without this nutrition program, the kids who came would not have had lunch, since school was not in session. If the kids didn't come to that park for nutritional food, I'm not sure they would have gotten it anywhere else. None of the food was wasted; and if there was any food left over, the kids would take it back to their families.

''Food is a basic human right, and our government sometimes forgets that and needs to be reminded. This is a moral imperative for our country to make sure that all people, especially children, have the resources needed to develop—even more so for families and children in poverty.''

I want to thank Jonetta, Linda, and all of those who took the time to share their stories. They remind us that these programs are helping real families who are trying to do their best in very difficult times.

Mr. Speaker, all too often the discussion around SNAP and our other antihunger programs is punctuated by misinformation, false stereotypes, or downright nasty rhetoric. It is frustrating, and it is wrong.

Community Voices reminds us what a positive difference these programs make for families who are really struggling.

The data backs up just how important these programs are. In 2014 alone, for example, SNAP lifted 4.7 million people out of poverty, including 2.1 million children. Ninety-two percent of benefits go to households with incomes below the poverty line, which includes millions of struggling families working hard every day to put food on the table.

Federal investment in our nutrition programs is one of the smartest investments we can make. For example, for every $1 spent on preventive services for a pregnant woman in WIC, the program saves $4.21 in Medicaid costs by reducing the risk of preterm birth and associated costs.

Mr. Speaker, I have long believed that we need to hear firsthand from the people who are directly touched by SNAP, WIC, or school meals. They are the real experts, and they can guide us, as Members of Congress, as we work to strengthen and improve these programs.

Every Member of Congress should have received a Community Voices booklet. It is a call to action to protect our vital nutrition assistance programs. I encourage you to read the stories about how these programs are helping families who need them most. Without them, hunger would be much, much worse in this country.

I urge you to keep their stories in mind the next time proposals come before Congress to cut funding for WIC or restrict access to SNAP or make it more difficult for kids to get healthy meals in school. Harmful changes like these would hurt real families who are already struggling. We should not make their lives more difficult. We should not be making hunger worse in this country. Mr. Speaker, we can and we should do more to end hunger now.

FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize October as National Fire Prevention Month and would like to thank all the firefighters across my district and across the Nation for all that they do to keep our communities safe.

In 2013, departments across the United States responded to nearly 400,000 fires, resulting in $7 billion in property damage and more than 2,700 deaths. That, unfortunately, amounts to an average of eight people every day.

Of those who lost their lives as a result of fire, one in four was caused by a fire that started in a bedroom. This is one of the reasons why one focus of this year's Fire Prevention Month is to raise awareness that every bedroom needs a working smoke detector.

Mr. Speaker, as a volunteer firefighter with nearly three decades of experience, I know that smoke detectors save lives. The statistics prove this, showing that working smoke detectors cut the risk of dying in a fire by half.

Smoke detectors are inexpensive and easy to install. I urge everyone to take action to help prevent future tragedies.

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES' 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 50th anniversary of Goodwill Industries of North Central, located in my district. This organization assists people across a huge portion of north central Pennsylvania, including 13 counties.

Goodwill has been a valuable part of its region since its launch in 1966. Over the years, their service area has grown to cover more than a dozen counties, 20 stores—the most recent addition, our 21st store, which is an online store they operate—and has created jobs for more than 500 people. Last week, I visited Goodwill's distribution center in Jefferson County, Pennsylvania, and learned more about the organization's plans to open an additional three stores as well as a donation training center.

Fifty years after its founding, hard work and determination are still the cornerstone to Goodwill of North Central's foundation.

It certainly helps that this great local organization is backed by a highly regarded national network. Across

the United States, Goodwill is considered one of the top five most valuable and recognized nonprofit brands and is the second-largest nonprofit organization. Pennsylvania alone is served by 10 Goodwill Industries service areas; and Goodwill has solid ties to the communities it services through partnerships with local businesses, schools, and human service agencies, helping individuals overcome life challenges through opportunity, education, training, and employment.

I often say that I wear many hats during my day-to-day routine: father, husband, community member, caregiver, legislator, and so on. I am sure most of you would agree with the fact that the different roles that you fulfill in your life provide you with diverse perspectives and help shape your outlook on what is most important. My experiences have solidified my belief in the value of community. Whether we are talking about our national economy, the quality of our health care, or closing the skills gap, we can agree that the most successful efforts start in our local communities from the ground up.

Those who donate to Goodwill can have peace of mind that their money is going to the right place, since 90 cents of every dollar is directed toward its mission and its services. These services were provided to nearly 1,200 people across the north central region in Pennsylvania in 2013, providing an immensurable benefit to our region.

The 50th anniversary celebration is a great time to reflect on all of the growth that Goodwill Industries of North Central has achieved as a team and to continue to prepare your plans for the future. I commend them for all their remarkable accomplishments, and I look forward to the great things that are to come.

DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning in some horror and alarm over the so-called Default Prevention Act that this Chamber will be considering. Of all the Orwellian names that the House comes up with for legislation, this one is truly deserving of an award by the Ministry of Truth.

For those of you at home who have not been following the swirling, madcap antics around the House of Representatives lately, let me assure you that the Default Prevention Act in no way prevents a default. The Default Prevention Act, in fact, specifies that two categories of people get paid in the event that the Congress does not raise the debt ceiling. It specifies that private bondholders of U.S. Treasuries will get paid interest, and it specifies that Social Security recipients will be held harmless. They will get paid.

Now, at some level, maybe that sounds attractive; but everybody else that is expecting a check or a salary or some form of repayment by the United States Government, they are out of luck.

1.4 million Active-Duty troops, they are not in this bill as somebody who gets paid if the government doesn't raise the debt ceiling. Four million disabled veterans are out of luck under this bill. One million doctors who today are providing Medicare services to our senior citizens are out of luck. Sorry. You didn't make it into the Default Prevention Act cooked up by the Republican majority.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that stunningly and explicitly defines for the world, tells everybody exactly how the U.S. Government intends to be a deadbeat, who we are going to pay and who we are not going to pay, and here is how we are going to be a deadbeat.

Why would you do that? What possible sense does that make?

There are all kinds of reasons why this is a terrible piece of legislation, but let me just focus on two.

Number one, I hear constantly from my friends on the Republican side of the aisle that everything creates winners and losers: the Affordable Care Act, the Ex-Im Bank, you name it. Dodd-Frank creates winners and losers. This bill very explicitly creates winners: Social Security recipients and bondholders.

By the way, who are these bondholders? Who holds United States Treasury debt? Do you?

I will tell you who holds most of it: China. China does. This is why, on the Democratic side of the aisle, we have called this bill the Pay China First Act, which is actually a much better description of what this act actually does than the Default Prevention Act.

More seriously, Mr. Speaker, I worked in the capital markets for a long time. There is no way to gracefully default on your debt, to say, ''Oh, we will pay interest; we will pay Social Security. But we are not going to pay soldiers; we are not going to pay Medicare.'' Once you tell the world that we do not intend to abide by our obligations, the world loses its faith in the United States.

Folks, this debt ceiling is a fiction. It is an absurdist fiction. What do we get from it? The debt ceiling has never prevented the accumulation of debt. That happens because this Chamber and the United States Congress chooses to spend more money than it chooses to tax and bring in.

There are really only two ways to reduce the deficit and the debt: you can tax more, which nobody likes to do; or you can spend less, which it turns out that nobody really wants to do either because, of course, everybody in this Chamber has the things that they want to spend their money on, but the other guy's stuff, well, that we are going to cut.

So we have the ultimate hypocrisy of saying we are going to tax too little and spend too much, create a deficit, but then we are going to vote on this magical thing called the debt ceiling that will allow us to say ''I am not raising the debt ceiling because I oppose spending.'' It is absurd. And you know what? It leads to legislation like this.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, we have seen this movie before. Pretty soon in the next couple of days, grown men and women in this Chamber are going to talk about maybe the Treasury minting a high-denomination platinum coin to solve this problem, as though we were characters in some kind of ''Harry Potter'' movie instead of responsible legislators.

This needs to stop, Mr. Speaker. My constituents are sick and tired of the House of Representatives acting in this fashion: ideological and absurd. My constituents want us to come together to deal with the real problems facing America: of improving the economy, of making education accessible. But, no, we are going to spend some time on this absurdly named Default Prevention Act.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this thing and move on to more serious issues.

OUR NATION'S DEBT TAX

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, in a mere 14 days, America will hit the limit for our national debt; but rather than working with Congress to address the causes of our debt, President Obama is demanding we dump more debt on our kids and grandkids.

President Obama is very different from Senator Obama. Here is a photo of Senator Obama speaking on the Senate floor, and here is what he said on our national debt on the Senate floor on March 16, 2006:

''The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. It is a sign that the U.S. Government can't pay its own bills. It is a sign that we now depend on ongoing financial assistance from foreign countries to finance our government's reckless fiscal policies.

''Over the past 5 years, our Federal debt has increased by $3.5 trillion to $8.6 trillion. That is 'trillion' with a 'T.' That is money that we have borrowed from the Social Security trust fund, borrowed from China and Japan, borrowed from American taxpayers.

''Numbers that large are sometimes hard to understand. Some people may wonder why they matter. Here is why: This year the Federal Government will spend $220 billion on interest.''

The $8.6 trillion that horrified Senator Obama in 2006 has exploded to $18.1 trillion on President Obama's watch. ''That is 'trillion' with a 'T,' '' to quote Senator Obama.

Senator Obama later explained:

''Every dollar we pay in interest is a dollar that is not going to investment

in America's priorities. Instead, interest payments are a significant tax on all Americans, a debt tax that Washington doesn't want to talk about.''

Senator Obama abhorred a debt tax that Washington didn't want to talk about, and now he refuses to talk about his new debt tax.

Senator Obama closed by saying:

''Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means that 'the buck stops here.' Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better. I, therefore, intend to oppose the effort to increase America's debt limit.''

If Senator Obama thought that a national debt of $8.6 trillion with a T is a ''failure of leadership,'' what has changed? Why is President Obama okay with a new debt tax of over $20 trillion, trillion with a T?

Clearly, President Obama has forgotten Senator Obama's words, but the American people remember. On their behalf and on behalf of all young Americans who will be crushed by this new debt, I ask President Obama to decrease our debt by working with Congress to stop his new debt tax.

DONALD TRUMP HOSTING ''SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE''

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, did you hear that ''Saturday Night Live'' has invited Donald Trump to host the show in November? Now, let me get the exact quote from July when Donald Trump launched his ''make America hate again'' campaign. He said:

''When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best . . . They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing us those problems. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.''

''They're sending us not the right people. It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America, and it's coming probably from the Middle East.''

While much of what Donald Trump says is hilarious, intentionally or otherwise, bald-faced racism for political gain isn't funny. His statements should disqualify him from being able to take the stage in any entertainment venue and speak to the American people as if what he said was no big deal.

It is not that I don't get the joke—I haven't been kidnapped by the politically correct police—but when public figures cross certain lines, they should lose their privileges to host TV shows, at least until they have apologized for their unacceptable behavior. To put Donald Trump on the air in America's living rooms on the signature comedy show of one of the most important national networks after saying that Mexicans are rapists, drug dealers, and criminals, that is a corporate blunder too big to be ignored.

What happened, NBC and Comcast? Within a couple of weeks after Trump launched those racist bombs, you dumped Trump. You dumped his TV show on your network. You dumped his pageants and other ventures on NBC and Universal networks like Telemundo.

In July, NBC said: ''Due to the recent derogatory statements by Donald Trump regarding immigrants, NBCUniversal is ending its business relationship with Mr. Trump.''

NBC said: ''Respect and dignity for all people are cornerstones of our values.''

NBC, you were not alone in dumping Trump. Macy's Department Stores dumped Trump's clothing line, Serta dumped Trump's mattresses, chef Jose Andres pulled his new restaurant from a Trump hotel, and Univision dumped a Trump pageant. Even NASCAR and ESPN dumped Trump. Corporate America stepped up to the plate and dumped Trump, and we all applauded.

Let's be clear: the goodwill that corporate America earned from dumping Trump didn't just come from the Mexican-American community. No, when Trump says Mexicans are murderers, rapists, and drug dealers, Puerto Rico knows he is talking about us, too, and Colombians and Salvadorans, and pretty much everyone in the Latino community.

Look, Americans aren't very good at telling us apart; so when we are under attack by a tycoon running for the Republican Presidential nomination, we can't tell us apart either. We are all family.

What happened, Comcast, Universal, and NBC? Now, 3 months later, have Donald Trump's words been expunged? Did I miss an apology on one of his almost nightly television appearances? Has he confessed his racist and hateful call to action?

Well, NBC installing Trump as SNL host may be good for ratings, but it is a bigger deal than a cameo or being a guest on ''The Tonight Show.'' I am calling you out.

If Donald Trump had said gays and lesbians were murderers and raping Americans, would he get to host a show? It is every bit as much a fiction and a lie.

Donald Trump has said some pretty awful things about women individually and collectively. But what if he said most women were criminals? Would the writers be thinking up sketches for Trump if he had slandered an entire gender rather than an entire ethnic group?

Trump says he wants to do away with the part of the Constitution that allowed freed slaves, freed African American slaves to be treated fully as American citizens. Yes, Trump thinks we do not need the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

But what if he said that Black people were murderers, rapists, drug dealers? Would you still pitch skits with Donald Trump and some lighthearted banter?

What if all the Latino cast members all walked off the job at ''Saturday Night Live''? Oh, wait, you don't have any Latino cast members.

I do seem to remember Comcast spending a lot of time on Capitol Hill when they had a merger deal with Time Warner and they wanted support from Members of Congress. Comcast said Latinos were so important to them, and they had plans to do this and that and the other thing to support the Latino and immigrant community.

What happened? The merger didn't go through, so you no longer feel the sense of corporate responsibility to the 55 million Latinos that live in the USA? Giving free airtime to people who insult and malign them is now part of your business model?

I just want to say one last thing to producer Lorne Michaels. I wonder if he had said that Canadians were rapists, murderers, and drug dealers, would you be inviting him on SNL?

Mr. Speaker, I place in the RECORD a letter that I sent NBC Comcast yesterday.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 20, 2015.

Mr. BRIAN ROBERTS,
Chairman/President/CEO, Comcast Corp, Philadelphia, PA.

Mr. STEPHEN B. BURKE,
President/CEO, NBCUniversal, New York, NY.

DEAR MESSRS. ROBERTS AND BURKE: Having Donald Trump as a guest on every news and entertainment program is one thing, but allowing him to host Saturday Night Live is another. It is a level of endorsement that says to America that every hateful and racist thing Donald Trump has said since the moment he launched his campaign is acceptable and no big deal.

Well, it is a big deal. He said Mexicans are rapists, criminals and drug-dealers, and to be clear, when he said Mexicans are those things, he was tarring all Latinos and all immigrants. His exact words were, ''They're sending us not the right people. It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America, and it's coming probably from the Middle East.''

The reaction in July from NBC was swift and clear: ''Due to the recent derogatory statements by Donald Trump regarding immigrants, NBCUniversal is ending its business relationship with Mr. Trump.'' And NBC said, ''Respect and dignity for all people are cornerstones of our values.''

Serta, Macy's, NASCAR, Univision, and ESPN were among the others that also acted to dump Trump.

Three months later, because he is a ratings and comedy bonanza, Lorne Michaels and Saturday Night Live (SNL) are giving the Trump campaign 90 minutes of free network airtime.

I think I speak for a lot of Americans, especially immigrant Americans and Latino Americans, when I say that if SNL is allowed to proceed, it would be a huge corporate blunder.

When Comcast sought a merger with Time Warner, I and a lot of my Congressional Hispanic Caucus colleagues heard from you

about your commitment to the Latino community and the level of corporate responsibility you pledged to your diverse audience. I certainly hope that your commitment to ''respect and dignity for all people'' was not some hollow promise and is in fact a cornerstone of your values.

Please disinvite him. Make a statement: Derogatory statements of the nature trumpeted by Trump about any group disqualifies someone from hosting shows on your network. Send a message that racism is not funny and that responsibility to your viewers and the public is more important than ratings. It is a chance for your company—again—to show you are committed to your audience in more ways than just the ad revenues they provide you.

Please do the right thing and dump Trump.

Sincerely,

LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ,
Member of Congress.

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

WEST VIRGINIA'S DRUG CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. JENKINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, President Obama is coming to West Virginia today to talk about our State's and Nation's drug crisis. What I hope he will also talk about on his visit to our capital city, Charleston, what I hope he will acknowledge, is our State's jobs crisis. West Virginia has lost good jobs: jobs in our coal mines, jobs in our schools and small businesses, jobs in our small towns and communities throughout southern West Virginia.

Regulations from the President's own Environmental Protection Agency are forcing coal mines to close. Our coal miners are out of work. Our coal families are facing an uncertain future. We have lost an estimated 43 percent of our coal jobs in just the last 6 years under this administration's policies.

Eighteen percent—18 percent—of unemployed people reported using illegal drugs. That is more than twice the number of people who used illegal drugs who were employed. The best antidrug policy is a good jobs policy.

West Virginia has the highest overdose rate in the country. We also have the highest unemployment rate in the country. Nearly every family in this State has been touched by drug abuse and, tragically, far too many families. There are those who have suffered and actually buried a loved one due to the horrible disease of addiction.

The President will announce several initiatives to help address the heroin and opioid crisis. He is going to talk about prescriber training. He is going to talk about access to naloxone, a powerful antidote to an overdose. He is going to talk about public education.

□ 1045

He is going to talk about public education. These are all excellent steps. These are actually things we already are doing in West Virginia. We have taken great strides on many fronts, including these in West Virginia, to arrest this problem.

These proposals, however, I am afraid, do not go far enough to really make a difference and treat those battling addiction. The President needs to propose a strong plan to get people real treatment to address their addictions and become healthy and productive members of society again.

Many West Virginians who want treatment don't have anywhere to go. Those suffering from addiction are forced to leave West Virginia to find help, treatment, and their families are falling apart.

To improve West Virginia, to give West Virginians hope for a better future, to give them an alternative to destructive lifestyles, we have to get people back to work.

Mr. President, a good job solves a lot of problems.

West Virginians are a proud people. We are not asking for a handout. We want to do a full day's work for a full day's pay.

The administration is crushing West Virginia's coal miners, machinists, healthcare workers, truckers, small business owners, and Main Street.

Mr. President, if you want to help win the war on drugs, stop your war on coal. What we need is the Federal Government to get out of the way of West Virginia, and let us get back to work.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OLSON). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

WE CANNOT RUN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, over the past 15 years, we have had thousands of young Americans killed and thousands more maimed and trillions of U.S. taxpayer dollars spent in our failed attempts at nation building in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the Middle East.

Surely, surely, we have learned a very expensive lesson, that we cannot run the Middle East. In fact, in some ways, our good intentions have made things worse.

Now some companies and people who make money off of an interventionist foreign policy are clamoring for us to get in an even bigger way in bloody Syria.

Mr. Speaker, this is not true conservatism.

Mr. Speaker, the conservative columnist Thomas Sowell wrote recently and said: ''What lessons might we learn from the whole experience of the Iraq War? If nothing else, we should never again imagine that we can engage in 'nation-building' in the sweeping sense that term acquired in Iraq—least of all building a democratic Arab nation in a region of the world that has never had such a thing in a history that goes back thousands of years.''

David Keene, the conservative opinion editor of the Washington Times, wrote:

> The concept of U.S. national interests was stretched beyond any rational meaning. America took on more than we could possibly handle. The result is a generation of young Americans who have never known peace; a decade in which thousands of our best have died or been maimed, with little to show for their sacrifices; our enemies have multiplied; and the national debt has skyrocketed.

Mr. Speaker, President Kennedy said in one of his most famous speeches at the University of Washington in 1961:

> We must face the fact that the United States is neither omnipotent nor omniscient, that we are only 6 percent of the world's population, that we cannot impose our will on the other 94 percent of mankind, that we cannot right every wrong or reverse each adversity, and that, therefore, there cannot be an American solution to every world problem.

The only difference now, Mr. Speaker, is that we are 4 percent of the world's population instead of 6 percent that he mentioned. But I would repeat those words of President Kennedy: ''We cannot right every wrong or reverse every adversity and that, therefore, there cannot be an American solution to every world problem.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 49 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We continue to ask Your blessing on all those who are discerning significant options about leadership here in the people's House.

You endow all Your people with gifts of various designs, meant to be used in service to others. May the pressures that come to bear not obscure honest self-reflection and evaluation of the gifts that each has to bring to the needs of this time in the people's House.

Bless all Members with a sense of their collective responsibility to our Nation and to this assembly so that the American people might look forward to the coming months with hope and a renewed respect and trust in those whom they have elected.

May all that is done today and in the days to come be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTENGER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PITTENGER 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

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

UNESCO WESTERN WALL VOTE

(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, this morning an initiative aimed at delegitimatizing Israel was defeated at UNESCO.

Abu Mazen is set to head to the U.N. Human Rights Council for an emergency meeting next week where he will surely spew more of his dangerous rhetoric and even further inflame the tensions between the Palestinians and Israelis.

The U.S. has had a clear policy of defending Israel from these biased attacks at the U.N., but recently we have seen perhaps a troubling shift in policy by the current administration.

The administration's refusal to stand publicly and firmly with Israel emboldens groups at the U.N. to push forward with these initiatives and undermines longstanding U.S. policy. If the administration won't counter these efforts at the U.N., then Congress must use every tool at our disposal to hold these agencies and Abu Mazen accountable.

Mr. Speaker, we must send a clear message to all the member states at the U.N. that Congress stands with Israel and that we will not allow these efforts to continue that seek to undermine the Jewish state, our best ally, and the U.N.

RHODE ISLAND WALK FOR EPILEPSY

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 2015 Rhode Island Walk for Epilepsy, which will take place this Saturday, October 24, at Slater Memorial Park in Pawtucket.

One in 26 people will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime. Today in the United States, there are 4.3 million adults and 750,000 children who are living with epilepsy or a seizure disorder.

There is no known cure for epilepsy, and it is critical that we do more to support research that will help develop new forms of treatment for those suffering from this disease.

I want to extend my deep gratitude to everyone who has been involved in planning this year's Rhode Island Walk for Epilepsy. I want to especially recognize one of my constituents, Robbie Thorp, whom I had the opportunity to meet with in April of this year when he was selected to serve as Rhode Island's ambassador for the Kids Speak Up conference in Washington, D.C.

Robbie is an impressive young man who has already demonstrated himself to be a strong advocate for epilepsy awareness in Rhode Island.

Again, I extend my best wishes for a successful event to him and everyone taking part in this Saturday's Rhode Island Walk for Epilepsy.

GARLAND DENNY—A DEDICATED PATRIOT

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of my good friend, Garland Denny, a true and dedicated patriot devoted to helping veterans in need.

Mr. Denny died last week at the age of 84. During the Korean war, Mr. Denny served our country aboard the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Following a long and successful career as a structural steel draftsman, Mr. Denny spent his retirement advocating for a special postage stamp to raise money for veterans' services.

In support of Mr. Denny, 55 Members of the House and Senate joined me this summer in writing the U.S. Postmaster General urging the creation of a Stamp Out PTSD semipostal stamp to help raise money for PTSD research and treatment.

We remain committed to Mr. Denny's goal of helping veterans and overcoming the bureaucracy standing in the way. Mr. Denny reminds us that one committed American can make a big difference.

His sons, Chuck and James, have joined me today in the House Chamber and intend to carry on their father's mission. May God bless you both and your sister, Sue.

DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, as Republicans bicker behind closed doors, the deadline to raise the debt limit draws closer and closer.

If we fail to act in time, interest rates will skyrocket, the dollar will plummet, and the stock market could collapse. That is unacceptable. It is time to bring this manufactured crisis to an end.

Let's not fool ourselves. Even if the Republican leadership does manage to pass a last-minute extension, the mere threat of a default will inflict real damage on the American economy. Economists tell us that the 2011 debt limit standoff cost American jobs and contributed to the downgrade of the U.S. credit rating, and we are repeating the same mistake today.

That is why the true threat to our fragile economic recovery isn't our budget deficit; it is the leadership deficit that exists within the Republican Party. Unfortunately, for conservative Republicans, irresponsibility has become a badge of honor and recklessness a source of pride.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want leadership instead of brinksmanship. They want cooperation and compromise instead of deadlock and dysfunction. Let's raise the debt ceiling and move on to the critical work of building a stronger and more prosperous Nation.

DEBT MANAGEMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, our national debt now stands at more than $18 trillion. If current law remains unchanged, the CBO projects Federal debt can exceed $50 trillion in our lifetime. This cannot be sustained.

That is why I have introduced the Debt Management and Fiscal Responsibility Act. This bill provides early and clear-eyed assessment of the debt well before even reaching the statutory debt limit.

Under this bill, the Treasury Secretary would report on three items: first, the national debt and debt protection; second, debt reduction proposals; and, third, regular progress reports to Congress on debt reduction. All of this information would be made readily available to the public.

The national debt is a shared responsibility, and it will take a shared executive legislative approach to reduce it. We can no longer afford to put $18 trillion on autopilot. Let's deal with it head-on and find a responsible measure to retire the debt before it is too late.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR THE ELDERLY

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, last week, the Social Security Administration announced that there would be no

cost of living adjustment to Social Security benefits next year.

This news has seniors in western New York worried. The price of food, housing, and health care have increased. Without a corresponding increase in benefits, seniors will be asked to do more with less.

The formula used to determine cost of living adjustments is not properly reflecting the senior economy. Seniors spend more on housing, food, and medical care and less on travel and education. That is why I support legislation to adopt a new formula, called the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly, that would give weight to price increases in housing and medical care and more accurately reflect the costs incurred by seniors.

Unless Congress acts, the incomes of 60 million Americans will be effectively reduced. That would be bad for our economy and worse for the vulnerable Americans that we are here to protect.

GRATEFUL RESPONSE TO SOUTH CAROLINA FLOOD

(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, despite the destruction of the thousand-year rain event flooding, it was a testament to the people of South Carolina working together. Led by Governor Nikki Haley and Adjutant General Bob Livingston, our State is a model for disaster response.

I am grateful for our State Emergency Management Division, led by Director Kim Stenson, for over 1,500 successful rescue missions and to all of our first responders for the countless rescues.

Credit is due to Director Christy Hall and the South Carolina Department of Transportation for their tireless work. During the flooding, over 500 roads and bridges were closed. I know firsthand, as the road I live on was washed out, the location of our family home for the last six generations, which was named by my grandmother.

Donations and volunteers have come from across the Nation. The Salvation Army, led by Major Roger Coulson, has provided over 50,000 meals to displaced persons in the flooding. The Red Cross, inspired by national president Gale McGovern's visit, has operated 26 shelters.

I appreciate the positive spirit of the people of South Carolina spontaneously coming together as family and neighbors before turning to government.

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

Thank you, Coach Steve Spurrier, for developing winning Gamecocks.

MUST-ACT DEADLINES

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, well, even some of my Republican colleagues acknowledge that there is chaos in their conference and that chaos has consequences. Governing from one manufactured crisis to another, we have piled up a whole series of must-act deadlines.

In just 8 days, the U.S. Government will default unless Congress acts. Once again, Republicans are jeopardizing the full faith and credit of the United States.

Unfortunately, that is just one of the deadlines that we face in this calendar of chaos. In just weeks, we have got to pass another budget or face another GOP-engineered shutdown.

We have to pass a highway trust fund bill. Hopefully, it is not another short-term patch but something that actually gets Americans working and rebuilds our infrastructure.

Sadly, the Export-Import Bank still sits idle. Fortunately, a handful of courageous Republicans joined all Democrats, and next week, hopefully, we will be able to get that moving again. It shouldn't take that kind of an extraordinary measure. We ought to be able to do it through the normal course of legislation.

This chaos is out of hand.

Hardworking Americans go to work every day. We need to do our job in Congress, and that is to do the business of the American people. Mr. Speaker, we have long passed time. We need to get to work.

SOAR ACT

(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, the House this week will vote on H.R. 10, the SOAR Reauthorization Act, known as the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act. This will authorize the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program for an additional 5 years.

At the core of this scholarship program is a simple premise that every American child deserves the opportunity to receive a great education. No child should be forced to attend low-performing public schools when alternatives for parents and their children are available right around the corner.

Education is essential to climbing the ladder of success in this Nation, and this bill takes a positive step forward in giving parents the ability to provide more opportunities and choices to pave the way to a better future for their children.

I urge my colleagues to support this responsible measure, and I thank Speaker BOEHNER for bringing this legislation to our floor.

BALANCED BUDGET PROPOSAL

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

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to bring responsible budgeting to our Nation's Capitol. First of all, this means funding the government every year without a shutdown, but also it means balancing the budget.

Since I have served in Congress, we have been consumed by fights over deficit reduction and budget priorities. We have gone from crisis to crisis, never coming up with a long-term plan. After the crisis is over, nothing happens.

Recently, I introduced a balanced budget amendment that would add discipline to the budget process and require the government to spend within its means. Balanced budget proposals are not new. But unlike most proposals, my amendment protects Social Security, enables long-term capital investments, and ensures that we can respond to emergencies.

In Delaware, like most States, the law requires the State to have a balanced budget. As Delaware Secretary of Finance, I helped make that happen. We should hold the Federal Government to the same standard.

If the United States is going to continue to be the strongest economy in the world, we need to address our budget deficits now. I urge my colleagues to bring order and responsibility to our budget process by passing my amendment.

□ 1215

NATIONAL DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, October is National Dyslexia Awareness Month. This is something that is very close to my family. My wife and I watched our daughter struggle to learn to read. She dreaded reading aloud in class, and worrying what her classmates thought affected her self-esteem.

With hard work, our daughter was able to catch up and surpass many of her classmates. Over time, she discovered her strengths in math and science, which helped her increase her confidence.

It wasn't until high school that we found out she actually has dyslexia. This diagnosis has helped her understand how her brain works and realize that her difference gives her some advantages.

We are extremely proud of how hard she has worked to overcome these challenges and not let them get in the way of her success. Mr. Speaker, it is important that we bring awareness to dyslexia and educate our communities about the impact on families.

NATIONAL FOREST PRODUCTS WEEK

(Ms. KUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the importance of the forest products industry as we celebrate National Forest Products Week.

In my home State of New Hampshire, we have a rich tradition of supporting working forests and recognizing the ways in which our forests contribute to our State's economic livelihood and the vitality of our rural communities.

The forest products industry employs over 7,000 Granite Staters. These men and women proudly continue our State's legacy of responsible forest stewardship. From timber production to biomass energy, our forests provide a wide range of sustainably sourced products that citizens and businesses rely on throughout our country.

My district is home to both biomass power plants and wood pellet manufacturing facilities that are important job creators in the renewable energy sector, and I am proud to serve as co-chair of the bipartisan Congressional Biomass Caucus.

As part of our efforts to underscore the economic and environmental contributions to our Nation's forests, we must rededicate ourselves to preserving these treasured lands for future generations to come.

NDAA VETO THREAT

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

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, I think this is absolutely nuts. Yesterday the House and the Senate sent the President the National Defense Authorization bill requesting his signature, which he has now threatened to veto.

I was an Air Force pilot for 14 years, and I sit on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. I understand how critical it is that our military be prepared; and to be prepared, they have to be adequately funded.

Vetoing NDAA means that we simply don't provide authorization for funding for our troops. It means we cut our military readiness. It means we can't continue our fight against ISIS. It cuts such critical programs that protect us as our missile defense program. I just simply don't understand it.

The President doesn't have any specific objections to this bill. It funds to the exact level that he has requested. By doing this, the President has ignored the primary responsibility that the Federal Government has to defend and protect the United States.

I hope that the President will not fail in that responsibility. I hope he will sign this critically important bill.

WE MUST TAKE ACTION ON GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, today marks 3 weeks since the mass shooting at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg that cost nine innocent Americans their lives. As that tragedy fades from the headlines, the daily tragedy of gun violence in America drums on.

Last week, in south Florida, Janel Hamilton was shot to death by her godmother's son while watching TV. She was 19 and dreamed of becoming a lawyer.

Last weekend, in Chicago, a 3-year-old boy named Eian Santiago was shot to death by his 6-year-old brother. They were playing cops and robbers.

Last night, in New York City, police officer Randolph Holder succumbed to a gunshot wound in the head. He was responding to gun violence in East Harlem.

In the last 96 hours alone, 91 Americans have lost their lives to gun violence. That is nearly 1 person killed by guns every hour in the United States.

The American people expect us to take action. They expect us to stand up to those who fight to prevent us from taking action; yet, hour by hour goes by in this Congress without hearings, without debate, and without action.

Mr. Speaker, I will be back next week and the week after that and the week after that. Gun violence won't stop until this Congress takes action, and neither will I.

OUR MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

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

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, our mental health system is abusive and neglectful to those with a serious mental illness. Worse yet, these policies disproportionately impact minorities and the poor. African Americans are 50 percent less likely to receive psychiatric treatment. Outpatient mental health spending for African Americans is 40 percent lower.

While there is an overall shortage of mental health professionals, only 3 percent of psychiatrists and 2 percent of psychologists are African American. The rate is similar for Latino mental health professionals and worse for Native Americans.

If you are a minority or low income and have a serious mental illness, you are more likely to end up in prison, where 80 percent of inmates don't receive any treatment.

If you are low income, Medicaid makes it harder for you to access inpatient mental health treatment, won't let you see two doctors on the same day, and says, you can't take the medications your doctor prescribed.

Stop this discrimination. I ask Members to cosponsor and pass the Helping Families of Mental Health Crisis Act, H.R. 2646. People with serious mental illness can and do get better with help, but where there is no help, there is no hope.

IT IS TIME TO GET REAL ABOUT GUN VIOLENCE

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

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, it is time to get real about gun violence in America. As the entrusted voices for millions of Americans, we have a responsibility to address gun violence. In our schools, in our movie theaters, and even in our churches the threat is ever present.

Most recently a dangerous individual went on the campus of a community college in Roseburg, Oregon, and opened fire, taking nine lives and injuring seven. My thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends as they mourn.

Chris Mintz, a veteran from Randleman, North Carolina, was among those injured while rushing into the crossfire in an effort to defuse the situation. I am honored by his bravery, and I wish him a speedy and full recovery.

From Newtown to Blacksburg, to Aurora, to Charleston, these senseless shootings are becoming far too common. It is not just mass shootings that are bothersome because every day 88 people die because of gun violence. That is more than 30,000 Americans killed every year.

How many lives must be lost before we say that now is the right time to pass commonsense legislation to keep guns out of the wrong hands? We can make a difference. We must, but we must take action now.

PREVENTABLE CHILD AND MATERNAL DEATHS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of our children and salute the medical researchers and the pediatricians who are seeking to find cures for debilitating and preventable childhood diseases.

The leadership of the U.S. is crucial in helping end many of these childhood and maternal deaths. That is why we have included specific provisions in 21st Century Cures for children.

Cures bring benefits. Let me give you an example: polio. In 1988, the World Health Organization had a resolution to support the worldwide eradication of polio. Through the work of American researchers, private citizens, and Rotarians, polio vaccines have nearly eradicated this scourge worldwide.

American leadership should continue to help end preventable childhood and maternal deaths.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOREST PRODUCTS WEEK

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

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize National Forest Products Week and to acknowledge what an important role our forests play in all of our daily lives.

The Second District of Florida is home to hundreds of thousands of acres of public and private forest lands. The Apalachicola National Forest alone is nearly 1,000 square miles.

Just last week, I participated in a work day with the Nature Conservancy in the Apalachicola Forest to learn how responsible management can boost the economic and environmental value of forestland.

I am proud that north Florida forests make such an important contribution to our country's economy and our environment. We depend on wood for the structure of our homes, the paper we write on, and a million different things in between, but most significantly for the oxygen we breathe.

FOREST PRODUCTS WEEK RECOGNITION

(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 also rise today in recognition of National Forest Products Week and the men and women across our country that work in this crucial industry. Forest products have been an integral part of the North American economy even before our States were united.

From our beginnings, forest products built ships and were the main source of fuel. Through our industrialization, forest products became the foundation of our vast rail system and the media that fills our great libraries. Today so much of everything we get is shipped and contained in forest products. Forest products have always been the backbone of housing, a critical sector of our economy.

Forest products are green, renewable, and sequester carbon. We have been prolific in perfecting our conversion technologies, developing new products, and growing more timber. In fact, we have more trees today in America than in 1900.

To keep our forests healthy and our economy strong, we need to develop more markets at home and abroad for our forest products, and we need to commit more research to find cost-effective ways to utilize our woody biomass, a vast, renewable, carbon-neutral fuel source.

IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT NEED FUNDING

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, this month all of us know that we are addressing the issue of breast cancer and cancer generally. I will proudly wear this label today for the number of people around our country and around the world that are suffering from cancer.

On Monday, I participated at Nova Southeastern University with experts in genomics and studying this issue. I learned from them that only 8 percent of grants are made from the National Institutes of Health. That is an incredible resource for all of us, and we need to be about the business of increasing the National Institutes of Health's opportunities to go forward on breast cancer.

The second part of my remarks this morning, Mr. Speaker, deals with airport workers, specifically in Fort Lauderdale and elsewhere. They are fighting for $15 an hour. These are the people that clean up the toilets at the airport in Broward County. They are the people who carry the people on the airplane with wheelchairs. We can at least afford $15 an hour for them.

□ 1230

REAUTHORIZE THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the potentially grave situation facing our Nation's security this week.

Despite the National Defense Authorization Act garnering widespread bipartisan support in both Houses of Congress, President Obama has inexplicably threatened to veto it. Our soldiers and their families deserve better than an administration that plays politics with the pay for our troops and puts our national security on the line just to prove a political point.

What I find most shocking is the President spent the last several months fighting to lift economic sanctions so that Iran's terrorist army could receive billions in aid, and now he is planning to block funding for America's military. This is unbelievable. Our soldiers deserve better. Our Nation deserves better.

America is facing increased threats from around the globe. We have soldiers fighting in Afghanistan. We have military families bravely continuing with their lives as their loved ones risk their lives for freedom.

Not only do we need to fully fund our troops, but we need to show the world that, when it comes to our defense and national security, the United States stands as one strong, unified body.

Mr. Speaker, it is time the President drops the partisan games and stands with our troops. It is time he signs the bill.

WE ARE THE GREATEST NATION ON THE PLANET

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I feel compelled to take this opportunity to remind us how great we are as a country, but also to remind ourselves that we are as great as we are as individuals collectively that make our country so great, a country where anyone can practice whatever faith they choose to practice.

You can come to this country from whatever part of the world and start anew and perhaps reach heights that you could never dream of in other places. We still are the greatest nation on the planet.

I am compelled to say these words because far too often I see, almost everywhere I turn, where people want to leave this country. They talk about how we are not great and how we need to get back to greatness.

We have never lost that greatness. I think it is really important for us to understand, as Members of Congress, that our responsibility is to guide this country and to legislate and to make decisions, but to always keep in mind those fundamental responsibilities that we have held true for so many hundreds of years in this country and that we are blessed to be the greatest nation on the planet. The only way that we can do that is if we take our personal responsibilities to heart and exercise that every single day.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DAY

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

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on Support Your Local Chamber of Commerce Day.

Livingston Parish is one of the fastest growing parishes in the State of Louisiana, and the chamber of commerce appropriately—with the extraordinary growth of this parish, we have had a growth in the businesses, the mom-and-pop businesses, and the large industrial businesses as well. Appropriately, the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce was recognized for the Louisiana State Chamber of the Year Award for the mid-size category by the Louisiana Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

When you have a parish that grows at rapid rates, you have huge swells in population. You have all sorts of demands on infrastructure, but you have demands on the growth of the businesses as well. Particularly, the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce was recognized in the areas of business resource and representation, community alignment, organizational excellence, and professional development.

Mr. Speaker, businesses like North Oaks Health System, Rouses Markets, Big Mike's Sports Bar and Grill, and Ferrara Fire Apparatus are all businesses that are members of the Chamber of Commerce.

Congratulations to the 500 businesses that are members of the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce, to Wayne, April, and all the folks in Livingston Parish.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 21, 2015.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on October 21, 2015 at 9:14 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 322.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 323.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 324.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 558.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1442.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1884.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3059.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 10, SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 692, DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 480 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 480

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. 10) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, 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 Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The amendments recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each further 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 further amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment 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. 692) to ensure the payment of interest and principal of the debt of the United States. 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 and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. 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 gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 480 provides for consideration of H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, and H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act.

These bills are important steps forward on two issues of great importance to Americans: education and fiscal issues.

H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, also known as the SOAR Reauthorization Act, would continue important funding provided to help young students here in Washington, D.C., reach their full potential. This legislation would provide $60 million annually for 5 years, split equally among the District's public schools, charter schools, and the District of Columbia Opportunity Scholarship Program, which enables low-income students to attend a private school that would otherwise be out of their reach.

Two amendments to the bill have been made in order for consideration, one by a Republican and another by a Democrat.

I have great confidence that the SOAR Reauthorization Act is a positive step for students in the District of Columbia and that, through its example, it will provide a model for success that could be adopted by States across the country.

The rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act. As my colleagues are all aware, the Treasury Department has asserted that its ability to use extraordinary measures to avoid reaching the statutory debt limit will be exhausted in coming days, possibly by November 3.

The legislation before us is a vital step to take default off the table, should extraordinary measures be exhausted, providing certainty to financial markets and hardworking Americans that we will pay our debts and meet our obligations.

The Default Prevention Act would authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to issue debt obligations necessary to continue making principal and interest payments on our debt, and would also ensure continued access to the funds in the Social Security trust fund necessary to pay Social Security benefits in full.

Mr. Speaker, it is simply common sense that we permanently close out the possibility of default and give seniors and other Social Security beneficiaries confidence that they will continue to receive the funds they rely on.

We can protect the full faith and credit of the United States and ensure that our credit ratings and economy are not impacted by policy battles here in Congress over future spending policies.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this rule and both of the underlying bills to my colleagues for their support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for yielding the customary 30 minutes to me for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to this rule, which provides for consideration of both H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, and H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act. Once again, we are playing grab bag rules, and I maintain that that is not the process of regular order.

Each time I have the privilege of managing a rule which, with only four

members of the minority on the committee, happens quite often, I find myself in the same position: frustrated with my friends, the House Republicans', complete disregard for regular order; their use of one rule to consider multiple unrelated pieces of legislation; and, most significantly, disillusioned that, in a time when so much can and must be done for the American people, we continue to spend precious time with partisan, dead-on-arrival measures.

H.R. 10 would reauthorize the Opportunity Scholarship Program through the years 2021. OSP is the only federally created and funded elementary and secondary private school voucher program in the United States.

Last night, my friend from Utah came forward and spoke, as is his responsibility. And I would just ask him, do they have the same program in Beaver, Utah, or Centerville, Utah, or Altamont?

I didn't know they had an Altamont. I come from Altamonte Springs, Florida. They spell it without the E. But they don't have this voucher program that they are trying to foist on the District of Columbia.

The program, which awards need-based scholarships to children in the District of Columbia to attend a participating private school of their choice, was created in 2004 and last reauthorized in 2011.

I would like to note from the outset that the current school voucher program is authorized through September 2016. That is almost a full year from now. Given the numerous pressing and time-sensitive matters facing this body, I can't help but feel bewildered as to why we are rushing to reauthorize D.C. school vouchers, yet we continue to ignore our Nation's crumbling infrastructure, income inequality, the need for jobs, immigration reform, the need for sensible gun control in the wake of mass shootings and countless other deaths at the instance of guns, particularly children, and our lack of a long-term budget. I continue to await a straight answer from my Republican colleagues and hope that we can get this question answered before today's debate concludes.

Now, I also want to make something clear. The members of the Washington, D.C. City Council have said that they do not want the D.C. voucher program to be reauthorized.

□ 1245

In a letter to the chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, the majority of the members of the D.C. Council expressed their belief that ''Federal funds should be invested in the existing public education system—both public schools and public charter schools—rather than being diverted to private schools.''

They go on to describe past findings on vouchers, saying that ''the evidence is clear that the use of vouchers has had no statistically significant impact on overall student achievement in math or reading, or for students from schools in need of improvement.''

Despite this very clear letter, in what I can only describe as ''typical Republican fashion,'' this body is going full steam ahead in its efforts to impose its political will regardless.

I remind those here today and watching at home that Washington, D.C., is a Federal district. Congress maintains the power to overturn laws approved by the D.C. Council, can vote to impose laws on D.C., and gets final approval of the D.C. Council's budget.

Washington, D.C.'s Delegate to the House of Representatives, my very good friend and a mentor to all of us not only on this issue, but countless others, Ms. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, who has served in this body for 24 years, is not permitted to vote on final passage of any legislation, let alone legislation directly intended to govern the jurisdiction which she was elected to serve.

One might hope that Congress would consider the wishes of the representatives of Washington, D.C., and the nearly 660,000 residents of the District who are taxpayers without representation. But, as we see today, that simply isn't the case.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying legislation would make significant changes to the way in which the program is evaluated, and that is a problem.

In 2012, The Washington Post published an article titled ''Quality Controls Lacking for D.C. Schools Accepting Federal Vouchers.'' The piece examined some of the schools receiving vouchers.

Among them were ''a nondenominational Christian school'' that ''occupies a soot-stained storefront between a halal meat shop and an evening wear boutique.'' The school consists of two classrooms, and ''students travel nearly 2 miles down Georgia Avenue to the city's Emery Recreation Center'' for gym class.

Another school ''follows a learning model known as 'Suggestopedia,' a philosophy of learning developed by a Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov that stresses learning through music, stretching, and meditation.''

A third is described as ''an accredited K–8 school supported by the Nation of Islam,'' which ''occupies the second floor of a former residence east of the Anacostia River.'' The classrooms are described as being former bedrooms, and the only bathroom in the school was described as having ''a floor blackened with dirt and a sink coated in grime. The bathtub was filled with paint cans and cleaning supplies concealed by a curtain.''

With descriptions like this of schools just a few miles away from this Chamber, I would like to think we would want more evaluations on these schools, not less.

Moving on to H.R. 629, a very bogus bill that plans for the unprecedented default on the full faith and credit of the United States, this measure is a debt prioritization bill and one that elevates the payments of debts to bondholders, including Switzerland, the Cayman Islands, and China, and they would be paid over the obligations to America's troops, veterans, seniors, and students, as well as Medicare recipients.

As Democratic members of the House Ways and Means Committee astutely put it: ''Under this legislation, the effect would be to pay China''—and Japan and others—''first, and some Americans not at all.''

We have been down this road before. Indeed, the debt limit standoff and government shutdown of 2013 cost an estimated 120,000 jobs and disrupted public and private credit markets so profoundly that the total estimated borrowing costs for the Federal Government, businesses, and homeowners during that crisis totaled approximately $70 million. Defaulting on our debt is simply not an option, and H.R. 629 is, as Treasury Secretary Jack Lew put it, ''default by another name.''

We cannot play this game. We need to be about the business of honoring our obligations. The last time we went down this road our debt rating was lowered, and I suggest it may happen again.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. I would like to thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I come from a family of educators. My father taught me in fifth grade. My brother and sister are both teachers. My wife is a teacher. One of my sons recently spent 2 years doing Teach for America in an inner-city school before he started graduate school.

Every weekend, it seemed, while he was teaching, we would hear stories and personal experiences of children who desperately needed help to get the education that they needed so they had any chance, any hope, of being successful in life.

And, finally, I am also the father of six children. I understand in a deeply personal way how important it is that we teach our children and educate our children.

This idea goes back to Jamestown, 1609, where literally for the first time in the history of the world we made a commitment that we would educate all of our children, that every village, every town, every community would educate all of our children. That is what the SOAR program is about: giving all of our children the opportunity to succeed.

So let's look at the program and see what it has accomplished. Since 2004, more than 6,000 children have had the opportunity to attend a private school of their choice. This has changed the trajectory of their lives. More than 90

percent of them now graduate from high school, compared with 58 percent throughout the rest of Washington, D.C. Eighty-eight percent of them go on to a 2- or a 4-year university. Eighty-five percent of their parents express satisfaction with this program.

Why in the world would you want to take that away? How could you not support this program? How could you not want to give these children the opportunity to succeed? Why in the world would you put the interests of unions and teachers above the interests of these children who desperately need our help?

I would ask my colleagues to support this rule and to support the underlying legislation. Give these kids an opportunity to succeed. That is all we are asking for.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, would the Chair be kind enough to tell me how much time remains for both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 20 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from North Carolina has 25 minutes remaining.

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

Let me respond to the gentleman from Utah who spoke of his family's background and education.

Firstly, my former wife, who is now deceased, taught school for 35 years, first and second grade. My son, who has his Ph.D., as my friend's son is about the business of getting his graduate degree, worked in education, taught sixth grade for a number of years, and then recruited schoolteachers for Palm Beach County and Broward County in Florida.

The question was why would we not want to educate every child, and the gentleman referenced a period in 1609 when we certainly were not educating every child. I went to school for the first time in 1941 to a school that was built by Julius Rosenwald, and I recommend a documentary that is in the movies throughout the country now. Mr. Rosenwald, at the insistence of Booker T. Washington, built schools for Black children, 642 of them, in the South, where there were none.

My mother didn't have an opportunity to go to that school. Other people in my town never had an opportunity to get an education, and you come here and you talk about why would we not want this education.

If it is so good, then why isn't it everywhere? And why are you picking on the District of Columbia? Perhaps someone who knows that very well will be able to tell us more than myself with my passion.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON), my very good friend, a member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Ms. NORTON. I thank my good friend from Florida for yielding and for his passion for our children.

Mr. Speaker, the short answer to the gentleman who wants to know why would we want to take away vouchers from these children is that we don't want to take vouchers away from these children. We want those who are currently in the program to maintain their voucher until they graduate.

But I should caution Members on both sides about voting for $100 million for a private school voucher program for a District that didn't ask for it while the Republican majority has pending a $2 billion cut for K–12 education for kids in their own districts.

The irony is that, when Newt Gingrich was Speaker, he first proposed private school vouchers, but as conservative as he was, he worked with me on a home rule public charter school alternative. The D.C. Council had voted for charter schools, but there were only two or three fledgling schools and charters weren't going anywhere.

Today, Mr. Speaker, there are 115 public charter schools in the District, and the reason is that, with my support, Speaker Gingrich placed H.R. 3019 in the 1995–1996 omnibus legislation establishing the D.C. public charter school board.

Today almost half of D.C. students go to publicly accountable charter schools, and most of these schools have long waiting lists. That, my friend, is what choice looks like.

Another speaker has now stepped forward with a private school voucher program to be authorized for the third time today, although the evaluation that Congress mandated definitively shows that the program failed to meet its stated goal to help children improve.

□ 1300

Vouchers did not improve math or reading scores for the children from low-income neighborhoods in this program, and that was the reason for the bill in the first place.

In light of that failure, I offered a compromise, and the President supports it. All of the students in the current voucher program would remain until graduation, but no new students would be funded. That would mean years of private school vouchers, but only in the District of Columbia, because this Congress has just voted down similar private school vouchers for the Nation.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. NORTON. That, my friends, is what compromise looks like: first, phenomenal growth of public charter schools, which are supported by both Congressional Republicans and Democrats; second, allowing all current students to remain in private voucher schools until graduation. If more compromises like this were on the floor, the majority would not be divided into multiple factions that have nothing to show for years of leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, it is a big surprise to see a member of the minority opposing the provision of additional education funding to low-income students.

My colleague earlier mentioned that some members of the D.C. Council oppose H.R. 10. I would like to bring it to the attention of the House that D.C. Councilwoman Anita Bonds has asked that her name be removed from that letter, saying: ''I am hopeful that many more of our neediest families have the opportunity to take advantage of the program.'' She knows that students in public, charter, and private schools all benefit equally from this legislation, and I welcome her support.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I want to thank the Rules Committee for reporting H.R. 692 to the floor.

This Nation now staggers under more than $18 trillion of debt, nearly a $7.5 trillion run up by this administration alone. The interest on that debt is one of the fastest growing components of the Federal budget. If there is ever any doubt over the security and reliability of the debt owed by this government, the interest rates that lenders charge us would quickly rise and overwhelm us.

Now, the Democrats say, well, just raise the debt limit, and, of course, we realize in this era of chronic deficit spending—establishing new records under this administration—that we have to do so. Congress alone has the power to incur debt, and the debt limit is the method by which we discharge our responsibility; but when we do so, it is also Congress' responsibility to review and revise the policies that are driving that debt.

The fundamental problem under both Democratic and Republican Congresses is that this process is fraught with controversy. The bigger the debt, the bigger the controversy; and the bigger the controversy, the more likely that credit markets are to demand higher interest payments to meet their greater risk. Given the size of our debt, that could produce an interest tidal wave that could sink our budget and our Nation along with it.

The Default Prevention Act simply provides that, if the debt limit is reached, the Treasury Secretary may continue to borrow above that limit for the sole purpose of paying principal and interest that is due. It is an absolute guarantee that the debt of the United States will be honored.

Most States have various laws to guarantee payment of their debts. In fact, a few years ago, Ben Bernanke praised these State provisions for maintaining confidence in their bonds. It amazes me that we can't all agree on this simple principle: that we should guarantee the loans made to the Federal Government. That is all this bill does.

Yet we have heard opposition from the other side, and they basically make two charges. One is that this pays foreign governments first while shorting our troops. We just heard that from the gentleman from Florida. Well, what xenophobic nonsense. The fact is most of our debt is held by Americans—often, in pension funds—so it protects Americans far more than foreign governments.

But they miss the main point. It is the Nation's credit that makes it possible to meet all of our other obligations. When you are living off your credit card, as our Nation is at the moment, you had better make your minimum payment first or you won't be able to pay all of your other bills.

In the veto threat, the President leveled the other charges we heard from the gentleman from Florida, that it is just an excuse for not paying our other bills. Well, do they actually believe that these other States that have guaranteed their sovereign debts for generations have ever used these guarantees as an excuse not to pay their other bills? On the contrary, by providing clear and unambiguous mandates to protect their credit first, they actually support and maintain their ability to pay for all of their other obligations.

So let me be crystal clear: delaying payment on any of our obligations would be unprecedented and dangerous. There is one thing, though, that could do even more damage than delaying payment on our other bills, and that is the mere threat of a default on our sovereign debt. This measure takes that threat off the table, and it ensures credit markets that their investments in the United States are as certain as anything can be in life.

A few years ago, Senator Barack Obama vigorously and forcefully opposed a debt limit sought by the Bush administration. He said it was a failure of leadership. Well, I have never equated Senator Obama's opposition to the debt limit increase as anything other than a principled and well-placed concern over the proper management of our finances. It is sad that he cannot give the opposition the same courtesy.

Mr. Speaker, we may disagree over the appropriate role of Congress in adjusting the debt limit, but at least can't we all agree that during these disputes the sovereign debt of the United States is never in doubt? That is all that this bill says; that is all that this bill does. Mr. Speaker, let's pass this rule and proceed with consideration of the bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from California referred to my comments as ''xenophobic nonsense.'' I firmly disagree. It kind of gives xenophobia a new meaning. I merely pointed out that a large portion of our debt is held by other countries and that the legislation that he supports proposes to pay them before 80 million obligations that the Treasury Department has.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has only 8 legislative days left to protect the full faith and credit of the United States. If we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule and bring up legislation that would allow—and I would ask the gentleman from California if he would support this—a clean extension of the debt ceiling.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) to discuss our proposal. My friend from Vermont is a distinguished gentleman and a former Member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. Raising the debt ceiling has absolutely nothing to do at all with increasing government spending. It only has to do with whether America will pay its bills for obligations already incurred.

Many of those obligations, by the way, are for expenditures that I vigorously opposed: trillions of dollars on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, unpaid for, and trillions of dollars in tax cuts for the very wealthy that are unpaid for.

But the United States of America, in good times and bad, through Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents, in Republican-led and Democratic-led Congresses, has always paid its bills—always. We have done it for two reasons.

First, it is the right thing to do. A promise made is a promise kept. An obligation incurred is an obligation honored. Mr. Speaker, a confident nation keeps its word. A confident nation pays its bills, not some of them. It pays all of them.

Second, running from our creditors, stiffing them, picking and choosing whom to pay among them is as fiscally reckless as it is dishonorable. This new theory that America can actually consider it feasible as an option to default is extremely dangerous and very costly.

Mr. Speaker, in 2011, when this tactic was first seriously considered and we came on the brink of default, it cost U.S. taxpayers $19 billion in unnecessary interest charges. That is $19 billion that could have been used to fix our highways or invest in scientific research, or it is $19 billion that your side might have preferred for tax cuts, or we could have split it. But that would have been half for tax cuts and half for investment. Yet we squandered that at the expense of the American taxpayer.

The use of the debt ceiling as a tactic to get your way on another issue is playing financial Russian roulette with America's credibility, with the well-being of the American taxpayer and the full faith and credit of the United States of America to meet all its obligations. We have maintained that bond with ourselves and our creditors for over 200 years, and this bill asks us to abandon it now.

How can it be that the party of Ronald Reagan can propose this legislation? It was Ronald Reagan who said that denigration of the full faith and credit of the United States would have substantial effects on the domestic financial markets and the value of the dollar. He is right.

How can it be the party of PAUL RYAN? The chair of our Ways and Means Committee said that just refusing to vote for the debt ceiling, I don't think that is a strategy.

Will the debt ceiling be raised? Does it have to be raised? Yes. Reagan was right then, and PAUL RYAN is right now.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out something that the proponents of this legislation would prefer to keep in the dark. The entire reason the debt ceiling must be raised now is to accommodate the budget that they passed over my strong objection on March 25, 2015. The Price budget, supported by 228 Republicans and opposed by 182 Democrats, projected an increase of our debt limit of nearly $2 trillion. Today that bill has become due, and the folks who supported that budget are running for the hills on acting on the debt ceiling that is required to accommodate the budget that they passed.

Mr. Speaker, this House now, as a result of the will of the American people, is led by a Republican majority. It is a majority that we in the minority have an obligation to do our best to work with. However, it is a majority that is raising questions that have never been raised before.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, they are using debt default and government shutdown as a tactic to get their way on an issue of concern to some of them. I admire Speaker BOEHNER that he put the country first and he put the House first in not letting this government be shut down over a real dispute on Planned Parenthood funding. But we have got to get past this, and the Republican majority has to make a decision whether it is going to govern or it is going to empower those who believe that default and shutdown are legitimate tactics to resolve legitimate debates that we have among us.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot now—we cannot ever—default on our obligations and our commitment to the American taxpayer to be fiscally responsible by paying our bills.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 10, but I wanted to clarify some of the debate that has been going on with my friend opposite, the gentleman from Florida.

Many of the concerns that he has raised have been addressed in our Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Specifically, I put forth an amendment that required strong evaluations that would evaluate the scholarship program. Additionally, the committee passed an amendment to ensure not only strong accreditation standards as well, but equally important is the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia. I have made a personal commitment to her to work on making sure that we have proper accountability with regard to this scholarship program. None of us wants to be loose with the American taxpayer dollars.

I want to also stress that this program does not decrease funding for D.C. public schools or charter schools. Indeed it is an addition to that appropriation. But it really comes down this, Mr. Speaker: it is the students that have benefited from this particular program.

I was part of a hearing that was held at Archbishop Carroll High School. When you look into the faces of those students that were given an opportunity with a scholarship to not have to go to the school because of where they live but they got a scholarship to be able to go to a private school, you look into their faces and you hear the stories of just how it has affected their families and given them hope, Mr. Speaker, it is one of those things that I think that we have to find a bipartisan solution to identify the problem areas, perhaps, that need to be addressed, but to also come alongside those parents, both fathers and mothers, who were there in the hearing who were applauding the successes of their children.

□ 1315

It is with great pride that I strongly support H.R. 10. I encourage my colleagues opposite to do the same. I am committed to working through some of those issues that they have addressed.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I am pleased to support this rule because of the underlying bill that is there.

Normally, the 10th Amendment says that education is delegated to the States. So I would be opposing anything this body does on education, except the Constitution also grants Congress the jurisdiction over the District of Columbia.

When there is a program that is a success—and this has been a success—a study by the Department of Education concluded that this D.C. Opportunity Scholarship significantly improves students' chances of graduating from high school.

I spent 28 years as a high school teacher. In that time, I saw all sorts of wonder programs being mandated from the Federal level and the State level. The most common expression of all teachers is ''This too shall pass.''

But the one thing that was never mandated to us was the concept of freedom, allowing teachers to teach their specialties, allowing parents the ability of having a choice on where they sent their kids. Choice is a powerful tool.

When I was in the State legislature, I had a bill that dealt with compulsory attendance. I had a PTA mother that came up to me once and said, ''I hate you and I hate your bill because, when my 17-year-old doesn't want to go to school in the morning, I want to be able to look at him and say, 'You have to go to school. It is the law.' '' And I thought: Thanks a lot. That is the exact attitude I want to have from a high school junior in my class when he shows up.

You see, when kids are forced to be where they choose not to be, they are unsatisfied jerks. But kids, knowing they had a choice, they would now attend in a positive attitude, even if it was the same school.

That is what this bill tries to do. We trust choice in all sorts of behaviors. We give people choices in food, in our homes, in our energy, and all the necessities of life. So why do we limit freedom and choice in something as important as education?

Ronald Reagan once said: ''Our leaders must remember that education doesn't begin with some isolated bureaucrat in Washington. It doesn't even begin with State or local officials. Education begins in the home, where it's a parental right and responsibility. Both our public and our private schools exist to aid our families in the instruction of our children, and it's time some people back in Washington stopped acting as if family wishes were only getting in the way.''

I applaud Speaker BOEHNER for this bill. Speaker BOEHNER, when it comes to kids, clearly gets it, and he has been an advocate on their behalf. Kids belong to the parents, not to an educator, not to a legislator, not to a special interest group.

It is time we start trusting parents and individuals, which is why I urge support of this rule that will bring this bill, a good bill, to the floor for us to support as well.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN).

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise in support of the rule and urge specific passage of H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

Over 10 years ago Congress took action to give the children of the District a hand-up through access to a quality education by creating the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program. I was heavily involved at that time, as a Member of the House Appropriations Committee that oversaw the District's budget, and our committee provided the initial funds.

The program was the first and only initiative in America where the Federal Government provides low-income families with funds to send their children where they will have a chance to thrive—private or parochial schools—because, in some cases, some D.C. schools were not providing that opportunity. That is not all schools, but some schools.

We all know the story of some District of Columbia public schools—low graduation rates, high dropout rates, low math and reading scores—that need to do better. We can all agree that all children in the District deserve a first-class education and the lifelong benefits that come from that education, whether it be public, private, parochial, or charter.

The bill before us today will reauthorize the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program for 5 years. By the way, the program is a huge success. Last year over 3,600 students submitted applications and the program enrolled nearly 1,500 students.

Through these scholarships, District children have flourished. In 2014, 88 percent of high school graduates who were enrolled in the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship program enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges, a very high mark.

Mr. Speaker, Congress should listen to the voices of parents, as we did 10 years ago, who want their children to succeed, and we should continue to work to ensure that the program not only survives, but that it grows.

I commend Speaker BOEHNER for all his years of leadership on behalf of the children of Washington not only in terms of his support for this legislation, but many things he does as a private citizen.

I urge my colleagues to join in support of the rule and this legislation.

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

We should be working together to ensure that all children have the opportunity to receive a quality education and taking action to guarantee that the United States pays all of its bills on time and in full. Neither of these bills accomplish those vitally necessary goals for this great country.

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

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

These are crucial bills. They make significant progress on two important issues: addressing our fiscal crisis in a

responsible manner and the education of our next generation.

We cannot squander the incredible wealth this country has built over decades of hard work by the American people. The full faith and credit of the United States is not ours here, as Members of Congress. It is theirs, the American people. We are the reserve currency because individuals across the world look to us for prudent fiscal choices and rock-steady resolve in our principles and integrity.

There are few debates more contentious in this body than those over spending levels or the leverage points that our system provides to exert control over those levels.

The Default Prevention Act would enable us to continue to fight tooth and nail over the right direction for our country's finances while giving Americans and financial markets certainty that they can remain confident in the Federal Government meeting its obligations.

We can and should stay up late at night and have passionate debates in this Chamber over how to address mandatory spending, but we shouldn't allow retired and disabled Americans to stay up late at night because they fear their Social Security checks won't arrive.

The Default Prevention Act is commonsense legislation to remove catastrophe as a possibility by enabling the Secretary of the Treasury to issue debt necessary to make principal and interest payments on the national debt and pay Social Security benefits in full. It is the right first step in beginning a conversation about how to constructively address our immense fiscal challenges.

If we don't address those challenges, we will be unable to provide for other important programs, such as the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act, or SOAR Reauthorization Act, which this resolution provides for consideration of as well.

As any parent knows, the education of our children is one of our highest priorities. For far too long children in Washington, D.C., have not received the education they deserve, but have suffered from unacceptable achievement levels in graduation rates.

The SOAR Reauthorization Act continues a successful three-sector approach to improving the lives and educational outcomes of low-income students in the District. It provides $60 million in funding for students, split equally among D.C. public schools, charter schools, and scholarships for students to attend private schools that would otherwise be out of reach.

Students receiving private school education have demonstrated higher test scores and significantly higher graduation rates, showcasing the importance of continuing students access to these institutions.

These programs are an important example of the need for innovation and experimentation in how to best reform our educational system to benefit students, not entrenched interests.

It has been an honor for me to personally witness some of the students who have benefited from the programs included in the SOAR Reauthorization Act. After seeing the hope for the future these students have in their eyes, I cannot fathom preventing other students from receiving their own second chances.

Mr. Speaker, I believe both of these underlying bills are positive steps forward on issues of great import to our Nation, and I commend them and this rule providing for their consideration to all of my colleagues for their support.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in opposition to the Rule and the underlying bill H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

H.R. 10 would reauthorize the District of Columbia private school voucher program, the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP), for five years through 2021.

In 2004, Congress established OSP, the first and only federally created or funded elementary and secondary private school voucher program in the United States.

In 2011, Congress reauthorized OSP through fiscal year 2016 in the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (SOAR Act).

Under the SOAR Act, DC households with incomes that do not exceed 185 percent of the poverty line may receive an annual maximum voucher payment per student of $8,000 for grades K–8 and $12,000 for grades 9–12.

In addition, H.R. 10 makes a significant change to the evaluation of OSP's effectiveness.

The bill prohibits a control study group in making evaluations of the OSP and requires a less rigorous "quasi-experimental research design" than under the SOAR Act.

Since 2004, almost $190 million has been spent on DC voucher schools. That is money that could have been spent on District public schools, which serve all students.

Instead of working on longer term solutions, such as reauthorizing ESEA, or working on job creation, the Majority is pushing its own education priorities on a local jurisdiction through this misguided legislation.

This bill pursues the wrong course by doing the following:

The voucher program is the latest Republican attack on the District of Columbia's right to self-government.

The local District government did not request this reauthorization nor did its only member of Congress, Del. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

If the District wants to establish a voucher program, it has the authority to do so.

Republicans have already tried to overturn DC's gun, marijuana, abortion, needle exchange, and non-discrimination laws.

They have also threatened DC's mayor with jail time over the city's marijuana law. Now they want to write education law in DC.

The bill would authorize the use of federal funds to pay for private school tuition in the District of Columbia, despite overwhelming evidence that the program, first authorized in 2004, has failed to improve student academic achievement, as measured by math and reading scores—including among the students the program was designed to most benefit, those from low-performing public schools.

Despite having numerous states vote down efforts to implement private school voucher programs; Republicans continue to use the District of Columbia as a testing ground for their own agenda.

The bill does not recognize that 44 percent of DC public school students attend charter schools, and 75 percent of DC public school students attend out-of-boundary public schools.

Unlike private schools, traditional public and charter schools are publicly accountable and subject to all civil rights laws.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this rule and the underlying bill.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 480 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

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

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3737) to responsibly pay our Nation's bills on time by temporarily extending the public debt limit, 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 Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3737.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the

control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R–Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1937, NATIONAL STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS PRODUCTION ACT OF 2015

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 481 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 481

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. 1937) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness. 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 Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill 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. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the good gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), 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. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1330

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, just yesterday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule for House Resolution 481, providing for the consideration of an important piece of legislation—H.R. 1937, the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2015.

This rule provides for the consideration of H.R. 1937 under a structured rule, with five amendments made in order, four of which, I might point out, were offered by Democratic Members of this body. Therefore, this rule provides for a balanced, deliberative, and open debate if we focus our remarks on the merits of the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act and don't go off on unnecessary tangents.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support both House Resolution 481 and the underlying bill, H.R. 1937. I would like to congratulate the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI) for sponsoring this legislation, and I would also like to thank the gentleman from Utah, Chairman ROB BISHOP, for his leadership on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, this rule will allow us to consider the National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act, an important bill that will streamline our country's mine permitting processes to remove unnecessary and burdensome bureaucratic hurdles, which can delay some mining activities and projects by up to a decade—10 years—which is an outrageous amount of time that is indicative of the problem we seek to address here today.

The permitting system the Federal Government currently uses to provide for the extraction of rare earth minerals in the U.S. is outdated, unproductive, and, more often than not, hinders our ability to extract these critical resources. This red tape has a devastating impact on communities across the country and in the West, particularly, that rely on the ability to obtain and develop these minerals for economic growth and our Nation's security.

Our country is blessed with a myriad of rare earth minerals that are increasingly used to manufacture high-tech equipment as well as many other everyday applications and products. Many countries around the world are already working to improve their infrastructure, providing the United States with an exceptional opportunity to play a major role in the growing minerals marketplace by supplying foreign countries and businesses, as well as domestic companies, with the resources necessary to remain competitive in the international economy. However, a lack of communication between local, State, and Federal permitting agencies exists, and it creates a bureaucratic backlog of applications that delays mining activity by approximately, like I said, 7 to 10 years, which, if not addressed, will impede the ability of U.S. mineral companies to increase their share of the global marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, due to onerous government red tape, the frivolous lawsuits that result, and a burdensome permitting process, good-paying jobs in the United States mining industry have moved overseas and have put domestic manufacturing jobs at the mercy of our foreign competitors. H.R. 1937 would fix

our outdated and uncertain bureaucratic permitting system, which negatively impacts investment in our economy by discouraging domestic companies from extracting and developing these critical minerals.

This is especially unfortunate given that we have only begun to scratch the surface of what we can potentially develop from our abundant natural resources, which have played such a critical role in making the U.S. a leading world economy and industrial power. Our Nation has vast energy potential from sources such as coal, oil shale, and natural gas, as well as numerous critical minerals that we should be developing. Yet the development of our domestic minerals resources has been obstructed time and time again under this administration, which, unfortunately, places the political goals of special interests over the welfare and well-being of hardworking Americans.

Mr. Speaker, simply put, the Federal Government should promote investments in the U.S. and in American companies by creating a regulatory framework that encourages the safe development of domestic resources. If we are going to address the growing mineral trade imbalance—with more U.S. mining jobs moving overseas and higher energy and commodity prices here at home—we must first put a stop to the bureaucratic delays that are at the root of the problem.

This legislation does just that by telling Federal agencies to make a decision about whether a project should move forward or not—a simple ''yes'' or ''no''—and do it in a timely manner. Give people certainty. We have streamlined and improved this process for other domestic industries, and it is now time to do it for our rare earth minerals sector, which is responsible for some of the highest paying middle class jobs across the country. It is illogical and irrational that red tape and delayed permit approvals can lead to 10 years of deliberation over whether or not to approve a mining permit or project. Actually, it borders on insanity.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good, straightforward rule, allowing for the consideration of an important piece of legislation that will provide the U.S. with a unique opportunity to tap into the growing global marketplace for rare earth minerals by supplying both foreign and domestic companies with the resources they need to remain competitive.

Mr. Speaker, I support the rule's adoption, and I urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and the underlying bill—the so-called Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act.

My colleague from Washington mentioned what is not being discussed here today. Again, to be clear, it feels like we are at Groundhog Day here. We have 8 legislative days until we hit the debt limit and default on our Nation's debt. In 6 legislative days, the Federal transportation authorization will expire. In 22 legislative days, we will be on the brink of yet another government shutdown. To a certain extent, I feel like we are fiddling while Rome burns. Here we are, talking about an issue which, I am sure, deserves its day in the Sun. I will talk about some of the deficiencies in this bill, but we are tackling a recycled bill that in similar form has already passed this body and that doesn't address any of these urgent deadline items that we are actually facing.

In fact, as I travel across my district in Colorado, I don't hear a lot of my constituents crying out for access to sand and clay. I do hear them saying, ''Don't default on the national debt.'' ''Do something about the budget.'' ''Make sure that we prevent another government shutdown.'' Yet all of those deadlines are looming while we are fiddling here with other bills that aren't going anywhere and aren't becoming law and have already passed this body in similar form. So, for the fourth time in three Congresses, we are going to consider a nearly identical measure that the Republicans have brought to the floor despite the Senate's unwillingness to pick it up and the President's opposition.

The so-called Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act promotes industry interests over the American people's health and welfare. The biggest conceptual problem with it is the definition that it gives of ''strategic and critical minerals.'' The bill not only expands the mining companies' ability to mine on public lands for minerals like gold and copper, but also materials that one would think, by no stretch of common sense, are rare, like sand and clay.

If we include sand from the beach or from my kids' sandbox as a mineral of critical development and if we include the gravel from my driveway as a mineral of critical development, I am not sure what we are excluding. I think this applies to almost everything. In fact, I am not even sure how we are even saying the term ''critical and strategic'' can even apply here when we are talking about sand and gravel and some of the most common natural resources that we have.

This bill permits nearly all mining operations to circumvent the important public health and environmental review processes that are required under the National Environmental Policy Act.

Instead of maintaining a reasonable threshold to ensure that we focus on resources and developing resources that are actually critical for our defense or for our economy, this bill expands our definition of ''strategic and critical,'' effectively making it worthless. By including everything and by saying everything is strategic and critical, you are effectively saying that nothing is strategic and critical. That is what this bill does while we are 8 days from hitting the debt limit, while we are 6 days from expiring on the Federal transportation authorization.

By the way, I have to talk about how these ''days'' work because we are 8 days from the debt limit and 6 days from the transportation authorization. Those aren't real days that Americans know. That is because the Republicans always send this Congress on vacation nearly every week. So it might be 6 legislative days. I think it is, actually, 15 or 20 days, but Congress isn't working for most of those. While these deadlines tick, Members of Congress are actually at home most of the time because the Republican leadership won't let us work. They won't let us come here. They are adjourning the session. That is why, when something is 20 days off, we are sounding alarm bells, saying it is 6 days off—because they are only letting us work 6 of those 20 days. I would be happy to show up for the other 14, Mr. Speaker, but you wouldn't be here to gavel us into session.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, a point of parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. POLIS. What would happen if I showed up and you were not here to gavel us down into session?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will not respond to a hypothetical question.

Mr. POLIS. Maybe we will just have to try that sometime when we are 2 or 3 days from the expiration of our transportation funding or from defaulting on our national debt. I will be happy to come here to an empty Chamber.

I recall one time, Mr. Speaker, when you and the Republican majority accidentally left the cameras on, and our Democratic whip, STENY HOYER, was on the floor, demanding why we couldn't bring up a bill. Maybe, if I am here and if you are not here, Mr. Speaker, we can get those C–SPAN cameras turned on when we are 2 or 3 days from a deadline so that the American people understand this funny math, where somehow 20 days is only 6 legislative days because you don't let us work the other 14, when hardworking Americans have to go to work every day to support their families.

This bill's impacts are far reaching. As drafted, it makes the term ''critical and strategic'' meaningless. The legislation would increase the pollution of our water resources for States dealing with extreme drought conditions and deadly blazes. The last thing we need is to jeopardize our already scarce sources of water. We can't afford to do any more harm to the quality of our limited water supplies and to risk the jobs that are created across the West

through outdoor recreation, leisure, and agriculture.

Why the House Republicans see a need for legislation to further promote mining interests at the expense of public health continues to be mystifying. The industry already has free rein to extract mineral resources. Under the antiquated 1872 mining law, Federal land managers are actually barred from denying hard rock mining proposals. The Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service have almost never denied a large mining process. Why exempt them further from all environmental review for sand and gravel, which aren't even rare elements?

This bill fails to update the antiquated legal framework. It fails to address the reforms needed. It fails to protect our environment. It doesn't change the fact that mining companies currently enjoy—guess what, Mr. Speaker. What do you think—a 3 percent royalty rate? What do they pay—a 2 percent royalty rate? Do they pay a 1 percent royalty rate? No. They pay a zero percent royalty rate on Federal land. This bill fails to address that. It doesn't change the fact that mining companies have left an estimated half a million mines. That is nearly one for every person in my district, Mr. Speaker. Half a million mines all across the country have been abandoned, most of which are in dire need of cleanup or restoration, which this bill fails to address.

I had the opportunity to introduce a bill with Ranking Member GRIJALVA earlier this year that would have addressed many of these ongoing failures in mining accountability, but it hasn't been brought up before the committee. Instead, legislation like this, the so-called Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act, is rocketed to the floor even though it has passed four times in the last three sessions.

Instead of confronting real challenges facing our economy, facing American families, we continue to line the pockets of the mining industry, which already has one of the fattest profit margins of any, while risking the health of the American people and exploiting our natural resources without adequate return and royalties to the taxpayers, who own our public lands.

I oppose the rule and the underlying bill.

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1345

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

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up legislation that would permanently authorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Land and Water Conservation Fund supports the protection of public lands and waters, such as natural parks, forests, and recreation areas.

Many conservation organizations from my district and nationally have been in to meet with me on this important topic, and I know they have reached out to other Members on the Hill as well.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, the Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act—again, it is hard to say that name with a straight face when they are defining strategic and critical minerals in such a broad way that it involves basically the dirt under our feet, the sand under our feet, the gravel in our drive. When you define something like that and try to mean everything, you wind up meaning nothing.

Rather than actually doing something to protect minerals that are critical for our defense, for our economy, this bill waters that down by expanding this access to sand and dirt and gravel, maximizing mining companies' profits at the expense of our health, our water, our land, and our natural resources.

Furthermore, the underlying bill would damage our economy by placing the use of the mining industry above the many other important economic uses of our public lands. I will give you some examples. How about hunting? angling? hiking? biking? These are the economic drivers in my district, Mr. Speaker.

If we didn't have an environmental review process and large gravel pits and silver mines were put in place with wild abandon, we would lose jobs. We would lose most jobs in Eagle and Summit Counties which relate to the tourism industry. The beautiful, pristine, outdoor public lands that attract visitors from across the country—probably from your district, Mr. Speaker—Vail, Breckenridge, Winter Park, and Rocky Mountain National Park, we would love to have you; but you better come quickly before this bill becomes law, because there won't be much to see if it does.

When visiting my constituents in Colorado this summer, expanding mining access was not one of the issues that they brought up. In fact, they asked me to ensure that mining companies are held accountable to greater levels of accountability and transparency. They asked me to develop environmental safeguards to make sure that disasters and tragedies don't occur and that abandoned mines are cleaned up and that our extraction industry can be done in a thoughtful way, and to make sure it doesn't destroy jobs by conflicting with other higher and better economic uses of some parcels of public land.

Look, Members on both sides of the aisle support the development of rare earth and critical mineral policy. There is no disagreement about that. I would be happy to work with my colleague, Mr. Speaker, from Washington State and others on putting together a commonsense bill that defines rare earth and critical minerals in a commonsense way. Not the dirt beneath our feet, not the sand in my kid's sandbox, but in a commonsense way where we look at the needs of industry, our supply, we define it, and we come up with a targeted access plan, including access to our public lands in appropriate ways, that is expedited for national priority items. That is not what this bill does.

We could work together, Mr. Speaker. And this body needs to work together, not just on this bill, but to avoid defaulting on our national debt, to continue to fund our highways and infrastructure, in fact, to keep government open. We might only have 11 legislative days to try to keep government open.

By the way, I think that is 30-some actual days for most Americans, Mr. Speaker. As we talked about, you won't be here, Mr. Speaker. If there is a way that I can be here and advance an agenda of keeping government open, I would be happy to, but I am afraid it requires a Speaker to gavel us in.

Now, there are bills that seek to balance the challenges of mining with its impact on surrounding communities, but, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues weren't interested in discussing those. Instead we are discussing a recycled bill for the fourth time that would eliminate environmental review, allow for the unfettered mining of public lands, define critical minerals in such a way that it means the dirt between your toes and the sand in your kid's sandbox. It would likely not be brought up by the Senate and dead on arrival at the President's desk.

This is a job-destroying bill that the American people are not even asking Congress to take up. It takes a simple concept—preserving access to critical resources, which would have strong bipartisan support—and contorts it into a divisive job-destroying, health-destroying, commonsense-defying issue that doesn't appear anywhere on the priority list of struggling families across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question and to vote ''no'' on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 481 is a fair rule allowing for balanced, deliberative, and open debate, just as my colleague is asking, as well as numerous amendment opportunities from both parties.

It provides for the consideration of a bill that is critical to the economic

well-being of mining communities across the country, which are reeling from the continual impacts of Federal regulation and the bureaucratic permitting process we have in place.

This regulatory environment has led to lost jobs and wages in the mining industry, ultimately hurting the middle class families that many of these rules and regulations claim they are intended to protect.

H.R. 1937 streamlines our country's mine permitting process by removing unnecessary and onerous hurdles, which can lead to decades-long delays for mining activities and projects. The current Federal permitting system for the extraction of rare earth minerals is outdated, unproductive, and often impedes our ability to extract these critical minerals.

You know, our country is blessed with a myriad of rare earth minerals, but this Federal red tape has had a devastating impact on the mining communities in our country whose livelihoods depend on the ability to obtain and develop these resources.

We must stop punishing middle class Americans with these heavyhanded and poorly considered regulations that more often than not have unintended consequences and serious negative economic impacts.

Mr. Speaker, already many countries around the world are looking to improve their infrastructure, which provides the U.S. with the unique opportunity to tap into this growing global market. Due to strong international demand for rare earth minerals, allowing for greater development of domestic resources also creates a unique opportunity to further American trade relationships and decrease our trade deficit.

Additionally, by increasing the available supply of these rare earth minerals, manufacturing companies will be able to more efficiently produce their products, which could reduce consumer costs and open the door to greater innovation. Further, our outdated permitting system negatively impacts investment in our economy that hinders our ability to take on this expanded role in the global marketplace for these mineral resources.

The Federal Government should be promoting investment in the U.S. by creating a regulatory framework that encourages the safe development of domestic resources. If we want to address the growing minerals trade imbalance, as we see more and more U.S. mining jobs moving overseas and higher energy and commodity prices here at home, then we must fix these delays which are at the root of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, this rule allows for consideration of an important piece of legislation that will address the burdensome permitting and regulatory hurdles that are harmful to this vital industry. Yet, while this legislation allows for greater utilization of domestic resources, it also maintains important environmental safeguards designed to ensure the health of our constituents and ecosystems, striking an important balance that has been absent far too long.

While my colleague from Colorado and I may have a few differences of opinion, I firmly believe this rule and the underlying bill are strong measures that are critically important to our country's future, both for my State as well as his and many, many others in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I support the rule's adoption, and I urge my colleague to support House Resolution 481, and the underlying bill.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 481 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

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

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1814) to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. 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 Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1814.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. 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 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on H. Res. 480;

Adoption of H. Res. 480, if ordered;

Ordering the previous question on H. Res. 481; and

Adoption of H. Res. 481, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 10, SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 692, DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 480) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 10) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 692) to ensure the payment of interest and principal of the debt of the United States, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 241, nays 181, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 553]

YEAS—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)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
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
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
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
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)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—181

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
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
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
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
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—12

Buck
Clyburn
Comstock
Gowdy
Grayson
Kelly (IL)
Larson (CT)
Loudermilk
Payne
Rice (NY)
Wilson (FL)
Young (IN)

□ 1422

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. COFFMAN 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:

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on October 21, 2015—I was not present for rollcall vote 553. If I had been present for this vote, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote 553.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 245, noes 182, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 554]

AYES—245

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
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
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
LaHood
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

NOES—182

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
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
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
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
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

NOT VOTING—7

Becerra
Clyburn
Gowdy
Grayson
Kelly (IL)
Payne
Pelosi

□ 1430

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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1937, NATIONAL STRATEGIC AND CRITICAL MINERALS PRODUCTION ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 481) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1937) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 243, nays 184, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 555]

YEAS—243

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
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
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
LaHood
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)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—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
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
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
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
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

NOT VOTING—7

Bishop (UT)
Clyburn
DeFazio
Gowdy
Kelly (IL)
Payne
Webster (FL)

□ 1437

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 244, noes 185, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 556]

AYES—244

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
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
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, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
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

NOES—185

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
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
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
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

NOT VOTING—5

Clyburn
Gowdy
Johnson (OH)
Kelly (IL)
Payne

□ 1445

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.

PERMISSION TO POSTPONE PROCEEDINGS ON MOTION TO RECOMMIT ON H.R. 10, SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT, OR H.R. 692, DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the question of adopting a motion to recommit on H.R. 10 or H.R. 692 may be subject to postponement as though under clause 8 of rule XX.

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

There was no objection.

DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 480, I call up the bill (H.R. 692) to ensure the payment of interest and principal of the debt of the United States, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 480, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 692

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 ''Default Prevention Act''.

SEC. 2. PAYMENT OF PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST ON PUBLIC DEBT AND SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUNDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the event that the debt of the United States Government, as defined in section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, reaches the statutory limit, the Secretary of the Treasury shall, in addition to any other authority provided by law, issue obligations under chapter 31 of title 31, United States Code, to pay with legal tender, and solely for the purpose of paying, the principal and interest on obligations of the United States described in subsection (b) after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) OBLIGATIONS DESCRIBED.—For purposes of this subsection, obligations described in this subsection are obligations which are—

(1) held by the public, or

(2) held by the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and Disability Insurance Trust Fund.

(c) PROHIBITION ON COMPENSATION FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.—None of the obligations issued under subsection (a) may be used to pay compensation for Members of Congress.

(d) OBLIGATIONS EXEMPT FROM PUBLIC DEBT LIMIT.—Obligations issued under subsection (a) shall not be taken into account in applying the limitation in section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, to the extent that such obligation would otherwise cause the limitation in section 3101(b) of title 31, United States Code, to be exceeded.

(e) REPORT ON CERTAIN ACTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If, after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury exercises his authority under subsection (a), the Secretary shall thereafter submit a report each week the authority is in use providing an accounting relating to—

(A) the principal on mature obligations and interest that is due or accrued of the United States, and

(B) any obligations issued pursuant to subsection (a).

(2) SUBMISSION.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, if you want to guarantee that the United States will never default, then you should vote for this bill. If you want to protect working families from the consequences of default, then you should vote for this bill. If you want to make sure that seniors get every dime of their Social Security, then vote for this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does not raise the debt limit, but it eliminates the threat of default. The full faith and credit of our country is too important to put at risk. What this bill says is very simple. It says that we will never fail to pay our debts. That is just it. That is all it does. It is just paying our debts.

We know the consequences of default. We know it would shake the world's confidence in us. We know that it could freeze up credit across this country. That is why with this bill, we are taking default off the table. It is common sense.

I want to thank Mr. MCCLINTOCK for developing this legislation, and I ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield the remainder of my time to the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) and ask unanimous consent that she be able to control the time from here on.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me just say at the beginning what needs to be said at the end. This doesn't take default off the table. This is an effort to obscure the reality. It does not take default off in any meaningful way.

Default by any other name is default, and essentially what this bill does is to address part of the problem but leave the rest of it very much outstanding and very much there. This bill plays with fire. This bill essentially—essentially—attacks the credit of the United States of America.

The Republicans are at it once again. In 2011, they played with it, they played with fire, and America was burned. The stock market plunged. The S&P downgraded for the first time in history the credit of this country. It lowered private pension balances. It essentially increased the cost of mortgages for people in this country. That wasn't enough. That in 2013 the Republicans played with fire and shut down the government. We lost 120,000 jobs. We slowed GDP growth, and there was an increase of $70 million in terms of the cost of financing debt.

So what is this really all about? What it is about is paying China and other foreign governments first and essentially putting at risk millions of Americans. So I just want to refer to who is at risk here. Who would be subject to default?

Payments and benefits to 1.4 million Active-Duty troops, their pay is at risk; benefits to almost 4 million disabled veterans; payment for health care for 5.9 million veterans; education assistance for over 1 million; and loan support for homes for over 500,000 or 600,000 veterans. And then payments to small businesses would be put at risk, payments to physicians under Medicare, payments to 30 million-plus kids in terms of their meals, and payments to hundreds of thousands of grantees of NIH.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is really what this is all about. Nine percent of the expenditures of this country are going to be safeguarded, mostly for foreign investors, and 30 percent in terms of Social Security payments. That means 60 percent would be at risk, 60 percent of the 80 to 100 million payments each month.

So, essentially, what the Republicans are doing is creating, here, a camouflage. But the problem with it is that it is so transparent. It might be as a purpose to try to find a few more votes on the Republican side, but when the camouflage is so obvious, I don't think it will work.

The administration has stated its position. That position is very clear, and I want to read from this Statement of Administration Policy. I quote the last paragraph:

> The President will not tolerate political gamesmanship, which caused the Nation's credit rating to be downgraded in 2011 and proved harmful to both the United States and the global economy. For this reason, if the President is presented with legislation that would result in the Congress' choosing to default on our obligations and imperil the full faith and credit of the United States, he would veto it.

So this bill cannot become law. So why do it? Why not simply face up to the need to address the full faith and credit of the United States? I think the answer is this isn't policy, this is a ploy, and ploys should not be used putting at risk the full faith and credit of the United States and payments at risk for millions and millions of Americans. That is really what this is all about.

This is irresponsible. This is indefensible. The only possible reason for passing a bill that can't go anywhere is maybe to pick up a few votes here. That is irresponsible in terms of the full faith and credit of this beloved country of ours.

So, Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge strong opposition to this. When this came up once before, I think every Democrat voted ''no''—every Democrat. So we are supposed to be kind of in a new era talking about bipartisanship. We are supposed to be, once again, thinking maybe we can act together. Instead, what we have here is a bill by Republicans essentially acting alone. It is a serious mistake.

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

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK), the author of the legislation.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, this bill simply guarantees that the sovereign debt of the United States will be paid in full and on time—period. How could that possibly be controversial? Yet in today's political environment, it is.

The sovereign debt of the United States is what makes it possible for us to pay all of our other obligations in this era of chronic deficit spending that we are now in. This bill provides an absolute guarantee of that credit.

Although the Constitution explicitly commands that the public debt of the United States is not to be questioned, it provides no practical mechanism to achieve this aim. This bill provides that mechanism. It says that, whenever we reach the debt limit, the Treasury Secretary can continue to borrow to pay interest and principal on the debt.

It amazes me that many of our friends on the other side of the aisle support loan guarantees to foreign corporations and to special interest groups, but they are unwilling to guarantee the loans to our own government.

Mr. Speaker, the national debt is now larger than the entire economy. It has doubled in the last decade. The interest on that debt is the fastest growing component of the Federal budget. It threatens to exceed our entire defense budget in just 8 years.

If there is ever any doubt over the security and reliability of the debt owed by this government, the rates we pay to service our debt would quickly rise and sink our country in a tidal wave of red ink.

Now, this is not a substitute for raising the debt limit. We all recognize that in this era of chronic deficit spending under this administration that is going to have to happen. We have a responsibility to raise the debt limit, but we also have a responsibility

to review the policies that are driving that debt.

□ 1500

The Default Prevention Act says loudly and clearly to the world that, no matter how much we may differ and quarrel here in Washington, the sovereign debt of this Nation is guaranteed and that their loans to it are absolutely safe.

We hear the charge that this would pay debts owed to foreign governments before paying our own troops. Actually, more than half of our debt is held by Americans, often in American pension funds. China holds just 7 percent. But whether our loans come from China or from Charleston, without the Nation's credit, we cannot pay our troops or meet all of our other obligations.

Opponents charge that this is an excuse not to pay our other debts. Well, what nonsense. This maintains the credit that is necessary to pay our other debts.

Most States guarantee that their sovereign debt will be secure and they have done so for generations. Do our friends actually suggest that any of these States has ever used these guarantees as an excuse not to pay their other bills? On the contrary, by protecting their credit first, they actually support and maintain their ability to pay for all of their other obligations.

The President contends that this is tantamount to a family saying it would make its house payment, but not its car payment. I sure hope he is getting better economic advice than that.

But let's continue the analogy. If the family is living on its credit cards, as we are as a Nation, it had better make the minimum payment on its credit card first or it won't be able to pay all the rest of its bills.

And when that family has to increase its credit limit because it is not spending within its means, it had better have a serious conversation about what is driving its debt and what to do about it.

Principled disputes over how the debt limit is addressed are going to happen from time to time. Just a few years ago then-Senator Barack Obama vigorously opposed an increase in the debt limit sought by the Bush administration.

When these controversies erupt, as they inevitably do in a free society, it is imperative that credit markets are supremely confident that their loans to the United States are secure.

Providing such a guarantee would prevent a future debt crisis and give Congress the calm it needs to negotiate the changes that must be made to bring our debt under control as we authorize still more debt.

The voices in opposition to this bill are the same voices that have cheered the most profligate spending and borrowing binge in the history of this Nation. It is time that we managed our affairs responsibly, and guaranteeing our debt is an important step in doing so.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

The gentleman says we are going to raise the debt limit. Raise it. Get a bill here that raises it. And then this political game will be totally unnecessary. Raise it. Where is the bill?

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, my colleagues, the last few days in New York people have been asking me: Do you really think PAUL RYAN is going to become Speaker of the House? I said: No. They said: Why? Don't you believe he is intelligent, smart, dedicated? I said: That is just the problem. I can't find anyone that I know and like that is more conservative than PAUL RYAN. PAUL RYAN, if he were to become Speaker, would be saying to the Republicans: I cannot accept this responsibility unless you respect the integrity of the United States of America. They said: Well, Charlie, what does that mean? I said: Well, PAUL RYAN wouldn't allow us to go into default. PAUL RYAN would support increasing the debt ceiling. PAUL RYAN would recognize that we need our infrastructure, we need our jobs, we need education. They said: Well, what is the difference with that? I said: If PAUL RYAN were to get these type of commitments from the Republican Party, Speaker BOEHNER never would have left, MCCARTHY never would have left.

So what are we going through today? Well, PAUL RYAN knows that this is not going to become law. Why? Because it doesn't make any sense.

It is almost like if you were in a corporation—since we are using analogies—and they say: We promise you you are not going to go bankrupt. You say: Well, how are you going to do that, since the only people that you have to pay are those you borrowed money from? Well, what about the cost of manufacturers? What about the salaries of the workers? What about the health benefits? What about the other things that make America great? Well, we didn't say that we are going to protect you for that. But just for the principal and the interest that you have to pay, you protect it.

This doesn't make any sense at all. But since it is going to be vetoed, this must mean something to those people that, when you say government, they get angry, when you say Obama, they see red, when you find cooperation with Democrats, they say that you are not faithful to the Republic.

So I don't know who these people are. We don't see them. They don't talk this way. But someone that can believe that just paying off debt, foreign and domestic, and not taking care of our veterans, not taking care of our military, not taking care of our health concern—if you really think that these things are just going to be forgotten, these are not the principles that PAUL RYAN believes in.

So, if this passes, if it is vetoed, can't we try to believe that, if you really want to have a Republican Speaker, take this garbage off the table, say you are going to cooperate for our country? This is more important than Republicans and Democrats.

We are talking about the prestige, the full faith and credit of the United States of America. People don't ask whether you are Republican or Democrat. They just want to know are you going to pay your debts.

I thank you for this opportunity.

And, PAUL, if they don't want you as Speaker, we will keep you as our chairman.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA).

Mr. ROKITA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman.

I rise today in simple, but strong, support for H.R. 692, the Default Prevention Act.

This commonsense bill makes clear that the United States and those who vote on the floor of this Chamber prioritize our debt and our Social Security payments over our reckless government and otherwise irresponsible spending.

With this bill, we take the hysteria out of our spending debate and codify the integrity of our Nation's full faith and credit. And I would say, Madam Speaker, that those that appear to oppose this bill really and truly at the end of the day need the hysteria that surrounds this issue to not go away simply so political points around this issue can continue to be made.

Now, here is a real scary point, not political at all. Today, as we stand here, our national debt stands in excess of $18 trillion. Yet, according to the Congressional Budget Office, government revenues were $3.25 trillion for fiscal year 2015 alone.

With $3.25 trillion revenue coming in, ladies and gentlemen, we do not have a revenue problem. But with $18 trillion in debt, we certainly have a spending problem. We must get to the root of it, and this bill is a responsible step forward.

It is a responsible step forward because it truly takes the politics of this debt and this hysteria off the table so that we can see as American people and as a Congress so that we can be exposed to the problems so that we can face it and, ultimately, so that we can solve it.

That is what we came to Washington to do. I think a little bit all of us did. For me, it is the majority of why I came to Washington, so that our tough decisions can be faced, met, resolved, and we can ultimately reduce this debt so that our children and grandchildren in the here and now and yet to come don't have to be the first and second generations in American history that are left worse off.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to

the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), our Whip.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I have been here for some period of time, and I have heard a lot about caucuses. But I would like to see us do what the gentleman from Indiana says, although I disagree with him on his conclusion.

I would like to see the formation of a responsibility caucus, a caucus that is honest with the American people, that doesn't pretend that this debt limit vote is a real vote.

It is a real vote when you cut revenues by hundreds of billions of dollars and don't pay for it. And if you think that that does not up the debt and somehow pays for it, you haven't been around for the last 35 years watching.

The responsibility caucus would say to the American people: If we bought it, we are going to pay for it. Whether it was Social Security, Medicare, an aircraft carrier, roads and bridges, whatever it was, we will pay for it.

But one of the first things our Republican friends did was they negated pay-for, and they certainly wouldn't have it apply to tax cuts. Almost every responsible economist I have talked with says there is no way you can do this without effectively having default.

Because if you prioritize debt, by definition, what you are saying is there are some debts we will not pay. As soon as you say that, you have defaulted. You may not default to a bond owner, but you have defaulted on an obligation of the most creditworthy nation on Earth, the United States of America.

This is a game. It is an irresponsible game. It is a game unworthy of responsible representatives. Of course we are going to pay our debts. We are America. When we say of course we are going to pay our debts, it means that we will pay our debts.

In order to do that, you need to up the debt limit. If you don't want the debt limit to go higher, stop buying things or pay for things or do both.

I urge my colleagues to reject this irresponsible charade that is a pretense of fiscal responsibility, not a reality. This is not worthy of this Congress or the American people. It is clear that this House has been a deeply divided House and a dysfunctional House for a number of months now, indeed, for a number of years.

I understand that there are some people who demand legislation like this that won't go anywhere and really won't do anything, and it will put the credit of the United States at further risk. Let us reject this charade.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I come today to the House as a supporter of the Default Prevention Act. Right now our Nation stands at over $18 trillion in debt, a number simply too large to comprehend.

As the House, we have an obligation to the American people to rein in out-of-control Federal spending and put our economy on a sustainable path forward.

However, while House Republicans will continue to act to reduce our national debt and restore fiscal responsibility to the Federal Government, we cannot put the full faith and credit of the United States Government at risk.

The Default Prevention Act ensures that we will continue to pay our existing debt obligations providing the economic security and certainty that our economy needs.

This legislation does not allow for an increase in the debt limit. It simply allows us to satisfy our existing debt obligations and avoid default, even if we reach the debt ceiling.

This bill also protects Social Security beneficiaries and Americans with disabilities by ensuring that their benefits will continue to be paid on time. Hardworking Americans deserve to have their benefits protected, and this bill does just that. This legislation is a commonsense measure that protects Americans' credit and integrity.

I urge all Members of the House to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), our caucus chair.

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding.

1.4 million troops, 4 million disabled veterans, more than 30 million children who participate on a daily basis in school lunch programs, and small businesses all over the country are some of the Americans who will pay the price if Republicans refuse to authorize our government to pay all its bills.

□ 1515

There are only 8 legislative days left for Congress to avoid defaulting on paying America's financial bills. Yet, our House Republican colleagues show no signs of putting serious business first and trying to work with their Democratic colleagues to pay our Nation's bills on time and in full. This bill isn't a solution. It is a sham.

First, it instructs our government to pay foreign creditors ahead of paying our troops or paying our veterans, who have honorably served our country and have earned their benefits.

Second, our Republican colleagues propose under this bill to borrow new money to pay for previously borrowed money and to say that the previously borrowed money won't count on the books. Borrowing money off the books to cover debt sounds a lot like a Ponzi scheme.

This is simply default by another name, bringing our economy closer to the brink. Maybe some people in this Chamber have forgotten 2011. When the Republicans brought us to the brink of default in 2011, the stock market plunged and the S&P downgraded our credit rating for the first time in our Nation's history.

In 2013, our Republican colleagues proposed default threats, and the government shutdown that followed cost us 120,000 jobs and $24 billion in slow GDP growth just as the economy was taking hold.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary Lew, said in a letter last week: ''There is no way to predict the irreparable damage that default would have on global financial markets and the American people.''

Madam Speaker, you wouldn't constantly run your small business on the edge of default. So why would Republicans try to run the largest economy in the world this way?

We need to move forward. We have 8 days. Let us defeat this bill and get our real work done.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. I thank the gentlewoman.

Madam Speaker, my colleague from Maryland made the comment just a moment ago of the ''responsibility caucus,'' that he would like to see more of that.

What I would submit to everybody in this Chamber is that, ultimately, what my colleague from California's bill is all about is, indeed, just that because, if you think about it, we really are living in an age of default.

Laurence Kotlikoff, from Boston University, has said that, in a thing called generational accounting, the imputed cost of governing—the imputed cost for a child born in America today in terms of future costs all in—is about 80 percent.

Eighty percent is not all that far from a thing called slavery if you have to be indentured to the Federal Government for the preponderance of your life and your life's work. What this is ultimately about is defusing that bomb.

Erskine Bowles was the former Chief of Staff to President Clinton. He ran a commission that looked at the way our Federal Government spent money. He said that what we have before us is the most predictable financial crisis in the history of man and that it is but 10 years off—roughly, 10 years off.

So, as we have a legitimate debate—and we will have a legitimate debate between Republicans and Democrats and Independents and all of us as Americans in where we go next—what this does is defuse that bomb of a train wreck with regard to international and national credit markets as we have that debate, and that is a very good thing.

This bill is about drawing a line as we have deadlines that come and go with this debate. It is about a tug of war that is taking place, and it is about saying let's step back and not risk credit markets and what might happen next on that front.

Secondly, it is about simple priorities. In a family's budget, they differentiate between the mortgage budget and the movie budget. Not all government expenditure is equal.

There is a whole host of programs in the Federal Government that make a lot of sense and some, frankly, that don't, some that add a lot of value and some that add a little bit of value. For us to say, ''I will tell you what. As we go through those deliberations, let's back up and protect the financial creditworthiness of the United States Government,'' it is, ultimately, a real step of responsibility.

I commend my colleague from California for offering this bill. I thank him for his work to defuse a ticking time bomb in the debate that will take place—a ticking time bomb that will go on, nonetheless, with regard to what happens next with regard to the national debt.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), another distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, here we go again. We are only weeks from defaulting on our debt, and this bill does nothing to deal with that. The bill before us today is, essentially, a plan for defaulting on our obligations.

As my friend said, the Republican gentleman from Louisiana, all this does is prioritize our debt. If you are prioritizing your debt, by definition, you are defaulting. You are not paying your bills.

This would prioritize our repayment, putting our veterans, small businesses, and our first responders behind foreign governments in regard to receiving the payment that is due to them.

We have to pay our bills. We cannot go down this road again. We have seen this movie before, and it is not going to change. The last time we came close to defaulting on our debt, the results were terrible. In 1 month, job growth dropped by more than 130,000 jobs. The S&P 500 tanked by nearly 20 percent, and our credit rating was downgraded for the first time in history.

No one knows for sure what the full extent of the damage to the economy would be if we were to default on our debt. But, as Chairman RYAN said earlier, we know that it would ''freeze up our economy''—higher interest rates for mortgages on auto loans, student loans, and credit cards; higher interest rates and less access to business loans needed to finance payrolls, building inventories, or to invest in equipment and construction; families' retirement savings in 401(k)'s dropping as the stock market tanks; almost 4 million veterans not receiving disability benefits; and doctors, medical providers, and hospitals not getting their pay.

The debt limit is not something to play around with. We simply need to pay our bills. Vote a resounding ''no'' on this bill, and let's pay our bills.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), our whip.

Mr. SCALISE. I thank the gentlewoman from Kansas for yielding.

I want to thank my friend from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for bringing this bill forward.

Madam Speaker, the Default Prevention Act takes off the table the ability for any President to use the debt ceiling as an opportunity to threaten default on the credit of the United States of America.

If you think about this, we are talking about whether or not the United States is going to pay its bills. This should be something that the President—any President—should understand as a basic responsibility of his duty in office whether or not Congress can come to an agreement with the President on the debt ceiling, which, by the way, should be something the Speaker, the majority leader, and the President are directly engaged in.

The fact that the President walked away from talks on negotiations on the debt ceiling tells you that he is not taking this in the serious way that he should. In fact, it also proves that the President wants to use the debt ceiling to threaten the default of the United States. That is irresponsible of any President. No President should have the option of defaulting or of even threatening default, and this bill takes default off the table as an option.

Now, why would the President be opposed to that?

I think it answers itself, Madam Speaker, because the President wants to threaten default and have that as a political weapon to try to scare the markets and to try to scare our seniors, who, by the way, are the largest holders of debt. Seniors shouldn't have to worry about whether or not that debt would be paid. Any creditor shouldn't be worried.

If the United States is going to borrow money, we should first focus on getting to a balanced budget, which this President is opposed to. Once we get to a balanced budget, we should also be focused on making sure we are paying the debts that were incurred.

The fact that the President wants to threaten default as an option shouldn't be available. This bill takes default off the table, and it makes the focus really clear that the United States is going to live within its means, uphold its obligations, and then go and focus on attacking the real root problems that got us into this debt in the first place.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote for this piece of legislation. Let's send it over to the Senate, where they should pass it on to the President.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for a unanimous consent request.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the ranking member.

Madam Speaker, I rise to oppose H.R. 692, for we should pay our debts. This bill is called the Pay China First Act.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to speak on H.R. 692, the so-called 'Default Prevention Act of 2015,'' which would result in the Congress refusing to pay the financial obligations it has already incurred.

This bill, which ought to be called the ''Pay China First Act,'' is virtually-identical to the one House Republicans brought to the floor in May 2013, which House Democrats unanimously opposed and which wasted time and taxpayer money on its consideration before pushing the nation to the brink of default just a few months later.

American families do not get to choose which bills to pay and which ones to ignore; neither can the United States Congress without putting the nation into default for the first time in its history.

In 1789, Alexander Hamilton, the nation's first and greatest Treasury Secretary, understood that the path to American prosperity and greatness lay in its creditworthiness which provided the affordable access to capital needed to fund internal improvements and economic growth.

The nation's creditworthiness was one of its most important national assets and according to Hamilton: ''the proper funding of the present debt, will render it a national blessing.''

But to maintain this blessing, or to ''render public credit immortal,'' Hamilton understood that it was necessary that: ''the creation of debt should always be accompanied with the means of extinguishment.''

In other words, to retain and enjoy the prosperity that flows from good credit, it is necessary for a nation to pay its bills.

H.R. 692 threatens the full faith and credit of the United States, costs American jobs, hurt businesses of all sizes, and does irreparable damage to the economy.

It is important to note that under the economic stewardship of the Obama Administration, the Dow Jones Industrial Average closed above 17,000 for the first time ever, and unemployment has fallen to 5.1 percent, the lowest since the Clinton Administration.

Madam Speaker, obligations not guaranteed by H.R. 692, and therefore in danger of not being paid on a daily basis, include pay for active-duty military, veterans benefits, Medicare and Medicaid payments, and payments to small businesses.

In short, H.R. 692 is simply default by another name.

Americans want a clean debt limit increase, which Congress has been done numerous times and was the normal process until 2011 when the House Republicans hijacked the process in a futile and quixotic effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

H.R. 692 reflects a House Republican governing philosophy that puts ideology over progress and partisan showmanship over common-sense legislating.

Madam Speaker, we cannot continue to hold our nation hostage, punishing the recipients of Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare who depend upon their benefits for economic survival.

That is why I support a long-term increase in the debt limit that would provide economic stability to consumers, businesses, and financial organizations and certainty to capital markets.

In contrast, the bill before us, H.R. 692, is merely a short-term measure with unnecessary complications, needlessly perpetuating uncertainty in the nation's fiscal system, and favors the Chinese government over Americans.

My colleagues want to buy time so that they can figure out how to squeeze the American taxpayer even more by devising bone-crunching cuts and slashes to entitlement programs as opposed to sitting down and working with Democrats to come up with reasonable budget reforms which do not hurt seniors or the , disadvantaged.

Madam Speaker, Social Security is currently the only source of income for nearly two-thirds of older American households receiving benefits, and roughly one-third of those households depend on Social Security for nearly all of their income.

Half of those 65 and older have annual incomes below $18,500, and many older Americans have experienced recent and significant losses in retirement savings, pensions, and home values.

Today, every dollar of the average Social Security retirement benefit of about $14,800 is absolutely critical to the typical beneficiary.

Contrary to some claims, Social Security is not the cause of our nation's deficit problem.

Not only does the program operate independently, but it is prohibited from borrowing.

Social Security must pay all benefits from its own trust fund.

If there are insufficient funds to pay out full benefits, benefits are automatically reduced to the level supported by the program's own revenues.

Instead of short-term management of self-inflicted fiscal crises, it is incumbent upon us on both sides of the aisle to find the common ground needed to put the nation on a sounder fiscal path.

If President Obama has made clear that he remains willing to work with both parties in Congress to budget responsibly and to achieve additional deficit reduction consistent with the principles of balance, shared growth, and shared opportunity.

But, as of today Madam Speaker, Congress has only two options—raise the debt ceiling to allow the Treasury to pay the nation's bills, or refuse to do so and have the nation default for the first time in history.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against H.R. 692.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), another very distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you.

Madam Speaker, I am listening to my friend from Louisiana rewrite history.

It is not the President who is threatening to default on the national debt. It is the Republican Congress that is refusing to do what was granted to every President in the past—Republican or Democrat—which is to deal with raising the debt ceiling, which is, after all, money we have already spent, money that they approved.

They have been in charge for the last 5 years. The notion that we can somehow distinguish the semantics of this proposal, distinguishing between sovereign debt and the rest of the 80 million transactions that the Treasury makes every day, is lunacy.

If you disagree with our protections to seniors, veterans, the military, Medicare, Medicaid, the FBI, food safety, cut them, but you don't. You nibble away at them. You have never offered a balanced budget when you have been in charge. We had balanced budgets when President Clinton was President. Thank you very much. Unless you assure everyone, nobody is protected.

As for the notion somehow that the President walked away from the negotiations with Simpson-Bowles, where was PAUL RYAN? I like PAUL RYAN. PAUL RYAN refused to embrace Simpson-Bowles' proposals. They cannot pass their vision. They want to blame the President and the American people.

I would respectfully suggest that we ought to reject this fig leaf and get down to business: raise the debt ceiling as we have done repeatedly in the past for Presidents, whether they are Republicans or Democrats, get past the rhetoric, and then deal with structural issues going forward.

Let's rebuild and renew America. Let's raise the gas tax so we can deal with our crumbling infrastructure, something that Ronald Reagan did in 1982, when we faced a deficit in the highway trust fund then.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). The time of the gentleman has expired.

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. There are simple, commonsense solutions, by the way, that are supported by the U.S. Chamber and the AFL–CIO, truckers and AAA, business, government, to be able to get the country moving again, to repair crumbling infrastructure, and not add to the deficit. One simple, little step—something we could do—not deal with goofy legislation like is offered today.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, we are asked: Why don't you just raise the debt limit?

Let me again make this very clear.

As long as we spend more than we take in, we have a responsibility to raise the debt limit. Republicans acknowledge that responsibility. Democrats acknowledge that responsibility.

Yet, with that responsibility comes a concomitant duty to review the policies that are driving that debt. The Republicans acknowledge this responsibility. The Democrats do not. That is the fine point of the matter.

That is a policy debate, and it is controversial, but that controversy should not roil credit markets and threaten to increase the cost of our borrowing.

Given the size of the debt that we are carrying—and this administration has nearly doubled it by its policies—even a small increase in interest rates could mean a catastrophic increase in interest payments, and those increased interest payments in the tens—possibly, hundreds—of billions of dollars would come at the cost of every other program that the Democrats cherish.

We keep hearing about the S&P downgrading our credit rating in 2011. Let me remind them that, for months prior to that downgrade, the S&P demanded that we reduce our 10-year projected deficit by at least $4 trillion or they would downgrade our sovereign debt. We ultimately only reduced it by $1.2 trillion because of the voices that we now hear raised against this bill, and the S&P followed through on that threat.

□ 1530

My Democratic colleagues are right, a threat not to pay interest and principal on our debt is the biggest threat to our credit. That is precisely the threat this bill takes off the table by guaranteeing our sovereign debt.

My friends are correct that failure to pay our other bills would be a very bad thing, and it is much to be avoided. There is no dispute in that.

As long as the debt limit has to be increased, there is going to be controversy; and that controversy, whether during Republican or Democratic Congresses or Republican or Democratic administrations, must not be allowed to provoke an increase in borrowing costs because we have frightened credit markets.

This is not a threat to default. It is a promise not to default on the sovereign debt that we use to fund everything else that we do. My friends on the left make no distinction between sovereign debt and our other obligations. That may explain some of the reasons we are in the mess we are in.

The fact is our sovereign debt is what makes it possible to pay for our other obligations as long as we continue to spend beyond our means. This measure guarantees the sovereign debt.

The policies advocated by the opponents of this motion are precisely the policies that have caused our country to wander now through 7 years down a dark road of debt, doubt, despair, and economic malaise.

It is time for a new morning in America, and that begins with guaranteeing the sovereign debt of this Nation. I ask for your support for this bill.

Mr. LEVIN. Could I ask the Speaker how much time is remaining on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan has 10 minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from Kansas has 13½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), another distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. KIND. Madam Speaker, this unquestionably is one of the most dangerous bills that we will be considering in this session of Congress because this gives this body permission, for the very first time in our Nation's history, to default on our financial obligations.

They claim that they are splitting the baby here by paying bondholders only. One of the largest bondholders we have, of course, is China, so this is a pay China first bill.

I have a feeling that the financial markets, the investors, and the credit rating agencies will view this for what it is however: a default is a default is a default.

A great nation like the United States of America should pay our bills. We should pay our bills.

Now, no one can stand here or sit here today with complete certainty and tell us what the market reaction would be if we start defaulting on any financial obligations we have as a nation, and that is really the point. Why would we even take that chance? Why would we take a chance of a downgrade to our credit, of an increase in interest rates which would impact everyone, from small businesses to families to farmers? It would drive up borrowing costs, which would act as a brake on economic activity and the job growth we have right now because we have never done this before. That is the danger that this legislation sets up.

If my friends on the other side are so concerned about debt and overspending, then perhaps they ought not have supported legislation this year alone—bills that they have passed—that would increase our national debt by $1.5 trillion over the next 10 years because you refused to pay for the tax cuts or the spending increases that were in that legislation through offsets in the budget. That may come as news or surprise to the other side, but the Congressional Budget Office score is $1.5 trillion of new debt over 10 years based on legislation you supported: repealing SGR, $141 billion; permanent expensing, $380 billion; get rid of the estate tax, another $180 billion, and others. It adds up to 1.5.

So if there is so much concern about excess spending and debt and what it is doing to our economy, then maybe we ought to look at ourselves first and the action that is being taken on this House floor.

We should not go down this path. We should stop creating the uncertainty and dysfunction coming out of Washington and give the economy a chance to recover.

I encourage my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY), vice chair of our Caucus.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Pay China First Act. We should call it, in my opinion, Put America Last Act because that is exactly what this does. This bill will codify into law a new low. It will ensure U.S. taxpayers are forced to pay China and other regimes as well as foreign banks first. That means we will pay China before we pay veterans, before we pay for Medicare to cover our seniors, and before we pay our enlisted troops bravely serving overseas. It means we are going to pay these guys before we pay these guys. We are going to pay these guys before we pay these guys.

Even Chairman RYAN, in a memo to House Republican colleagues, acknowledges that, in fact, China and other foreign debt holders will be paid before Medicare, before our elderly receive their checks, and before our troops receive their salaries.

This whole bill is a sign of misplaced priorities. There are countless issues that Americans have called on us to address that we need to tackle to ensure this country remains healthy and strong, yet this is a bill the Republicans have chosen to bring to the floor. This is a bill that you have chosen to bring to the floor.

At least now we know. We know this Congress is not serious about paying our Nation's bills because, under this bill, we resort to having the U.S. file, in essence, a bankruptcy. Filing for bankruptcy and walking away from debt obligations may work for Donald Trump, but it doesn't work for middle class Americans. Average Americans who work hard to pay their bills and live up to their financial obligations—and that includes American veterans and seniors—the Republicans would have waiting in line for their VA benefits behind Chinese bankers.

I cannot support a measure that puts China above our veterans, above our seniors, and above our servicemembers.

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

Mr. LEVIN. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, if you ask the American people, ''Who should be paid first, these guys or these guys?'' I suggest they would agree with us. These guys should get paid first.

Oppose this Pay China First Act, and let's keep America first.

Let me also add this, Madam Speaker.

Have you ever heard of dine and ditch? This is the biggest dine and ditch I have ever heard of. When I was a kid, some of my friends wanted to go to restaurants, eat as much as they could, and then run out before they paid their bill, and I would never let them do that. I felt it was immoral. That is exactly what we are suggesting we do today.

Who got stuck paying for that bill? The waitress. Who is the waitress in this case? The American people. The American people, they get stuck when you dine and ditch on them. Even suggesting for a moment that we may not pay our debt and that we may default sends the wrong message to America. It sends the wrong message to the world.

Defeat this measure.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS), another very distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Pay China First Act. I am truly shocked that the Republican leadership is advancing a bill that approves America defaulting on its debt.

This is a dangerous action that jeopardizes the full faith and credit of our Nation. It also jeopardizes the well-being of millions of our most vulnerable citizens.

I cannot support a bill that would tell my constituents that repaying our debt to foreign countries is more important than paying their salaries for military service or paying their disability benefits or providing them student loans.

How can I tell small businesses in Illinois that repaying our debt to a foreign government is more important than paying them for providing goods and services to our government? How can I tell Illinois doctors and hospitals that we can pay China for lending us money, but we cannot pay them for taking care of our elderly?

The Council of Economic Advisers estimated that the 2013 debt limit standoff and shutdown cost us 120,000 jobs, and the GAO estimated that it resulted in $70 million in increased borrowing cost on securities issued during the last crisis.

The 2013 debt limit fiasco already damaged our economic recovery, yet the Republican leadership insists yet again on a path to harm our national economy and well-being simply for political posturing.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this shameful bill that says that debt to foreign countries is more important than our citizens.

We should protect our economy. Pass a clean bill to raise our debt ceiling.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I know that this great Hall has become a national gallery for hyperbole, but I think the opponents of this measure have taken it to a whole new level. Pay China first, what xenophobic nonsense.

China holds about 7 percent of our debt. Most of our debt is owed to Americans, much of it in pension funds and debts to Social Security pensioners.

If we don't maintain our credit, we can't meet any of our other obligations, including our troops in the field. And if there is even a suggestion that our sovereign debt is not absolutely secure, we could see a spike in interest costs that will take money away from the very programs that the Democrats say they are trying to defend. That is the reality of it.

This is a question over whether we should guarantee the sovereign debt of the United States, and I would ask

again: Why is it and how is it that my friends on the Democratic side of the aisle can get wildly enthusiastic about taxpayers being forced to guarantee loans to foreign corporations, foreign governments, or domestic special interests and yet not be willing to guarantee the full faith and credit of the United States simply by allowing the Treasury Secretary to continue to borrow to meet our interest and principal payments if we should ever reach a point where the debt limit has been reached?

It is the debate over the debt limit that tends to roil markets. We are going to meet our debt obligations, but that debate that is required to review the policies that are driving our debt is what roils those markets.

This calms that debate. This assures everyone who makes loans to the Federal Government that their loans are secure. This keeps our interest costs down, and it guarantees the credit of the United States that is necessary to meet all of our other obligations.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, as I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, this is an amazing debate. The gentleman from California talks about guaranteeing. So you guarantee payments to foreign debt holders. You won't guarantee payments to our veterans or to kids with school lunches. You won't guarantee payments to people who are doing medical research. You won't guarantee that.

So here is the problem: you are proceeding on a very partisan basis on a bill that is going nowhere.

You say we need to raise the debt ceiling. We will, and we are going to do it long before there is any consideration of the details about which you speak.

□ 1545

You talk about the need to control spending. We are going to pass a debt ceiling. The disturbing thing is you come here on a partisan basis when there is a crying need for bipartisanship. The only way the debt ceiling can be raised is bipartisan, and you come here today strictly partisan.

That is a bad omen because, in addition to the debt ceiling, there is the continuing resolution. We have also the Medicare premium issue that looms in a few days. We have a highway bill that looms in a few days. The only way they are going to be resolved is on a bipartisan basis. You come here with a bill that won't get, I think, a single Democratic vote, and you know it, and yet your leadership sanctions you to do this.

What does that mean for the future? It is deeply troubling. This is demagoguery. It is an effort maybe to gain a few more Republican votes, but this is too important for that. It is not policy, as I said before. It is a ploy. When it comes to issues like this, it should be beyond that kind of gamesmanship.

In this sense, it is kind of sad you are doing this. It raises questions as to where your leadership is going to take this institution in the future, when already on your side the public has such deep disbelief in what you are doing. It is too late to ask you to pull back. I urged that to your leadership some time ago. I guess we are going to go forth. It is a frightful mistake to be doing it this way.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members that remarks in debate must be addressed to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Congress still has a great deal of work to do to rein in spending. While conversations to reduce Federal spending continue, we must also continue to pay down our existing debt. The Default Prevention Act before us today provides a responsible way to deal with our debt crisis and protect the full faith and credit of the United States.

As we all know, if the U.S. defaulted on a debt payment, it would do serious harm to the economy and to the hardworking Americans who make this country great. This bill ensures that, even if the debt limit is reached, the U.S. Treasury would not default on our existing obligations to pay down the debt.

Again, this legislation does not increase the debt limit. Instead, it actually prevents Treasury from issuing new debt to pay for any new spending unless Congress passes a law to increase the debt limit, a conversation for another day.

This bill, guaranteeing our debt, makes it possible to pay all the bills that the minority claims to want paid. This bill takes the important step of ensuring that Social Security benefits are paid in full and on time. This legislation is a commonsense measure that will protect our Nation's credit and integrity.

Once again, I strongly urge my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I stand in opposition to H.R. 692, the so-called Default Prevention Act.

Raising the national debt limit is a basic responsibility of government which ensures America will be able to pay its bills. If we do not raise the debt limit, our nation will default for the first time in its history. Americans' retirement savings will plunge, and interest rates for mortgages, student loans, credit cards, and car payments will skyrocket.

That is why the American people and the American economy need a clean debt limit extension bill that meets all of our financial obligations, not just a few of them. Sadly, the Majority party's Default Prevention Act does not meet this basic standard.

Their bill would guarantee payments above the debt limit to bond holders in China and other foreign countries, without consideration for meeting our obligations to the American people, including troops, veterans, and small businesses. That is irresponsible and wrong.

Taking care of our veterans, troops, and small businesses should be our priority, not guaranteeing payments to China and our other bond holders. This legislation is the Majority's cynical attempt to pass a debt limit bill and say the House is being responsible. The truth is it is not an honest attempt to address the debt limit. The Majority's bill is a sham. Our nation will be in default if we miss any payment for any reason. And the Majority knows the bill will not become law, because the President will veto it if it reaches his desk.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this pointless Default Prevention Act, and-pass a clean debt limit extension bill that fulfills our obligations to the American, people, avoids economic catastrophe, and truly honors the full faith and credit of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 480, 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.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 3116) to extend by 15 years the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the quarterly financial report program, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. 3. REPORT ON DATA SECURITY PROCEDURES OF THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS.

(a) REVIEW.—The Secretary of Commerce shall conduct a review of the data security procedures

of the Bureau of the Census, including such procedures that have been implemented since the data breaches of systems of the Office of Personnel Management were announced in 2015.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report on the review required by subsection (a).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall—

(A) identify all information systems of the Bureau of the Census that contain sensitive information;

(B) described any actions carried out by the Secretary of Commerce or the Director of the Bureau of the Census to secure sensitive information that have been implemented since the data breaches of systems of the Office of Personnel Management were announced in 2015;

(C) identify any known data breaches of information systems of the Bureau of the Census that contain sensitive information; and

(D) identify whether the Bureau of the Census stores any information that, if combined with other such information, would comprise classified information.

Mr. CHAFFETZ (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

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

There was no objection.

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

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to submit for the RECORD a letter from John Thompson, Director of the Census Bureau, to Chairman MCCAUL, myself, and others, indicating the Bureau will comply with FISMA when developing the report required by H.R. 3116 and will continue to work with the Secretary of Homeland Security and others to secure the Bureau's network.

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

There was no objection.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU,

Washington, DC, October 20, 2015.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This correspondence is regarding the U.S. Census Bureau's compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) and the provisions of Senate Amendment (S. Admt.) 2710 to H.R. 3116. The Census Bureau is compliant at this time with the requirements of FISMA, and is working with the Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide information on the data security procedures required by S. Admt. 2710.

We have implemented a formal risk management program in accordance with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication 800–37r1. All of the FISMA reportable systems supporting the Census Bureau are continually assessed per this guidance and all have a current Authorization to Operate. In addition, the Census Bureau is currently behind a Managed Trusted Internet Protocol Service (MTIPS) provider and is protected by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Einstein 1 and 2, which looks at network flow information and network intrusion detection. The Census Bureau is engaged with DHS and MTIPS provider to move behind Einstein 3 Accelerated (E3A) as soon as the DHS and our MTIPS say they are ready. This will give us the added cybersecurity analysis, situational awareness and security response capabilities for DHS to augment our efforts.

The Census Bureau also is actively engaged with the Department of Commerce to implement Phase 2C of the Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) program by the end of calendar year 2016. This will provide us the capability to identify cybersecurity risks more efficiently and prioritize the risks based on potential impacts. The initial meeting with DHS and the service provider took place on October 15. 2015. The Census Bureau reports regularly on this and other aspects of its cybersecurity program to the Department of Commerce, Office of Management and Budget, and DHS.

Please know that the security of our respondents' information is paramount at the Census Bureau. We take seriously our responsibility to honor privacy and protect confidentiality. We will continue to work with the Department of Commerce and DHS to implement effective data security procedures and ensure compliance with FISMA requirements.

Thank you.

JOHN H. THOMPSON,
Director.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 10.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 480 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. 10.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1552

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. 10) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes, with Mr. HOLDING 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 Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

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

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results, or SOAR, Reauthorization Act.

The SOAR Reauthorization Act continues the three-sector approach to education within the District of Columbia. This approach gives equal funding to D.C. Public Schools, D.C. Public Charter Schools, and the Opportunity Scholarship Program, often referred to as the OSP.

The OSP gives scholarships to children in low-income families to attend a private school so that those children can experience a quality education. The average OSP family makes less than $22,000 per year. These scholarships allow families to place their children in learning-rich environments.

District of Columbia Public Schools rank at the top in spending per student, but are near the bottom in academic performance. The Opportunity Scholarship Program gives these students the education they deserve so they can pursue the American Dream.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 10 works not only to provide scholarships to students who need them the most, but also to improve the current state of public school and public charter school education. This bill authorizes equal funding for D.C. Public Schools and for D.C. Public Charter Schools in addition to the Opportunity scholarships.

My friends across the aisle claim that the SOAR Act takes money away from public education. However, that is quite the opposite. The SOAR Act increases funding for public education in the District of Columbia.

In fact, since the three-sector approach has been in effect, D.C. Public Schools and D.C. Public Charter Schools have received a combined $435 million in Federal funding for school improvement.

Mr. Chairman, the District of Columbia schools would not have received these funds had it not been for the OSP and this three-sector approach. Now we are debating reauthorizing this approach and giving $20 million annually to each sector for 5 years, $300 million across 5 years for D.C. education.

It is hard to imagine how anyone who advocates for public education would oppose such an approach that has poured millions of dollars into the D.C. public education system, particularly since the OSP is getting a great return on its investment and is producing results. The OSP produces $2.62 in benefits for every dollar spent on the program, according to a study conducted by one of the program's evaluators.

Mr. Chairman, you would be hard pressed to find another government program that generates this sort of result and bang for your buck. We are talking about a 162 percent return on investment here, an investment that has not taken one dime from public education.

Mr. Chairman, it is good stuff. We talk about how to keep this program going because it is really affecting real people and real lives. We talk about the individual students and their families, but it is also borne out in the statistics.

The Opportunity Scholarship students are averaging a 90 percent graduation rate—90 percent—compared to D.C. Public Schools, which was roughly less than a 60 percent graduation rate in 2013 and 2014.

Further, some 88 percent of the Opportunity Scholarship participants enroll in college. Not only are they graduating high school at record levels above and beyond what is happening in public schools, but they are also going on to higher education.

These children, though, are more than a graduation statistic. Their individual lives have been forever changed because of the OSP.

I want to remind our colleagues about Joseph Kelley's son, Rashawn Williams. He had fallen behind in every single subject. His father had to get the courts involved to ensure that his school was following its requirements pursuant to Rashawn's individual education plan. Mr. Kelley was able to get Rashawn a scholarship through the Opportunity Scholarship Program and has said: ''I truly shudder to think where my son would be today without it.''

Mr. Chairman, the OSP is changing outcomes for the least advantaged. The program places kids in safer high-quality schools that allow them to receive a good education. It brings funding to all sectors of education in D.C. to improve education opportunities for all.

Mr. Chairman, it is important to note that the bill requires all participating Opportunity Scholarship schools to be accredited. The accreditation standards give the taxpayer—and, more importantly, Opportunity Scholarship families—assurances that District students are receiving the education they deserve.

The Opportunity Scholarship currently limits entrance based on a control group for an evaluation study. H.R. 10 removes this arbitrary requirement, instituting a new study to track the results of the Opportunity Scholarships. Removing this barrier to entry increases access to the program and means more families can be afforded quality education for their children.

Mr. Chairman, we had the opportunity to debate this bill in the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and I appreciate the perspectives heard from both sides. We had a good, productive field hearing.

I want to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the Speaker of the House, our friend and colleague, for authoring this legislation. He has poured his heart and soul out, trying to do what he can do to help these young children. It has had a very positive effect on so many lives and in future generations. It is something we can all be proud about.

He has worked tirelessly to bring opportunity to students within the District of Columbia, and he will be remembered by this body for his effort to bring a quality education to all. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to give students in the District of Columbia the opportunity for a quality education by reauthorizing a program that actually works and produces results. It affects real lives. It is called the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act. I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

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

Mr. Chairman, I didn't really expect to be on the floor this afternoon managing this bill. Ironically, I was scheduled to host a briefing today for Members and staff on the constitutionality of the District of Columbia statehood bill, where I was going to show a 17-minute HBO ''Last Week Tonight'' clip from John Oliver that lampoons the Congress for denying District residents their voting rights, budget and legislative autonomy, and statehood.

Instead, here I am on the floor in a virtual reality show not speaking about the right to self-government, but fighting this latest attempt by the Republican Congress to impose its ideology on D.C. residents.

□ 1600

I ask to include the D.C. Council's letter opposing this bill in the RECORD.

COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, DC, October 8, 2015.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairperson, Committee on Oversight & Government Reform, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

CHAIRPERSON CHAFFETZ: We write as locally elected officials to express our opposition to renewed efforts to expand a federally funded school voucher program in the District of Columbia. We appreciate your interest in providing support to public education in the District. We strongly believe, however, that federal funds should be invested in the existing public education system—both public schools and public charter schools—rather than being diverted to private schools.

We support the decision by Congress and the President several years ago to phase out the voucher program. Multiple U.S. Department of Education reports indicate that the program has not lived up to the promises made by proponents. These studies along with two troubling Government Accountability Office reports have also revealed that many of the students participating in the voucher program attend private schools with fewer resources and lower standards than our public schools. The evidence is clear that the use of vouchers has had no statistically significant impact on overall student achievement in math or reading, or for students from schools in need of improvement.

We have serious concerns about using government funds to send our students to private schools that do not have to adhere to the same standards and accountability as do public and public charter schools. For example, private religious schools, which 80% of students with vouchers attend, operate outside the non-discrimination provisions of the D.C. Human Rights Act. Moreover, the voucher proposal is inequitable: if fully funded, the authorization would provide many more dollars per student for vouchers than is allocated per student in public schools and public charter schools.

Although we believe that students who are already receiving a voucher should have the opportunity to maintain and use that voucher through graduation from high school, we do not support expansion of the program to new students. The District devotes considerable funds to public education, and our local policies promote choice for parents. Indeed, over the past decade the quality of public education in D.C. has increased, as a result of reforms and targeted investment. Families can choose from an array of educational institutions based on publicly available performance metrics, both within the D.C. Public Schools system and among the myriad public charter schools. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has called the progress of D.C. Public Schools ''remarkable'', while the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools has ranked the District's charter sector as the best in the country.

Despite such ample evidence that the Congressionally imposed voucher program is ineffective, while D.C. public schools improve every year, some members of Congress continue to see our city as their personal petri dish. It is insulting to our constituents, who vote for us but not for any voting member of Congress, that some of your colleagues push their personal agendas on D.C. in a way they could never do in their home states. Attacking D.C. home rule, including any expansion of the voucher program, is irresponsible governing on the part of Congress.

We call on you to respect the wishes of the District's elected officials on the quintessentially local matter of education as you consider this issue.

Sincerely,

David Grosso, DC Council, At-Large, Chairperson Committee on Education; Charles Allen, DC Council, Ward 6, Member, Committee on Education; LaRuby May, DC Council, Ward 8; Elissa Silverman, DC Council, At-Large; Anita Bonds, DC Council, At-Large, Member, Committee on Education; Yvette Alexander, DC Council, Ward 7, Member, Committee on Education; Brianne Nadeau, DC Council, Ward 1; Jack Evans, DC Council, Ward 2.

Ms. NORTON. Yet, Mr. Chairman, I have sought a compromise that should be acceptable to Republicans, as it is to President Obama.

We support, and I repeat, we support allowing our current D.C. voucher students to remain in the program until graduation. That ensures D.C. would have voucher students for many years to come.

That is the kind of sensible compromise that Congress must get back to or be content with the label ''least productive Congress,'' as it has come to be known each year under this majority.

This bill goes beyond the compromise, we have offered, by seeking to admit new students as well. We are here so that Speaker JOHN BOEHNER has a capstone to his own political career. The D.C. voucher program is his pet project, not D.C.'s. The Speaker has introduced only two bills this Congress: a bill on the Iran nuclear agreement and this bill.

Even if Members do not respect D.C.'s right to self-government, they should at least care whether the program improves achievement, which was the stated reason for vouchers in the first place. Far from helping students, however, the program has demonstrably failed.

According to the congressionally mandated evaluation of the program's effectiveness, this program, these vouchers, have failed to improve academic achievement, as measured by objective math and reading testing scores.

Most importantly, the program has not had significant impacts—that is also from the congressionally mandated evaluation—has not had ''significant impacts'' on the achievement of students whom the program was designed to most benefit: those who previously attended low-performing public schools.

The majority cites improved high school graduation rates. However, the evaluation did not examine dropout rates or the rigor of the schools' curriculum or graduation requirements.

The majority also cites high college attendance rates. However, the evaluation did not measure college attendance rates.

Even if the program were successful, Mr. Chairman, it would still not be needed, at least in the District of Columbia, which has perhaps the most robust public school choice program in the country. Almost 50 percent of our public school students attend charter schools, which the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools ranked as the strongest in the Nation. In addition, 75 percent of public school students in the District attend out-of-boundary schools. What D.C. has developed amounts to a model choice education program.

Moreover, the D.C. public schools have made some of the most impressive improvements in the country, by any measure, spurred by competition from the rapidly growing D.C. charter schools, not from the small number of voucher schools. In fact, a 2013 assessment of D.C. public schools indicated that the District had made the greatest improvement of any urban school district in the Nation.

D.C. charter schools have even higher educational achievement and attainment than D.C. public schools. D.C. charter schools outperform D.C. public schools across traditionally disadvantaged groups, including African Americans and low-income students, and have a higher percentage of such students, precisely the students the voucher program was ostensibly designed to serve.

Greater confidence in D.C.'s public schools is also clear. D.C. public school enrollment has increased for 7 consecutive years, right alongside the very large number of charter schools.

If Congress wants to support D.C. students, we ask that you support our home rule public choice, not impose yours. Any new funding for education in the District should reinforce the hard work of our city, our parents, and our residents, who have shown the Nation how to build a fully accountable public school choice program. D.C. residents, not unaccountable Members of Congress, know best what our children need and how to govern our own affairs.

During this debate, Mr. Chairman, we will consider an amendment I have offered to restore the scientific integrity of the program's evaluation, one like the evaluation Congress has always mandated, and another to crack down on so-called voucher mills.

Given that the Speaker's bill will surely pass, I want to work with Members who support vouchers to ensure that our voucher students attend high-quality schools, like our accredited Catholic and other parochial schools, not fly-by-night, often storefront schools in low-income neighborhoods that were opened only after the voucher program was created to get access to unrestricted Federal funds.

I appreciate that the majority indicated in committee and on the floor that they also want to prevent voucher mills. I look forward to continuing to work with them as this bill moves forward to protect our families from voucher mills.

Under the Home Rule Act of 1973, Congress gave the District authority to establish its own education system; and unlike some other local jurisdictions, D.C. has never created a voucher program. Instead, like many D.C. bills in Congress, this bill seeks to impose a program on the District that does not have national support.

Just think of it. Only 3 months ago, both the House and Senate defeated Republican national private voucher amendments on the floor. Members reject private school vouchers for their own constituents but want to impose them on mine. No wonder.

Since 1970, every single referendum to establish State-funded vouchers or tuition tax credits has failed, and by large margins. Now the majority wants to do to the District what it would not dare do at home. The recent vote to deny voucher funding on a national level shows where Republicans really stand.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the chairman for this opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, I come to the floor today, after looking in the eyes of the kids, students, their parents, eyes filled with hope and opportunity and success.

I come to the floor today to add my support for H.R. 10, the SOAR Reauthorization Act, because it works. This legislation will ensure the continuation of the successful D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, which was established by Congress in 2004, to provide eligible low-income families in the District of Columbia with the opportunity to attend the school of their choice.

Innovative programs like the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program are necessary to fix our broken educational system and prepare our children for the 21st century workforce, and I am confounded that any of my colleagues would oppose a program that provides students with an opportunity for a better education, especially one that has been an unqualified success.

On average, students in the Opportunity Scholarship Program have a graduation rate of 90 percent, well above the national average, as well as D.C.'s overall graduation rate of 58 percent. These students continue to succeed in their pursuit of higher education, with 88 percent of the graduates going on to attend a 2- or 4-year college or university.

While the benefits to D.C. children are clear, the program also plays an important role in empowering parents to make the best choice for their kids and engaging them in their educational and academic progress. A recent survey of parents found that 85 percent of parents are happy with their child's current Opportunity Scholarship Program school.

H.R. 10 has garnered the support from a wide array of stakeholders. Just yesterday, in an op-ed entitled ''A Misguided Attack on D.C.'s Needy Students,'' The Washington Post editorial board defended the SOAR Act and wrote in support of reauthorizing the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, noting that over 6,100 children have benefited from the program, while thousands more are on waiting lists.

The Washington Post also notes that nearly 75 percent of D.C. residents support the program, which has provided more than $600 million in funding for traditional public schools, charter public schools, and the voucher program.

It is important to note, Mr. Chairman, that this bill does not take any funding away from D.C. public schools. In fact, the legislation authorizes equal funding to public schools, charter schools, and scholarships.

With an average family income of less than $22,000 for participating families, this program really is a lifeline for low-income D.C. families, offering students up to $1,572 to pay for tuition, fees, and transportation. Why, Mr. Chairman, would any of us want to prohibit these students and families from opportunity and success?

This is a hand up to the American Dream. Ensuring our children have access to the best possible education

should not be a partisan issue, and receiving a quality education should not be limited to people of means.

I urge my colleagues to continue supporting this program and pass H.R. 10. It is the right thing to do. Let's do it for the kids.

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

I simply want to say, once again, that no child currently enrolled in the program under the compromise that I have offered would be stricken from the program and all current voucher students could stay until graduation. It is new students that we object to, given the evaluation that shows that the program had not met its goal, which was to improve reading and math scores. By contrast, we have had improvement in reading and math scores both in the D.C. public schools and the D.C. charter schools.

Also, Mr. Chairman, there is no waiting list for vouchers in the District of Columbia. However, there are long waiting lists for our charter schools, and now, even for some public schools.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN).

□ 1615

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. I thank the gentlewoman from D.C.

Mr. Chair, it is extremely unfortunate that we are here yet again debating legislation that would interfere with the ability of D.C. residents to make decisions for themselves. So far this Congress, the House has attempted to block laws that would protect District women's reproductive rights and reform Washington's drug laws. And now we are asked to continue a failed private school voucher program, a program that a majority of the D.C. Council opposes and on which they are not even consulted, a program that D.C.'s own longtime Congresswoman opposes.

I am shocked at the arrogance of this body to set aside the will of the citizens of the District of Columbia so fleetingly. It is disgraceful that in this building, a symbol of our democracy, we impose such policies on a city that does not even get a vote on these decisions.

Additionally, I oppose this bill because it weakens D.C.'s public school system. Instead of taking public dollars to outsource our children's education to private schools, we should be focusing on truly reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We need an updated ESEA that strengthens public schools for all our children and prepares students for the globally competitive world we live in.

Education should be the great equalizer, and every student should have access to the best education, regardless of their ZIP Code or their socioeconomic status. There are public schools in this country that are among the very best in the world. I am proud that several of them are in my district.

Mr. Chair, we know that public schools can work when we properly support them; but, unfortunately, for certain communities, far too many schools continue to struggle due to lack of resources on one hand and relentless attempts to undermine them on the other. Private vouchers only further perpetuate these inequities by siphoning additional resources for few students while leaving the rest behind in underfunded public schools.

In our global economy, it is more essential than ever that every child receives a quality education. To do that, our public schools need adequate resources. Diverting public money to private and parochial schools only worsens the problem.

I support access to a world-class public education for all students; but too often, the majority in this body undercut that goal, whether through the so-called Student Success Act that leaves students in a lurch or today's SOAR bill that sorely misses the point.

I urge my colleagues to listen to the people of the District of Columbia and their elected representative, Ms. NORTON. Most importantly, listen to the teachers and the parents who oppose this bill, and reject this legislation.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER), the chairman of the Republican Policy Committee.

Mr. MESSER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise in support today of H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

I want to commend Speaker BOEHNER for introducing this important legislation and thank him for a lifetime of extraordinary leadership on this issue. Throughout his speakership and under his leadership as a former chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Speaker BOEHNER improved educational opportunities for all students. Literally thousands of kids have access to the American Dream because of his dedication to the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. As chairman of the Congressional School Choice Caucus, I was honored to have Speaker BOEHNER keynote a rally earlier this year with hundreds of Opportunity Scholarship recipients.

I have to tell you, I am amazed at some of the rhetoric that I have been hearing today, talking about it is disgraceful that this legislation is before you.

I will tell you what is disgraceful. It is disgraceful that any child in America has to go to a terrible school, and it is disgraceful that anyone would say that we should do anything but make sure that every one of these kids has an opportunity to go somewhere where they will have a chance to succeed.

Every child deserves equal access to a great education. Lots of kids have great public school options in America. Other families can afford to send their kids to private school if they don't have a great public school option. This debate today is about what we do for those who don't.

Unfortunately, too many kids in our country have their destiny determined by their ZIP Code. These children are stuck in poorly performing schools, and their parents feel powerless to do anything about it.

That is why education choice and the Opportunity Scholarship Program matter. Programs like D.C. OSP allow parents to choose the best educational environment for their child. The freedom provided by school choice levels the playing field and helps ensure all children have a chance to succeed.

This legislation will continue to bring greater educational opportunities to the most underprivileged students in the District of Columbia, and it takes zero—let me repeat that—zero dollars away from D.C. Public Schools. Because of this legislation, more than 6,000 students have had the opportunity to attend a great school. Even better, an incredible 90 percent of D.C. OSP students graduate from high school. The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program is clearly a success and needs to continue.

Mr. Chair, I hope for a day when we will be talking about even bolder proposals on this floor, because the truth is we already have school choice in America if you can afford it. The only real question is: What are we going to do for everybody else?

Our Founding Fathers wrote in the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights. In modern America, the pursuit of happiness comes on the back of a quality education.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chair, I want to remind the gentleman that the $100 million doesn't come out of the air, that this majority is cutting $2 billion from K–12. Most of our children are K–12. That money has to come from somewhere. We know it comes from education funds.

I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 10, legislation that would reauthorize the D.C. private school voucher program.

This bill prioritizes an ideological agenda over the rights of D.C. residents to self-govern and, more importantly, over the rights of all students to get a quality education.

In study after study, the voucher program has failed to show any meaningful improvement in student achievement, safety, satisfaction, motivation, or engagement; yet since 2003, it has received nearly $190 million while failing to adhere to basic accountability standards.

Its funding should be dedicated to improving our underfunded and underresourced public school system, a school system that is required by law to serve all students.

Unlike public schools, private schools receiving voucher students have no requirement to serve all students. Specifically, they are able to—and do—reject students based on prior academic achievement, language ability, socioeconomic background, and other discriminatory factors.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. POE of Texas). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. NORTON. I am pleased to yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. TAKANO. Many do not offer the necessary services for students with disabilities.

It is a mistake to continue funding a program that fails to serve all students, damages the public school system, and disregards the District's right to choose its own education policy.

I thank the gentlewoman from D.C. for yielding me the time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time each side has.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Utah has 17 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia has 14 minutes remaining.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Chair, I love America. America should be number one, and America's capital should be number one.

I love to talk to immigrants who do so much of the work in our Capital City. They all know America is great. They gush about how anybody can work in America and realize the American Dream.

But when I ask about their kids and where they go to school, they almost uniformly send their kids to Maryland or Virginia schools. Even immigrants who can barely speak English and come from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Eritrea, or Nigeria know that D.C. schools mean stay away. How embarrassing for our country that new immigrants who barely speak English view our Nation's Capital schools with contempt.

Finally, President Obama, we love you and Michelle for the love you show your daughters. You show your love for your daughters by spending some of your substantial salary to keep your daughters out of the D.C. Public Schools. Please, President Obama, show a little love for the children who don't have such wealthy parents and sign the SOAR Act.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chair, I just want to tell the gentleman that the so-called immigrants that he speaks to who send their children to schools in Maryland and Virginia live in Maryland and Virginia. Eighty percent of the jobs in the District of Columbia go to people who live in the suburbs.

As to the schools in the District of Columbia, as I have indicated, there are waiting lines to get into almost all the charter schools, and the D.C. public schools have improved so much that some of them also have waiting lines.

I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS), our very distinguished ranking member.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia for yielding and for her leadership.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 10. We have been told that the purpose of this bill is to help all D.C. children get a better education. I strongly support that objective, but this bill does not do that.

Let me be crystal clear: public funds should support public education. But this bill proposes to spend more than $100 million over 5 years to fund vouchers to send public school students in the District of Columbia to private schools while House Republicans are proposing to cut $2 billion from public K–12 education nationally.

Coming from the city of Baltimore, I understand firsthand the complexities of turning around struggling inner-city schools. Almost 10 years ago, I became deeply involved in improving one of my own neighborhood schools—and I am still involved in that—the Maritime Industries Academy High School.

It takes vision, commitment, accountability, and, yes, resources to begin the process of turning troubled schools around. However, it is impossible to turn around public schools if we divert public resources to private schools.

Put simply, H.R. 10 attempts to help a few students at the expense of the vast majority of the District's children.

By dividing the funding it would provide among D.C.'s public schools, public charter schools, and private school vouchers, H.R. 10 provides a third of its total funding to a tiny fraction of the District's students. Specifically, the bill would fund vouchers to enable only 1,442 students—a tiny fraction of the District's 47,548 students—to attend private schools.

The lack of equity is stunning. Our focus should be on maximizing the impact of the Federal Government's limited resources to serve all of the District's students.

Since this bill last passed in 2011 over my strong objection and along party lines, studies of the program have demonstrated that the use of a voucher had no effect on academic achievement, as measured by math and reading scores, school safety, student satisfaction with their school, or motivation and engagement.

Previous studies of this program show that 50 percent of the students from the first two cohorts of the D.C. voucher program eventually dropped out of the program. Students in the program are also less likely to attend a school that offers support programs for those that are academically challenged or have learning difficulties.

In addition, this bill is a direct assault on D.C.'s home rule that was rushed through our committee shortly after Speaker BOEHNER announced his retirement, and the bill is not supported by D.C.'s elected representative in Congress or a majority of the D.C. City Council.

So all the rhetoric justifying massive cuts to education funding—all the talk about budget constraints, about tightening our belts, and about making sacrifices—all that goes out the window when Republicans want to give $100 million in taxpayer funds to private schools.

□ 1630

As a graduate of public schools and a longtime advocate of quality public education, I believe our highest priority must be to use limited taxpayer dollars to support programs that will truly meet the educational needs of all of our children. This bill does not do that. I urge our colleagues to reject H.R. 10.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman CHAFFETZ for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act. It is a bill to continue the popular and successful D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.

This program is based on the simple notion that every child deserves an excellent education regardless of the family's background, income, or ZIP Code. The program provides scholarships to students in low-income families so they can escape underperforming schools and receive the quality education they need to excel both in the classroom and later in life. Our investment in this effort is paying off.

Last year, 90 percent of 12th graders who received a D.C. Opportunity scholarship graduated from a high-quality school, and 88 percent went on to pursue a college degree. What is more, when asked if they were satisfied with the child's education, 85 percent of the parents responded ''yes.'' It is no wonder every year the demand for scholarships far exceeds the number of scholarships available. These positive results also explain why this important program has long enjoyed bipartisan support.

Of course, there are some who don't believe these vulnerable families deserve the opportunity to do what is best for their children's education. At a time when this administration has spent billions of dollars pushing its own pet projects and priorities, it has routinely put this modest, successful program on the chopping block. Fortunately, Mr. Chairman, a majority in Congress has continued to stand by these students and families by continuing to support the program, and Speaker JOHN BOEHNER has always stood at the forefront of those efforts.

Few have fought harder or longer for the educational opportunities of D.C. students than Speaker BOEHNER. In fact, throughout his more than 20 years in public office, JOHN BOEHNER has been a tireless champion for families who simply want the opportunity—any opportunity—for their children to receive a quality education. The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program began under his leadership. Thanks to his efforts, this initiative has made a positive difference in the lives of thousands of students across the District. This act reflects his continued commitment to these families. More importantly, it reaffirms a bipartisan commitment to the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program and the D.C. schoolchildren it serves.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to help more low-income students and support this legislation.

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

Mr. Chairman, this morning, a Member said that a letter had come from a member of the city council, Anita Bonds, asking that her name be removed from the letter sent by the council, the majority of the council, saying that they opposed reauthorization of this bill. That member has since called me. She writes:

''Dear Member of Congress,

''Due to some confusion about my position on the District of Columbia voucher bill (H.R. 10), I want to make my position clear. I oppose this bill, and I intend to remain a signatory of the letter previously acknowledged that seven of my colleagues on the D.C. Council and I sent to Chairman Jason Chaffetz dated October 8, 2015, in oppostion to the bill.''

Signed, Councilmember At-large, Anita Bonds.

Mr. Chairman, I submit her letter for the RECORD.

COUNCIL OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, DC, October 21, 2015.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS, Due to some confusion about my position on the District of Columbia school voucher bill (H.R. 10), I want to make my position clear. I oppose this bill, and I intend to remain a signatory of the letter previously acknowledged that seven of my colleagues on the D.C. Council and I sent to Chairman Jason Chaffetz dated October 8, 2015, in opposition to the bill.

Sincerely,

ANITA BONDS.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WALKER.)

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support today of H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act. In the 10 months that I have been here, one of the neat things that I have experienced is when we participated in a site visit with the Oversight and Government Reform Committee under Chairman CHAFFETZ earlier this year and had a firsthand opportunity to interact with the kids and families about the success of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.

I was recently reminded just a couple weeks ago when I was sitting in the hearing seeing the families, seeing the moms who were just beaming with pride about their children having this special opportunity. In the 2013 and 2014 school year, the Opportunity Scholarship Program had a graduation rate of 89 percent, which is astonishing compared to the D.C. Public Schools graduation rate of 58 percent.

As a former minister, I have taken groups in the heart of the inner cities, places like New York and Baltimore. Specifically, in Cleveland, there is a school there called Sunbeam Elementary School. Thieves had stolen the copper off the weathervane, the school was filthy, and there was a metal detector for an elementary school. We brought in a team of 60 or 65 people and refurbished the school and did our best. But do you know what? That was only a temporary fix. The SOAR Act is a fix that lasts for a lifetime. It gives scholarships to children in low-income D.C. families to attend a private school. This piece of legislation also allows parents the opportunity to provide a quality education for their children.

I believe that education will only be successful if two foundational truths are rediscovered: first, that parents know what is best for their child, and they should have the freedom to pursue the path that works for them; secondly, and finally, States must stand up to the Federal Government to reclaim their freedom to educate their children.

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

Mr. Chairman, once again, let's get this straight. The control study did not evaluate college attendance. It was not a part of the study. Now, it did evaluate graduation rates. Mr. Chairman, what it did not evaluate was dropout rates.

Private schools are notorious for sending back to the District of Columbia children who they think are not doing well or they are not acting as they think they should act. Unless we had those figures, we would have no idea what the graduation rates were, because the graduation rates are those who were left in the school and did not get sent back.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 10.

Now, why would I rise in support of this? If you hear the rhetoric from the other side, you are saying this is not a program that works; but if you compare the results, it does work. When you just hear that only 55 percent of people in D.C. Public Schools graduate from high school and yet if they have an opportunity to go to this other school, 89 percent graduate, my goodness, what more do you need to understand?

Look, it is very evident about what is going on here. If you want our children to succeed, if you want our children to excel, and if you want America to be able to compete worldwide, then education is the answer. The true issue here is a moral issue and a civil rights issue.

I really believe that President Obama, in 2008, was on to something. This is what the President said:

> The single most important factor in determining student achievement is not the color of their skin, it is not where they come from, it is not their parents or how much money their parents have. It is who their teacher is.

Mr. Chairman, if there is one thing that has made this country exceptional, it is that we have allowed everyone the opportunity to rise from whatever level they started at to whatever level they can achieve. It is only possible through education. This program works.

Mr. Chairman, $60 million is going to be equally divided between the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, D.C. Public Schools, and the D.C. Public Charter Schools. When we give this money to the parents of these children, when they get a chance to see their children excel, when they get a chance to see their children grow, and when they see a chance for their children to have great success, how can we sit in America's House and debate about is this really what it is all about?

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

Mr. Chairman, Members can keep repeating all they want to figures that have come from the air. The only thing evaluated by the congressionally mandated evaluation was the test scores. Our public school students and our charter school students have to take these tests. These children took these tests.

Our public school students are doing better—not nearly as good as they should—and so are our charter schools. In fact, our charter schools are doing even better than our public school students, and these students didn't move at all. That is what the congressionally mandated study showed.

As to civil rights, these schools are exempted from many of the civil rights laws, and for that reason, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the NAACP, and a number of organizations wrote opposing reauthorization of this bill.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD.)

Mr. SANFORD. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I think that there is one fundamental question in this debate, and that is: Should a child be trapped in a school that traps them? Should a child be trapped in a school

that, for whatever reason, isn't working for them but would forever limit their capacity and their potential in life? To me, that is what H.R. 10 is all about.

I think it is important to remember that 98 percent of the kids that have entered this program have come from schools that were not performing; and in that regard, this is simply a way out, it is a hand up. I think it fundamentally recognizes that dignity and worth that comes with giving somebody a choice.

I think it is something that every human being wants, which is simply a choice. I think it is a recognition of the fact that one size never fits all, that God makes us all different, and therefore a plethora of different choices is vital in the marketplace.

Finally, it is recognition of the fact that the marketplace has the ability to create choices that might take forever in other systems, time that these kids do not have. I would ask that we refocus on the kids.

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

Mr. Chairman, I don't know about other Members' districts, but I challenge Members to meet what the District of Columbia has done to keep students from being trapped in bad schools.

In your districts, can 75 percent of the children choose to go to a better performing district? They can in mine.

In your district, are there 110 publicly accountable charter schools as an alternative to your own traditional public schools? There are in mine.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA).

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for his leadership in bringing this excellent bill to the floor. This bill—of which, in full disclosure, I am an original cosponsor of—will continue to promote school choice and provide Opportunity scholarships to D.C. students that are most in need, while also expanding D.C. Public Charter Schools, therefore providing more opportunities for Washington students to excel and set themselves up for productive and successful lives.

Now, to date, the Opportunity Scholarship Program has been an educational lifeline for more than 6,000 children from very low-income D.C. families, and more than 16,000 have applied to participate since the 2004–05 school year. Quite simply put, this program works.

It is no secret I am a big proponent of school choice. As chairman of the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee, I have heard about the challenges many students in schools are facing, and I firmly believe that when parents have a choice, kids have a chance. This program, which has helped pave the way for others like it across the country, gives that chance, and it creates a healthy competition that causes all schools to improve, therefore helping all students, even those who aren't in the program.

As I have seen in my home State of Indiana and across this great country touring schools and visiting classrooms, Opportunity scholarships provide students a hand up in improving their lives, their family's lives, and their communities. That is why we have a moral obligation to pass this legislation and why I urge my colleagues to join me and join the others here on the floor in reauthorizing the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.

Mr. Chairman, a great education is a great equalizer. It opens doors to unlimited possibilities and provides students the tools that they need to succeed in life.

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

□ 1645

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

Speaker BOEHNER led the Nation over 10 years ago when he provided flexibility to Washington, D.C., children and their parents through School Choice. I believe that School Choice is paramount to increasing educational gains for all children, but especially our Nation's students who are most in need.

The SOAR Act gives scholarships to low-income students to attend a private school, providing them an opportunity to access a quality education that would otherwise be out of reach.

School Choice has proven to be successful in Washington, D.C., as students using their scholarships have a 90 percent graduation rate compared to the 58 percent graduation rate for D.C. public schools in 2013 and 2014.

We heard today that these statistics have been questioned, and we hope that the public schools are improving. But with this act would they actually be improving?

I encourage my colleagues to stand up for School Choice by supporting the SOAR Act.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would draw our Members' attention to the editorial board comments from yesterday. This is from the Washington Post: A misguided attack on D.C.'s needy students.

I want to remind people, as they did in this document here in this editorial, that eight council members seem unaware that the program was established in 2004 at the initiation of the then-D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams, who was also supported by the chairman of the Council's Education Committee, and it has produced results.

The graduation rates are amazingly good, at roughly 90 percent, compared to D.C. public schools that are less than 60 percent. I think that is strong evidence that it is a winner, that it does provide a good opportunity for people, and that it should be reauthorized.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time each side has remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Utah has 6 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia has 6 minutes remaining.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, at this time, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the author of this piece of legislation and the distinguished Speaker of the House.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Chairman, let me thank my colleague for yielding, and thank all my colleagues who are supporting this legislation today.

Many of us remember the story of ''The Little Engine That Could.'' What happened was that the train full of toys wanted to get over the mountain to get to the kids on the other side. The big engine said: No, I cannot. The rusty old engine said: No, I cannot. But the little engine says: I'm not very big, but I think I can. I think I can.

Well, from the beginning, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program has been the little engine that could. We started this back in 2003 with the help of D.C.'s Mayor at the time, Anthony Williams, and D.C. councilman Kevin Chavous.

For years the government was promising the Moon to D.C. families and spending the Moon, essentially, but nothing changed. So we said: If we are going to support public schools and charter schools, let's also give low-income families the chance to apply for scholarships to attend the school of their choice. Let's give them that power.

Because if you have got the resources, you already have school choice. You can send your kids to whatever school you want to send them to. You can move from the neighborhood you are in to where they have got a better school. But if you are poor and you are stuck in a bad neighborhood and your child doesn't have that chance or, frankly, any chance, they are just dead in the water.

Well, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program has been that little lifeline that could. All told, 6,100 students have escaped underperforming schools. In that time, the program has received some 16,000 applications. Last spring 90 percent of 12th graders using the Opportunity scholarships graduated and

88 percent enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college. Of the 1,400 students in the program this year, 87.4 percent would have been in a school that the government has identified as in need of improvement.

These are the kind of results parents dream of for their kids. And while it is my name on the bill, the best champions of this program are some of the most fearless kids you will ever see.

Not only did they have to overcome the doubts of the education establishment, they also had to withstand efforts by some of the most powerful people in this city to kill this program.

So today I am asking each of you to support H.R. 10, which reauthorizes this program for another 5 years. Here is why. Yes, this issue is personal to me and has been for a long time. But, frankly, it ought to be personal to every single Member of this body.

Those of us who work here, who make a good living here, owe something to the kids in this town. We owe these kids a fighting chance at success.

So what I am asking you to do today is help these kids get over the mountain. Help us keep building the movement that could. Vote for H.R. 10.

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

The Speaker has said that, without this program, these children would have been in bad neighborhood schools. Well, I think it must be noted that the District of Columbia has done more to make sure that those children are not trapped in such schools than any district I have yet read about or heard of.

I have noted that 75 percent—that means the overwhelming number—of children stuck in neighborhood schools that they believe are not good schools go to the other side of town, if necessary, to a better school. Far from being trapped, they are encouraged to choose a better school. And I have also cited the 110 charter schools that increase their choices.

And, Mr. Chairman, I want you to know that many of the voucher parents whom I have met with—after all, they are my constituents—have said to me that they tried to get into one of our charter schools, but the waiting lists were too long, which is why they went to the voucher schools.

Now, isn't it interesting that the voucher schools have no waiting list, but the D.C. charter schools and many of our public schools have waiting lists, so much so that D.C. has had to combine the public schools and the charter schools on one list in a lottery so that families can choose which school to go to.

How many Members on that side of the aisle have a lottery that lets the children, the parents, choose the best school for them to go to? Do not dare tell me that the District of Columbia leaves children trapped in failing schools. It has gone out of its way to do just the opposite.

And what does it get for it? The imposition by this body of yet another alternative. It is true that, a former mayor, who himself went to Catholic schools, said he was for vouchers. Well, Mr. Chairman, I ask you, then, since the District of Columbia has control of its own education apparatus, why hasn't the District of Columbia set up its own voucher schools? Some other districts have done that. Because the majority, they don't prefer vouchers, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from the District of Columbia has 2 minutes remaining.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, there are many reasons why I oppose this bill. First, it has failed the goal that the Congress gave it. Bring these children's test scores up. The public schools have brought their test scores up. The public charter schools have done even better in bringing their test scores up. These children's test scores have not risen.

Moreover, I can't fail to note how recently the majority has cut K–12 by $2 billion while taking $100 million out of, obviously, education funds to fund a private school voucher bill.

Mr. Chairman, not everybody on my side of the aisle is for public charter schools, but I have supported public charter schools because my own constituents wanted and needed a way out of neighborhood schools very often.

Yet, even though I come to this floor with home rule choices, this body is insisting on its choices, knowing full well that nobody in the District of Columbia can vote against their choices.

And it says to the District of Columbia residents: No matter what you do, people, no matter how good your choices are, no matter how much you meet the standards we often talk about when it comes to choice, you, who have no vote on this floor, who will not vote on this bill when the bell rings in a few minutes, must do what we say.

That, my good friends, is not a chapter in democracy. It shows once again that Republican do whatever they care to do to the District of Columbia, even when they reject the same choice for their own constituents, and vote down for their constituents what they now impose on mine. Just a few months ago, the House and Senate voted down vouchers, but today—today—they will vote to impose these same vouchers on the District of Columbia.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

I want to correct the record there. I think, obviously, somebody misspoke. The House did not vote on vouchers in this Congress. That is not what has happened.

Mr. Chairman, I insert into the RECORD the letter we got from 500 families, D.C. residents, urging us in the adoption of this.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 20, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES: We are a large and diverse number of parents of children attending various schools within the District of Columbia. We write to urge your support of the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act (SOAR) (H.R. 10).

The SOAR Act is bipartisan legislation which ensures our rights as parents to choose the best public, charter or private school for our children. It not only provides up to $20 million for Opportunity Scholarships for low-income families to attend private schools, but also authorizes an additional $40 million per year for public and charter schools in the District of Columbia. This three-sector initiative provides opportunities for all our children to succeed!

Nearly 6,200 children from very low-income families in the city have attended private schools through the Opportunity Scholarship Program over the past eleven years—88% coming from areas zoned for schools in need of improvement and 97% African-American or Hispanic. These students graduate at rates 30 points higher than the city's public schools and have a near 90 percent college enrollment rate. These are proven results!

The SOAR Act is an example of what works in education. When we can choose the best public, charter, or private school for our children, there are not only more opportunities to engage in their education, but also for them to achieve greater academic excellence. These outcomes strengthen the city's education system as a whole.

We believe that maintaining and fully funding all educational options are critically important for the city's families, especially low-income families served by the Opportunity Scholarship Program. No child should be denied a safe, quality education because of their family income or zip code.

We therefore urge you to support the swift passage of the SOAR Act.

Sincerely,

Ms. Nichelle Cluff, Mrs. Ifeyinwa Ikoli, Ms. Stephanie Montgomery, Ms. Mary Montgomery, Ms. Nina Harris, Ms. Eboni Purvis, Ms. Juliette Randolph, Ms. Ashley Adams, Ms. Naa Borle Sakeyfio, Mrs. Mariama Bah, Ms. Mia Wilson, Mrs. Sherri Calhoun, Ms. Lamonica Jeffrey, Mr. Darrell Cousar, Mr. James Calhoun, Mr. Andrew Cyr, Ms. Kayann McCalla, Mrs. Aldrina Cabrera, Ms. Kiana Wright, Ms. Albertine Cole.

Ms. Dianna Coley, Ms. Tonya Carter, Ms. Giovanna Grayson, Ms. Luciana Udeozor, Ms. Andrea Davis, Mrs. Obiagel nuel-Ejiofor, Mr. Emmanuel Ejiofor, Mr. Rogers Ferguson, Mr. Girma Mihretu, Ms. Molita Gaskins, Ms. Latoya Myers, Ms. Djenane Jeanty, Ms. Keona Lewis, Mrs. Nicole Knott, Mr. Rudy Knott, Mr. Hanna Boku, Mr. Rashawn McCain, Ms. Ann Mmayie, Ms. Rita Pineda, Mr. Okechukwu Mbarah.

Mr. Carlings McPhail, Ms. Ann Meruh, Ms. Shantel Powell-Morgan, Mrs. Marguerita Ramos, Mrs. Muanza Sangamay, Ms. Felicia Thomas, Ms. Sydney Williams, Ms. Caren Kirkland, Mrs. Temitope Tayo, Mr. Anthony Ugorji, Ms. Natasha Tutt, Ms. Dina Bayou, Ms. Natasha Tutt, Mr. Calvin Wright, Mrs. Julia Ugorji, Mrs. Chinwe Mbarah, Mr. Souleymane Bah, Julie McLaughlin, Sheila Martinez, Susan Morais.

Joan Sapienza, Eddie Donahue, Jeseph Yohe, Carter Jefferson, Vincent Browning, Jonathan Bender, Peter Frantz, Ellen Graper, Elizabeth LeBras, Kiandra Willis, Robert McKeon, Marcela Price Souaya, Stephen Lennon, Aleasa Chiles-Feggins, Sally Leakamariam, Juleanna Glover, Christopher Reiter, Cristina Khalaf, Tom Shea, Sean Vincent.

Karen Brennan, Ceci Smith, Adrienne Vincent, Pedro Smith, Donna Gibson, Colleen Cavanagh, Chris Long, Aleasa Chiles-Feggins, Mariela Alardon-Yohe, Jennifer Browning, Philippa Bender, Melanie Jefferson, Veronica Nyhan Jones, Michael

Truscott, Eavan O'Halloran, Sakinah Dupree, Morris Redd, Ron Josey, Susana Ramos-Izquierdo, Aimee Donahue.

Marisse Rovira, Linda Girardi, Sharlene Mentor, Lisa Richa, James McLaughlin, Glenda Morales, Samuel Parker III, Clarence Jones, Leyla Y. Teos, Mavian Nouget, Kip Ross, Beatriz Lopez, Charles Malloy, Steve Trynosky, Carlos Aquino, Yanira Reyes, Nelly Romero, Sandra Huerta, Eboni Curry, Amanda Lawrence.

Laura Hernandez, Mogus Meles, Danielle Aguirre, Julie Corsig, Andy Corsig, Alan Joaquin, Stephen Connors, Colton Campbell, Amy Dean, Flavio Cumpiano, John Menditto, Michelle Theic, Liza Figueroa, Shenelle Henry, Glenda Urquilla, Kelly Brown, Maria Granados, Catie Malloy, Ingrid Mejia, Jill Trynosky.

Marlene Aquino, Roselia Gonzalez, Nubia Easil, Jessica Martinez, Beatriz Jansen, Juan Carlos Acajabon Mendez, Betiel Zekarias, Maria Torres, Carrie Hillegass, Mike Hillegass, Barbara Richitt, Victoria Connors, Kiandra Willis, Marilyn Campbell, Bob Dean, Felice Goodwin, Shanti Stanton, Molly Robert, Jen MacLennan, Michael Grady.

Sharon Blume, Brendan O'Brien, Kenia Reyes, Salvador Hernandez, Rob Grabarz, Bentley Storm, Molly Bruno, Jennifer Leonard, Geoff Morrell, Christy Reap, Genet Demisse, Javier Aguirre, Neil McGrail, Kai Schmitz, Jimmy Kemp, Kathy Hagerup, Stephanie McGovern, Yohannes Z. Hadgu, Thomas Fitton, Melinda Johnson.

Theresa Nahazar, Ann McAllister, Dan Goodwin, Daphne de Souza, Darren MacLennan, Alexandra Walsh, Andrew Blume, Greg Talbot, Darren Jansen, Susan Tanis, Sarah Grabarz, Ashley Storm, Jaclyn Madden, Barton Leonard, Ann Morrell, Pat Reap, Jana Patterson, Barbara Swaboda, Stephanie McGrail, Adriana Schmitz.

Susan Kemp, Brian Crowley, John McGovern, Michael Scanlon, Kelly Fitton, Bassam Khalaf, John Nahazar, John McAllister, Marc Sozio, Tyson Redpath, Laverne Lightbourne, Nick Milano, Trisha Corcoran, Eleanor Hopkins, Liza Lindenberg, Katie Krantz, John Morrissey, Joe Patterson, Chima Oluigbo, Sonia Cruz.

Mercedes Rubio, Eddie Donahue, Gilbert Richa, Nick Saunders, Stephen Sexton, Thomas Faust, Meg Molloy, Michelle Wolf, Bruce Cormier, Ryan Angier, Jen Rowan, Lauren Buckley, Collin Cullen, Mary Santiviago, Kelly Sozio, Renee Redpath, Kevin Madden, Susan Milano, Joe Corcoran, Mary Glaser McCahan.

Kate McAuliffe, Meg Knight, Ann Morrissey, Courtney Knowles, Nnenna Oluigbo, Robert Cruz-Reyes, Lydia Dolan, Lauren Lennon, Tom Knight, Joe Beemsterboer, Sarah Sexton, Larisa Faust, Jim Molloy, Kristin Lindquist, Sarah Cormier, Katreena Vigil Pineda, Mike Rowan, Mark Buckley, Brenda Cullen, Sergio Santiviago, Gary Fabiano.

Rene McGuffin, Jorge Costa, Meghan Deerin, Kelly Stanton, Art Frye, John McGill, Mike Bruno, Matt Ritz, Margaret Bond, Billy MacArtee, Anthony Puglisi, Monica Micklos, Tim Yost, Ray Powers, Chris Dolan, Darrell Clark, Chris Connolly, Joni Veith, Courtney Taylor, Athena Meyers.

Joshua Corless, Allison Sheedy, Robin Barth, Sam Depoy, Jung Kang, Connie Fabiano, David McGuffin, Michelle Costa, JB Deerin, Mike Stanton, Barbara Frye, Stephanie McGill, Anne Zorc, Erin Ritz, Chris Delaney, Elena MacArtee, Laura Puglisi, Jeff Micklos, Liz Yost, Tom Hohman.

Desiree Gabbidon, Yves Clark, Michelle Connolly, Tom Veith, Jay Taylor, Greg Meyers, Shannon Corless, Stefan Hagerup, Woo Lee, Marty Depoy, Stephanie O'Leary, Susan O'Keefe, Luwam Berhane, Patti Exposito, Michael Henry, Dan Hickey, Carmen Burducea, Joseph Finnegan, Michael Hyatte, Peter Komives.

Eric Stogoski, Fred Dombo, Dave Madden, Justin Glasgow, Bernardo Ahlbom, Mark Emery, Doug Skomy, Stephen Grimberg, Brendan Delaney, John DiMartino, Jeffrey MacKinnon, Hirut Teklu, Erika Lopez-Padilla, Michelle Marshall, Abebe Kebede, Shayla Mack, Tesfaye Bune, Michael O'Keefe, Daniel McCahan, Lorenzo Exposito.

Sarah Henry, Stephanie Hickey, Radu Burducea, Elizabeth Finnegan, Theresa Hyatte, Irina Komives, Julia Stogoski, Michelle Dombo, Lisa Madden, Megan Glasgow, Tatiana Ahlborn, Celina Emery, Mary Skorny, Christina Grimberg, Celine Delaney, Ginny Treanor, Gail MacKinnon, Mekuria Gebremichael Bint, Renee Lopez-Padilla, Emebet Worku.

Carlotte Crawford, Solomon Meshesha, Etsegent Demissie, Sri Winarti, Denisha Dempster, Demssie Gebremedhin, Alembanchi Taye, Tezita Woldegebriel, Tesfaye Abebu Bune, Magie Maling, Jessica Cabrera, LaShawn Debnam, Barbara Destry, Jaanai Johnson, Hewan Abera, Siddiq Anderson, Markina Bailey, Odessa Brown, Rosa Caiza Maldonado, Sharon Coffey.

Dianna Coley, Felicia Dyson, Ruth Fekadu, Dana Grinage, Sandra Hall, Lakia Harris, Shirlene Jackson, Francine Johnson, Nicole Johnson, Rajeeyah Burks, Mohamad Nugroho, Woinishet Gelete, Johnny Kassa, Cynthia Downes, Genet Tirksso, Wosen Admasu, Sara Caceres, Johanna Rizo Martinez, Nikita Pray, Estela Arellano.

Sagrario Agaton, Mary Addae, Ruth Barnwell, Meka Burch, Sherri Calhoun, Catrice Coleman, Barbara Cunningham, Lashawn Durant, Moanick Fenner, Michelle Glover, Carmen Hall-Ali, Deborah Jackson, Darlene Johnson, Denise Johnson, Wendy Jones, Michael Jones, Alfreda Judd, Lynetta McClam, Adrienne Miles, Claudia Moreno.

Pauline Murray, Brigitta Nyahn, Naha Poindexter, Erin Skinner, Felicia Thomas, Sharon Waller, Lanita Wood, Ms. Myeshia Johnson, Ms. Venete Eason, Ms. Kanita Washington, Mrs. Barbara Graham, Sophie Alozie, Blanca Magarin, Jeanine Henderson-Lebbie, William Walker, IV, Tigistu Zewdie, Sydonie Fisher, William James, Akwilina Perry, Monalisa Reno.

Zakia Williams, Shonta Jones, Pamela Matthews, Cecilia Mensah, Tonya Moore, Priscilla Moultrie, Carolina Novoa, Deborah M. Parker, Michelle Roberts, Sandra Stackhouse, Leslie Void, Varnell Washington, Ms. Kitty Dawson, Ms. Mia Butler, Ms. Tiana Robinson, Mrs. Jill Gelman, Nejat Teman, Nathaniel Garbla, Tefaye Tamire, Patrice Aubrey.

Fatmatta Kamara, Stephon Knox, Dwishnicka Randolph, Nicole Wood, Erica Iweanoge, Amanda Brown-Parks, James Parker, Teata Sanders, Samora St. Firmin, Dionne Clemons, Vernessa Perry, Donald Matthews, Tashana Ellis, Donita Adams, Caroline Beruchan, Steven Garrison, Ms. Holly Destry, Ms. Victoria Heimbold, Mr. Solomon Weldeghebriel, Ms. Jamil Raspberry.

Anne Hedian, Atchoi Osekre-Bond, Margie Bacon, Jill Wright, Cathy Falk, Chanda Foreman, Colleen Scheidel, Kenny Stack, Juliette Randolph, Barbara Andercheck, Indra Thomas, Dog Harvey, Darah Tracy, Ginger Beverly, Tonya Wright, Brandon Winder, Antilecia O'Neal, Uanna Ferguson, Aster Robi, Bernadette Aniekwe.

Patrice Davis, Ms. Maria del Carmen Reyes, Ms. Ingrid Lucas, Ms. Stephanie Goodloe, Mrs. Helen Andemariam, Michael Thomasian, Neslyn Moore, Judy Steele, Kathleen Downey, Judith Home, Niamh O'Mahoney, Arleen Hall, Bobby Rienzo, Teresa Fitzgerald, LaShawne Thomas, Sarah Kane, Frank Washington, Mary Ann Welter, Shawn Hunter, Leslie Sherrill.

Donise Yeager, Keyana Caroline, Sandra Gray, Latasha Monnique Jones Ward, Anthony Speight, Deborah B. Jones, Kim Atwater, Alvena P. Toland, Loretta Henry, Marilyn Sharpe, Davon Wilson, Sherry Bryant, Elroy Black, Lisa Newman, Shakia Henderson, Octavia Powell, Anita M. Harris, Krestin Clay, Laneka Brakett, Ana Acedo-Garcia.

Garry Jones, John Wallace, Nakeisha Thompson, Donald Lampkins, Renard Hawkins, Tammy Williams, Tynisha Dunn, Jovanna Bailey, Latasha Johon, Bobby Perry, Shalita Knight, Keyana Howard, Kenneth Meredith, Calep Epps, Ty'ron Byers, Chase Blakney, Curtis Watts, Kishara Odom, Jeffrey Corry, Antonia Payne.

Denise L. Lowery, Stephanie Payner, Tanya Lambright, Elaine E. Harris, Elbert Laker, Ryan Storr, Sylvester Bynum, Lavelle Lamb, Dominique Johnson, Paulette Willims, Martasha Fermine, Oyhani Williams, Nasir McKeiver, Kenneth Wood, Neta Vaught, Mary Joyner, Michelle L. McIntyre, Kaitlin Gallagher, Will E. Henderson, Jeanette Hubbard, Ontavia Lynch, Tasha McKenzie, James R. Wills, Jr.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I also introduce into the RECORD The Washington Post editorial from yesterday, ''A Misguided Attack on D.C.'s Needy Students,'' actually supporting this.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 20, 2015]

A MISGUIDED ATTACK ON D.C.'S NEEDY STUDENTS

(By Editorial Board)

Is the federally funded scholarship program for poor D.C. families being forced on an unwilling city? It is safe to say that thousands of D.C. parents whose children are on the waiting list for a scholarship do not think so. Nor, we would venture, do the 6,100 children, predominantly minorities, who have used the scholarships to attend private schools. For that matter, students in the city's public schools who have benefited from the infusion of federal dollars that has accompanied the voucher program probably would not embrace the argument either.

So whom do members of the D.C. Council think they are helping as they urge Congress to kill this program?

Fortunately, it does not appear that the council members will succeed in inflicting this wound on their city. Congress appears poised to reauthorize the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, which provides needy students with up to $12,572 to pay for tuition, fees and transportation to a school of their choice. The average family income for participating families is less than $22,000. A bill extending the program for five years and championed by outgoing House Speaker John A. Boehner (R–Ohio) is set for a floor vote Wednesday, while a bipartisan group of senators has filed a companion bill that would continue the program through 2025.

Seeking to derail those efforts, a misguided majority of the D.C. Council, undoubtedly egged on by Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D–D.C.) and other voucher critics, wrote a letter to Congress objecting to what they portrayed as an intrusion into local affairs. These eight council members seemed unaware that the program was established in 2004 at the initiation of Anthony Williams (D), then D.C.'s mayor, and with the strong support of Kevin Chavous (D), then chair of the council's Education Committee. Likewise, they were unmoved by polling that has shown 74 percent of D.C. residents support

the voucher program, which, despite the specious claims of critics, has improved outcomes for its students without taking a dime from regular public schools.

Indeed, the three-sector federal approach has brought more than $600 million to D.C. schools, with traditional public schools receiving $239 million, charter public schools $195 million and the voucher program $183 million. At stake for fiscal 2016 is an additional $45 million. It is fantasy to think there would be additional monies absent vouchers.

School reform has brought improvement throughout the system. Yet, many parents still lack the choices and the access to high-quality education that city politicians take for granted for their own families. We credit D.C. Council Chairman Phil Mendelson (D) and council members Vincent B. Orange (D–At Large), Mary M. Cheh (D–Ward 3), Brandon T. Todd (D–Ward 4) and Kenyan R. McDuffie (D–Ward 5) for not seeking to deprive those parents of choice, and we hope their eight colleagues will rethink their position and put constituents' welfare over misguided ideology.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, the bottom line is this program produces results. I like the variety of choices. And the Delegate has been a real champion for charter schools, and I applaud her for that, I support her in that. But the reality is the scholarships that we are talking about here, the Opportunity scholarships, have yielded the best results with nearly 90 percent graduation rates and roughly 88 percent of the people then going on to college. Those are amazing statistics.

But I have heard a lot of derogatory comments. I have heard everything from misguided, idiotic, disgraceful, weakens, underfunded. Underfunded? Underfunded? That is offensive to us from Utah. We happen to have the lowest per pupil funding in the entire United States. We are not proud of that fact. But the reality is we get roughly $6,500 per student, where in Washington, D.C. you get about $19,500 per student. It is not even close. And yet here we are championing and trying to help give more money, more resources, to what are underperforming students and giving them more choices.

I guess one of the things you should consider is if the Congress does support this bill, does pass this bill, it is appropriated, would anybody on the Democratic side of the aisle actually recommend that the city not take the money?

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If it is so idiotic, if it is so awful, if it is so derogatory, if it is so negative, then why not cut it off right now? See, they want to continue to allow it to happen for those who have scholarships now because they know it is working, and they could never look those parents in the eye and take it away; but they are going to deny that choice to future generations where we know there has been demonstrable success.

So I am proud of Speaker BOEHNER and what he has done to champion this bill. I think it is a good bill. With that, I urge the adoption of this bill.

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, today, I will vote against H.R. 10, which would continue a flawed program that pursues a partisan ideology at the expense of a child's quality education.

This bill would reauthorize Washington, D.C.'s private school voucher program, the only program in the country using federal money to send children to private and religious schools. The SOAR voucher program was a five year pilot set to expire in 2008. Despite four studies by the Department of Education and two General Accountability Office (GAO) reports concluding that the program wasn't working, Republicans in Congress are doubling down by allowing taxpayer dollars to prop up unaccredited, and even unsafe, schools. The last thing we need, as our students fall further behind their international peers, are voucher schools operating in relative isolation, free of oversight for curriculum, quality or management.

SOAR is the only program of its kind for a reason—there's no way our states would tolerate such nonsense. Sadly, because D.C. has not been freed from the partisan grips of Congress, it has become commonplace to see House Republicans impose their politics on D.C., despite widespread citizen and local government objection, from women's health care to marijuana reform to street design. There's justification for a program that funnels millions of dollars into a program shown to be ineffective and strongly opposed by the people that should matter—the parents, the educators, and taxpayers who support the system.

Worse, the SOAR Act strips students of constitutional protections of civil rights: federal funds can flow to schools that do not meet the federal standards to prevent discrimination against disabled persons, persons of color, persons of a religious group, women, or any other protected class. The SOAR Act is a sad step backward for education policy, civil rights, and good governance, and I strongly oppose it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I rise to speak in opposition to H.R. 10, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act.

H.R. 10 would reauthorize the District of Columbia private school voucher program, the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP), for five years through 2021.

H.R. 10 would reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, which provides Federal support for improving traditional public schools in the District of Columbia (D.C.), expanding and improving high-quality D.C. public charter schools, and offering private school vouchers to a limited number of students.

The Obama Administration continues to strongly oppose the private school vouchers program within this legislation, known as the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.

Members of the House should respect the self determination of the residents of DC by not forcing education policy onto children or their families at taxpayer expense.

Rigorous evaluation over several years demonstrates that D.C. vouchers have not yielded statistically significant improvements in student achievement by scholarship recipients compared to other students not receiving vouchers.

In addition, H.R. 10 would extend this voucher program to a new population of students previously attending private schools.

Instead of using Federal resources to support a handful of students in private schools, the Federal Government should focus its attention and available resources on improving the quality of public schools for all students.

Mr. Chair, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this bill.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

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

The amendments recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform printed in the bill are adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 10

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; REFERENCES IN ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act'' or the ''SOAR Reauthorization Act''.

(b) REFERENCES IN ACT.—Whenever in this Act an amendment is expressed in terms of an amendment to or repeal of a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to that section or other provision of the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (division C of Public Law 112–10; sec. 38–1853.01 et seq., D.C. Official Code).

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Parents are best equipped to make decisions for their children, including the educational setting that will best serve the interests and educational needs of their children.

(2) In 1995, Congress passed the DC School Reform Act, which granted the District of Columbia the authority to create public charter schools and gave parents greater educational options for their children.

(3) In 2003, in partnership with the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the chairman of the DC Council Education Committee, and community activists, Congress passed the DC School Choice Incentive Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–199; 118 Stat. 126), to provide opportunity scholarships to parents of students in the District of Columbia to enable them to pursue a high-quality education at a private elementary or secondary school of their choice.

(4) The DC Opportunity Scholarship Program (DC OSP) was part of a comprehensive three-part funding arrangement that provided additional funds for both the District of Columbia public schools and public charter schools of the District of Columbia. The intent behind the additional resources was to ensure both District of Columbia public and charter schools continued to improve.

(5) In 2011, Congress enacted the three-part funding arrangement when it reauthorized the DC OSP and passed the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act (division C of Public Law 112–10) with bipartisan support.

(6) While the National Center for Education Statistics indicates that per pupil expenditure for public schools in the District of Columbia is the highest in the United States, performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) continues to be near the bottom of the country when examining scores in mathematics and reading

for fourth and eighth grades. When Congress passed the DC School Choice Incentive Act of 2003, students in the District of Columbia ranked 52 out of 52 States (including the Department of Defense schools). Since that time, the District of Columbia has made significant gains in mathematics and reading. However, students in the District of Columbia still rank in the bottom three States out of 52 States. According to the 2013 fourth grade math NAEP results, 34 percent of students are below basic, 38 percent are at basic, and 28 percent are at proficient or advanced. The 2013 fourth grade reading results found that 50 percent of fourth grade students in the District of Columbia are at or below basic, 27 percent are at basic, and 23 percent are proficient or advanced.

(7) Since the inception of the DC OSP, there has been strong demand for the program by parents and the citizens of the District of Columbia. In fact, 74 percent of District of Columbia residents support continuing the program (based on the Lester & Associates February 2011 Poll).

(8) Since the program's inception, parental satisfaction has remained high. The program has also been found to result in significantly higher graduation rates for those students who have received and used their opportunity scholarships.

(9) The DC OSP offers low-income families in the District of Columbia important educational alternatives while public schools are improved. The program should continue to be reauthorized as part of a three-part comprehensive funding strategy for the District of Columbia school system providing equal funding for public schools, public charter schools, and opportunity scholarships for students to attend private schools.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to amend the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act to provide low-income parents residing in the District of Columbia with expanded educational opportunities for enrolling their children in other schools in the District of Columbia, and provide resources to support educational reforms for District of Columbia Public Schools and District of Columbia public charter schools.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITING IMPOSITION OF LIMITS ON TYPES OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.

Section 3004(a) (sec. 38–1853.04(a), D.C. Official Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) PROHIBITING IMPOSITION OF LIMITS ON ELIGIBLE STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program under this division, the Secretary may not limit the number of eligible students receiving scholarships under section 3007(a), and may not prevent otherwise eligible students from participating in the program under this Act, on any of the following grounds:

''(i) The type of school the student previously attended.

''(ii) Whether or not the student previously received a scholarship or participated in the program.

''(iii) Whether or not the student was a member of the control group used by the Institute of Education Sciences to carry out previous evaluations of the program under section 3009.

''(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) may be construed to waive the requirement under section 3005(b)(1)(B) that the entity carrying out the program under this Act must carry out a random selection process which gives weight to the priorities described in section 3006 if more eligible students seek admission in the program than the program can accommodate.''.

SEC. 4. REQUIRING ELIGIBLE ENTITIES TO UTILIZE INTERNAL FISCAL AND QUALITY CONTROLS.

Section 3005(b)(1) (sec. 38–1853.05(b)(1), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (K); and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(M) how the entity will ensure that it utilizes internal fiscal and quality controls; and''.

SEC. 5. CLARIFICATION OF PRIORITIES FOR AWARDING SCHOLARSHIPS TO DETERMINING ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.

Section 3006(1) (sec. 38–1853.06(1), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6316)'' and inserting ''identified as a low-achieving school according to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education of the District of Columbia''; and

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting the following: '', or whether such students have, in the past, attended a private school;''.

SEC. 6. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.

(a) CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS; COMPLIANCE WITH REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Section 3007(a)(4) (sec. 38–1853.07(a)(4), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(1) by striking ''and'' at the end of subparagraph (E);

(2) by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (F) and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

''(G) conducts criminal background checks on school employees who have direct and unsupervised interaction with students; and

''(H) complies with all requests for data and information regarding the reporting requirements described in section 3010.''.

(b) ACCREDITATION.—Section 3007(a) (sec. 38–1853.07(a), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''paragraphs (2) and (3)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (2), (3), and (5)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds provided under this division for opportunity scholarships may be used by an eligible student to enroll in a participating private school unless one of the following applies:

''(i) In the case of a school that, as of the date of enactment of the SOAR Reauthorization Act, is a participating school, the school is provisionally or fully accredited by an accrediting body described in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section 2202(16) of the District of Columbia School Reform Act of 1995 (sec. 38–1802.02(16)(A–G), D.C. Official Code), or by any other accrediting body determined appropriate by the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent for Schools for the purposes of accrediting an elementary or secondary school.

''(ii) In the case of a school that, as of the day before the date of enactment of the SOAR Reauthorization Act, is a participating school but does not meet the requirements of clause (i)—

''(I) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of such Act, the school is pursuing full accreditation by an accrediting body described in clause (i); and

''(II) not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of such Act, the school meets the requirements of clause (i), except that an eligible entity may extend this deadline for a single 1-year period if the school provides the eligible entity with evidence from such an accrediting body that the school's application for accreditation is in process and that the school will be awarded accreditation before the end of such period.

''*(iii) In the case of a school that, as of the date of enactment of the SOAR Reauthorization Act, is not a participating school, the school meets the requirements of clause (i) or, if it does not meet the requirements of clause (i)—*

''*(I) at the time the school notifies an eligible entity that it seeks to be a participating school, the school is actively pursuing full accreditation by an accrediting body described in clause (i);*

''*(II) not later than 5 years after the school notifies an eligible entity that it seeks to be a participating school, the school meets the requirements of clause (i), except that an eligible entity may extend this deadline for a single 1-year period if the school provides the eligible entity with evidence from such an accrediting body that the school's application for accreditation is in process and that the school will be awarded accreditation before the end of such period; and*

''*(III) the school meets all of the other requirements for participating schools under this Act.*

''(B) REPORTS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of the SOAR Reauthorization Act, each participating school shall submit to the eligible entity a certification that the school has been fully or provisionally accredited in accordance with subparagraph (A), or has been granted an extension by the eligible entity in accordance with subparagraph (A)(ii)(II).

''(C) ASSISTING STUDENTS IN ENROLLING IN OTHER SCHOOLS.—If a participating school fails to meet the requirements of subparagraph (A), the eligible entity shall assist the parents of the eligible students who attend the school in identifying, applying to, and enrolling in another participating school under this Act.''.

(c) USE OF FUNDS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES AND PARENTAL ASSISTANCE.—Section 3007 (sec. 38–1853.07, D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (b) and (c) and inserting the following:

''(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES AND PARENTAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall make $2,000,000 of the amount provided under the grant each year available to an eligible entity receiving a grant under section 3004(a) to cover the following expenses:

''(1) The administrative expenses of carrying out its program under this Act during the year, including—

''(A) determining the eligibility of students to participate;

''(B) selecting the eligible students to receive scholarships;

''(C) determining the amount of the scholarships and issuing the scholarships to eligible students;

''(D) compiling and maintaining financial and programmatic records; and

''(E) conducting site visits as described in section 3005(b)(1)(l).

''(2) The expenses of educating parents about the entity's program under this Act, and assisting parents through the application process under this Act, including—

''(A) providing information about the program and the participating schools to parents of eligible students;

''(B) providing funds to assist parents of students in meeting expenses that might otherwise preclude the participation of eligible students in the program; and

''(C) streamlining the application process for parents.''; and

(2) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (c).

(d) CLARIFICATION OF USE OF FUNDS FOR STUDENT ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE.—Section

3007(c) (sec. 38–1853.07(c), D.C. Official Code), as redesignated by subsection (c)(2), is amended by striking ''identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under section 1116 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6316)'' and inserting ''identified as a low-achieving school according to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education of the District of Columbia''.

(e) PERMITTING USE OF FUNDS REMAINING UNOBLIGATED FROM PREVIOUS FISCAL YEARS.—Section 3007 (sec. 38–1853.07, D.C. Official Code), as amended by this section, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''*(d) PERMITTING USE OF FUNDS REMAINING UNOBLIGATED FROM PREVIOUS FISCAL YEARS.—To the extent that any funds appropriated for the opportunity scholarship program under this Act for any fiscal year (including a fiscal year occurring prior to the enactment of this subsection) remain unobligated at the end of the fiscal year, the Secretary shall make such funds available during the next fiscal year and (if still unobligated as of the end of that fiscal year) any subsequent fiscal year for scholarships for eligible students, except that an eligible entity may use not more than 5 percent of the funds for administrative expenses, parental assistance, and tutoring, in addition to the amounts appropriated for such purposes under section 3007(b) and (c).*''.

SEC. 7. PROGRAM EVALUATION.

(a) REVISION OF EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3009(a) (sec. 38–1853.09(a), D.C. Official Code) is amended to read as follows:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY AND THE MAYOR.—The Secretary and the Mayor of the District of Columbia shall—

''(A) jointly enter into an agreement with the Institute of Education Sciences of the Department of Education to evaluate annually the opportunity scholarship program under this Act;

''(B) jointly enter into an agreement to monitor and evaluate the use of funds authorized and appropriated for the District of Columbia Public Schools and the District of Columbia public charter schools under this Act; and

''(C) make the evaluations described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) public in accordance with subsection (c).

''(2) DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.—The Secretary, through a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, shall—

''(A) ensure that the evaluation under paragraph (1)(A)—

''(i) is conducted using an acceptable quasi-experimental research design for determining the effectiveness of the opportunity scholarship program under this Act which does not use a control study group consisting of students who applied for but who did not receive opportunity scholarships; and

''(ii) addresses the issues described in paragraph (4); and

''(B) disseminate information on the impact of the program—

''(i) in increasing academic achievement and educational attainment of participating eligible students; and

''(ii) on students and schools in the District of Columbia.

''(3) DUTIES OF THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES.—The Institute of Education Sciences of the Department of Education shall—

''(A) assess participating eligible students in each of the grades 3 through 8, as well as one of the grades in the high school level, by supervising the administration of the same reading and math assessment used by the District of Columbia Public Schools to comply with section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b));

''(B) measure the academic achievement of all participating students in the grades described in subparagraph (A); and

''(C) work with the eligible entities to ensure that the parents of each student who receives a scholarship under this Act agree to permit the student to participate in the evaluations and assessments carried out by the Institute under this subsection.

''(4) ISSUES TO BE EVALUATED.—The issues to be evaluated under paragraph (1)(A) shall include the following:

''(A) A comparison of the academic achievement of participating eligible students in the measurements described in paragraph (3) to the academic achievement of a comparison group of students with similar backgrounds in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

''(B) The success of the program under this Act in expanding choice options for parents of participating eligible students and increasing *the satisfaction of such parents and students with their choice*.

''(C) The reasons parents of participating eligible students choose for their children to participate in the program, including important characteristics for selecting schools.

''(D) A comparison of the retention rates, high school graduation rates, *college enrollment* rates, college persistence rates, and college graduation rates of participating eligible students with the rates of students in the comparison group described in subparagraph (A).

''(E) A comparison of the *college enrollment* rates, college persistence rates, and college graduation rates of students who participated in the program in 2004, 2005, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 as the result of winning the Opportunity Scholarship Program lottery with the rates of students who entered but did not win such lottery in those years and who, as a result, served as the control group for previous evaluations of the program under this Act.

''(F) A comparison of the safety of the schools attended by participating eligible students and the schools in the District of Columbia attended by students in the comparison group described in subparagraph (A), based on the perceptions of the students and parents.

''(G) Such other issues with respect to participating eligible students as the Secretary considers appropriate for inclusion in the evaluation, such as the impact of the program on public elementary schools and secondary schools in the District of Columbia.

''(5) PROHIBITING DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Any disclosure of personally identifiable information shall be in compliance with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly known as the 'Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974') (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

''(B) STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—With respect to any student who is not attending a public elementary school or secondary school, personally identifiable information may not be disclosed outside of the group of individuals carrying out the evaluation for *such student or the group of individuals providing information for carrying out the evaluation of such student*, other than to the parents of such student.''.

(2) TRANSITION FROM CURRENT EVALUATION.—The Secretary of Education shall terminate the current evaluations conducted under section 3009(a) of the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (sec. 38–1853.09, D.C. Official Code), as in effect prior to the date of enactment of this Act, after obtaining data for the 2015–2016 school year, and shall submit the reports required with respect to the evaluations in accordance with section 3009(b) of such Act. Effective with respect to the 2016–2017 school year, the Secretary shall conduct new evaluations in accordance with the provisions of section 3009(a) of such Act as amended by this Act, *and as a component of the new evaluations, the Secretary shall continue to monitor and evaluate the students who were evaluated in the most recent evaluation under such section prior to the enactment of this Act, along with their corresponding test scores and other information*.

(b) DUTY OF MAYOR TO ENSURE INSTITUTE HAS ALL INFORMATION NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT EVALUATIONS.—Section 3011(a)(1) (sec. 38–1853.11(a)(1), D.C. Official Code) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) INFORMATION NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT EVALUATIONS.—Ensure that all District of Columbia public schools and District of Columbia public charter schools make available to the Institute of Education Sciences of the Department of Education all of the information the Institute requires to carry out the assessments and perform the evaluations required under section 3009(a).''.

SEC. 8. FUNDING FOR DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS.

(a) MANDATORY WITHHOLDING OF FUNDS FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH CONDITIONS.—Section 3011(b) (sec. 38–1853.11(b), D.C. Official Code) is amended to read as follows:

''(b) ENFORCEMENT.—If, after reasonable notice and an opportunity for a hearing, the Secretary determines that the Mayor has failed to comply with any of the requirements of subsection (a), the Secretary may withhold from the Mayor, in whole or in part—

''(1) the funds otherwise authorized to be appropriated under section 3014(a)(2), if the failure to comply relates to the District of Columbia public schools;

''(2) the funds otherwise authorized to be appropriated under section 3014(a)(3), if the failure to comply relates to the District of Columbia public charter schools; or

''(3) the funds otherwise authorized to be appropriated under both section 3014(a)(2) and section 3014(a)(3), if the failure relates to both the District of Columbia public schools and the District of Columbia public charter schools.''.

(b) RULES FOR USE OF FUNDS PROVIDED FOR SUPPORT OF PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS.—Section 3011 (sec. 38–1853.11, D.C. Official Code) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

''(c) SPECIFIC RULES REGARDING FUNDS PROVIDED FOR SUPPORT OF PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS.—The following rules shall apply with respect to the funds provided under this Act for the support of District of Columbia public charter schools:

''(1) The Secretary may direct the funds provided for any fiscal year, or any portion thereof, to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education of the District of Columbia (OSSE).

''(2) The OSSE may transfer the funds to subgrantees who are specific District of Columbia public charter schools or networks of such schools or who are District of Columbia-based non-profit organizations with experience in successfully providing support or assistance to District of Columbia public charter schools or networks of schools.

''(3) The funds shall be available to any District of Columbia public charter school in good standing with the District of Columbia Charter School Board (Board), and the OSSE and Board may not restrict the availability

of the funds to certain types of schools on the basis of the school's location, governing body, or any other characteristic.''.

SEC. 9. REVISION OF CURRENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

The Secretary of Education and the Mayor of the District of Columbia shall revise the memorandum of understanding which is in effect under section 3012(d) of the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (sec. 38–1853.12(d), D.C. Official Code) as of the day before the date of the enactment of this Act to address the following:

(1) The amendments made by this Act.

(2) The need to ensure that participating schools under such Act meet fire code standards and maintain certificates of occupancy.

(3) The need to ensure that District of Columbia public schools and District of Columbia public charter schools meet the requirements under such Act to comply with all reasonable requests for information necessary to carry out the evaluations required under section 3009(a) of such Act.

SEC. 10. EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 3014(a) (sec. 38–1853.14(a), D.C. Official Code) is amended by striking ''each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years'' and inserting ''each of the 9 succeeding fiscal years''.

SEC. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this Act shall apply with respect to school year 2016–2017 and each succeeding school year.

The Acting CHAIR. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in House Report 114–300. Each further 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. CHAFFETZ

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 114–300.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 9, beginning line 5, strike ''identified as a low-achieving school according to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education of the District of Columbia'' and insert ''identified as one of the lowest-performing schools under the District of Columbia's accountability system''.

Page 10, beginning line 25, strike '', or by any other accrediting body determined appropriate by the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent for Schools for the purpose of accrediting an elementary or secondary school''.

Page 16, beginning line 7, strike ''identified as a low-achieving school according to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education of the District of Columbia'' and insert ''identified as one of the lowest-performing schools under the District of Columbia's accountability system''.

Page 18, line 10, strike ''evaluate'' and insert ''report on''.

Page 21, line 12, strike ''A comparison of'' and insert ''A report on''.

Page 21, line 18, strike ''with the rates'' and insert ''as well as the rates''.

Page 21, line 22, after the period add the following: ''Nothing in this subparagraph may be construed to waive section 3004(a)(3)(A)(iii) with respect to any such student.''.

Page 25, beginning line 20, strike ''may direct the funds provided for any fiscal year, or any portion thereof,'' and insert ''shall direct the funds provided for any fiscal year''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 480, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, the manager's amendment that I am offering makes small technical changes to the bill.

First, the amendment substitutes the term ''low achieving schools'' for ''lowest performing schools,'' which corresponds to the language used by the District of Columbia on this topic.

Second, the amendment makes clear that the Secretary of Education and the Mayor of the District of Columbia will monitor and report on the use of funds authorized by this bill.

Third, the amendment clarifies reporting requirements in the bill to protect students against arbitrary exclusion from the program.

Finally, the amendment requires the Secretary of Education to direct funding for public charter schools to the District's Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

Mr. Chairman, this is a good amendment that reflects the ongoing conversations with the District of Columbia regarding this bill. I urge its adoption.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentleman's amendment, although I am not opposed to it.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). Without objection, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I actually agree with the chairman, and the chairman has consulted with us on these changes, which are technical in nature.

I do not oppose this amendment. Indeed, I want to thank our chairman for working with us before this committee markup on this bill on some additional technical changes.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate working with the Delegate. It is a good working relationship. We have our opposition from time to time, but she did work with us in this way, and I appreciate her support of this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. NORTON

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 114–300.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end of section 6 the following new subsection:

(f) LIMIT ON PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION OF SCHOOL WHO RECEIVE OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS.—Section 3007(a) (sec. 38-1853.07(a), D.C. Official Code), as amended by subsection (b), is further amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''paragraphs (2), (3), and (5)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (2), (3), (5), and (6)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(6) LIMIT ON PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION RECEIVING OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—None of the funds provided under this Act for opportunity scholarships may be used by an eligible student to enroll in a participating school for a school year unless the school certifies to the eligible entity that, for the school year, the number of students enrolled in the school who receive opportunity scholarships under this Act does not exceed the number of students enrolled in the school who do not receive opportunity scholarships under this Act.

''(B) EXCEPTIONS.—In determining the number of students enrolled in a school who receive opportunity scholarships under this Act for a school year under subparagraph (A), there shall be excluded any student who was receiving an opportunity scholarship as of the date of the enactment of the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act and any student who is the sibling of a student who was receiving an opportunity scholarship as of the date of the enactment of such Act.''.

Page 18, strike line 23 and all that follows through page 19, line 5 and insert the following:

''(i) is conducted using the strongest possible research design for determining the effectiveness of the opportunity scholarship program under this Act; and''.

Page 20, strike lines 4 through 9 and insert the following:

''(C) work with the eligible entities to ensure that the parents of each student who applies for a scholarship under this Act (regardless of whether the student receives the scholarship) and the parents of each student participating in the scholarship program under this Act, agree that the student will participate, if requested by the Institute, in the measurements given annually by the Institute for the period for which the student applied for or received the scholarship, respectively, except that nothing in this subparagraph shall affect a student's priority for an opportunity scholarship as provided under section 3006.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 480, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

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

The Speaker's voucher bill is sure to pass, and I am sure it is offered with the best of intentions. Therefore, I want to work with him and with Members and with those in the Senate who support vouchers to provide much-needed oversight for the millions in

Federal dollars in this bill. It is in that spirit that I offer a two-part amendment, and both parts are entirely consistent with the underlying bill.

The Government Accountability Office, the GAO, said in 2007 and again in 2013 that the voucher program lacks quality control, transparency, and information.

In response, the first part of my amendment restores the scientific integrity of the program's evaluation, copied from prior authorizations of this bill, and the second prohibits voucher mills, not our accredited Catholic schools, which are attended by most of our children, but their competition for vouchers—a small, but significant, number of private schools that would not exist but for this Federal funding.

First, my amendment restores the evaluation of the program's effectiveness that Congress has required since the program was created in 2004—and I am quoting from Congress—''to be conducted using the strongest possible research design.''

In contrast, this bill requires the evaluation to be conducted using ''an acceptable quasi-experimental research design that actually prohibits the more scientific randomized controlled trial Congress mandated in prior authorizations.''

Yet the congressionally mandated evaluation said that randomized controlled trials ''are especially important in the context of School Choice because families wanting to apply for a Choice program may have educational goals and aspirations that differ from the average family's.''

I appreciate that this bill requires for the first time that schools be accredited, but it gives unaccredited schools 5 years, along with the grace period of a year, to become accredited.

This time frame is so long that it would allow existing and new unaccredited schools to accept voucher students well into the decade. The 50 percent cap that my amendment proposes at least would ensure that voucher schools would ultimately be eliminated.

For example, the GAO found that six participating voucher schools had more than 80 percent of their enrollment from voucher students. A Washington Post investigation found one school where voucher students comprised 93 percent of the total.

The majority concedes that there is a need for the ongoing evaluation of the program's effectiveness by requiring a study of this bill, but after the mandated study showed that vouchers did not improve student achievement, the majority took care of that by watering down the mandated evaluation.

The second part of my amendment prohibits fly-by-night, often storefront school voucher bills by eliminating the percentage of voucher students in the school to 50 percent of the school's total enrollment. No current voucher student or sibling would be affected by the cap.

My amendment would disqualify so-called voucher mills, a small, but significant, number of schools that cannot survive without government funding, most of which sprang up in low-income neighborhoods after the program was created to get unrestricted Federal funds.

Why should the major recipients of voucher funds—our fully accredited Catholic schools or other parochial and private schools—have to share the available funding with voucher mills of low quality? The way to eliminate these unaccredited schools, which are unworthy of our students, is to require that their enrollment not consist primarily of voucher students.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that the Post's investigation, entitled, ''Quality controls lacking for D.C. schools accepting Federal vouchers,'' be included in the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, Nov. 17, 2012]

QUALITY CONTROLS LACKING FOR D.C. SCHOOLS ACCEPTING FEDERAL VOUCHERS

(By Lyndsey Layton and Emma Brown)

Congress created the nation's only federally funded school voucher program in the District to give the city's poorest children a chance at a better education than their neighborhood schools offer.

But a Washington Post review found that hundreds of students use their voucher dollars to attend schools that are unaccredited or are in unconventional settings, such as a family-run K–12 school operating out of a storefront, a Nation of Islam school based in a converted Deanwood residence, and a school built around the philosophy of a Bulgarian psychotherapist.

At a time when public schools face increasing demands for accountability and transparency, the 52 D.C. private schools that receive millions of federal voucher dollars are subject to few quality controls and offer widely disparate experiences, the Post found.

Some of these schools are heavily dependent on tax dollars, with more than 90 percent of their students paying with federal vouchers.

Yet the government has no say over curriculum, quality or management. And parents trying to select a school have little independent information, relying mostly on marketing from the schools.

The director of the nonprofit organization that manages the D.C. vouchers on behalf of the federal government calls quality control ''a blind spot.''

''We've raised the question of quality oversight of the program as sort of a dead zone, a blind spot,'' said Ed Davies, interim executive director of the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corp. ''Currently, we don't have that authority. It doesn't exist.''

Republicans in Congress established the D.C. voucher program eight years ago to demonstrate the school-choice concepts that the party has been espousing since the 1950s. Vouchers were once thought to be moribund, but came roaring to life in 2010 in states where Republicans took control. Fourteen states have created voucher programs or expanded existing ones in recent years.

Some states, such as Wisconsin, now include middle-class families in their voucher programs. Other states, including Virginia, have begun indirectly steering public dollars to private schools by offering tax credits to those who donate to scholarship funds.

In some cases, the public has pushed back against the idea of routing state dollars from public to private schools. Legal challenges are pending in Colorado and Indiana. In the November elections, Florida voters rejected a ballot amendment that would have permitted tax dollars to flow to religious institutions, including parochial schools. That would have enabled the state to revive a voucher program that had been declared unconstitutional in 2006 by its highest court. Yet Florida continues to offer vouchers for disabled students who want to attend private schools and awards tax credits to corporations that donate to private-school scholarship programs.

In the District, it's clear that vouchers have provided many children with an education at well-established private schools that otherwise would have been out of reach, and their parents rave about the opportunity. Of the 1,584 District students now receiving vouchers, more than half attend Catholic schools and a handful are enrolled at prestigious independent schools such as Sidwell Friends, where President Obama sends his daughters.

But the most comprehensive study of the D.C. program found ''no conclusive evidence'' that the vouchers improved math and reading test scores for those students who left their public schools.

The study, released by the U.S. Department of Education in 2010, found that voucher students were more likely to graduate than peers without vouchers, based on data collected from families. And parents reported that their children were safer attending the private schools, though the students themselves perceived no difference.

Congress set aside $20 million for the D.C. voucher program this year. Since 2004, the federal government has appropriated $133 million for the program.

Private schools that participate in the D.C. program don't have to disclose the number of voucher students they enroll or how much public money they receive, and many declined to release such information to The Post.

While public schools must report test scores and take action when they don't meet goals, private schools participating in the D.C. voucher program are insulated from such interference.

The schools must administer a single standardized test, but can choose the type. Those scores are not made public, and schools can stay in the voucher program no matter how their students fare.

Schools that accept vouchers are required to hold a certificate of occupancy and employ teachers who are college graduates, but they do not have to be accredited. The Post found that at least eight of the 52 schools are not accredited.

Parents, not the government, should determine a school's quality, according to Kevin Smith, a spokesman for House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio), a proud product of Catholic schools who designed the voucher program. ''Our belief is that parents—when provided appropriate information—will select the best learning environment for their children,'' he wrote in an e-mail.

At Archbishop Carroll High School, where 40 percent of students receive vouchers, principal Mary Elizabeth Blaufuss agrees. ''The question is, to what extent do we trust parents to make educational decisions for their kids?'' she said.

Santa Carballo knew little about the Academia de la Recta Porta before enrolling her daughter, Emma, through the voucher program. She chose it because it was across the street from the Catholic school for boys that her son attends, also with a voucher, and it seemed better than a neighborhood public school that has failed for years to meet achievement targets.

''This is private, it's good,'' said Carballo, an immigrant from El Salvador who works

as a waitress and struggles with English. ''It's more intelligent. And it's religious, it's good. I'm so happy.''

A nondenominational Christian school, the Academia charges $7,100 a year and occupies a soot-stained storefront between a halal meat shop and an evening wear boutique on a busy stretch of Georgia Avenue NW near the Maryland line.

The K–12 school consists of two classrooms. A drum set and keyboard are stowed in a corner for music class; for gym, students travel nearly two miles down Georgia Avenue to the city's Emery Recreation Center.

Annette and Reginald Miles founded the unaccredited school 13 years ago. He is the pastor of the associated church, she is the school director, their daughter is a teacher and their grandson is a student.

Annette Miles declined to say how many of her 70 students receive vouchers. If the program were to end, the Academia would ''have to stretch with fundraising'' to continue operating, she said.

To be eligible for a voucher, families must qualify for food stamps or meet other income requirements.

Through the D.C. program, the federal government pays about $8,000 a year for each elementary school student and $12,000 for high schoolers. That's less than the $18,000 a year it costs to educate one child in the D.C. Public Schools. Many of the participating private schools do not offer costly services for children with disabilities, who make up about 18 percent of the DCPS school population.

The voucher payments are enough to cover tuition at most Catholic schools, which enroll about 52 percent of D.C. voucher students. But they pay only a fraction of costs at elite institutions such as the Sheridan School in Northwest D.C., where charges can reach about $30,000 a year.

Tiblez Berhane has a daughter in eighth grade who is attending Sheridan with a voucher and financial aid from the school. ''It's wonderful,'' said Berhane, an immigrant from Eritrea who works in a day-care center. ''We could never afford this.''

While Sheridan, Sidwell Friends and the Washington International School each have one voucher student, the Academy for Ideal Education depends almost entirely on the federal program.

Founder Paulette Jones-Imaan created the school more than two decades ago, aiming to provide a nurturing environment with small classes and a learning model known as ''Suggestopedia,'' a philosophy of learning developed by Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov that stresses learning through music, stretching and meditation. Jones-Imaan melds that philosophy with an African-flavored approach that includes students addressing teachers as ''Mama'' and ''Baba,'' honorifics meaning mother and father.

Jones-Imaan also founded a K–12 public charter school, Ideal Academy, based on the same educational philosophy, in 1999. She served on the board for more than a decade.

But the charter school ran into trouble. Last year, the D.C. Public Charter School Board threatened to close it because of chronic poor performance. Ideal Academy agreed to shutter its high school, which had a particularly poor record, in order to keep its lower grades open. The preschool–8th grade Ideal Academy was classified as ''inadequate'' this year by the city's charter officials, which means it could be closed if it doesn't improve.

Meanwhile, the private Academy for Ideal Education continues on. More than 90 percent of its approximately 60 students are paying the $11,400 tuition with vouchers, Jones-Imaan said. ''If this program were to end, this school would end,'' she said.

While some schools have libraries, art studios and athletic fields, the Muhammad University of Islam occupies the second floor of a former residence east of the Anacostia River. The unaccredited K–8 school is supported by the Nation of Islam, according to director Stephanie Muhammad.

Parents choose the school because of its small classes, safety and strict discipline, she said.

About one-third of the 55 students hold vouchers. Few of the others can afford the $5,335 annual tuition, Muhammad said. They are asked to help defray tuition by raising funds. Last month, they sold pizzas. This month, it's coffee and tea.

The classrooms are small, located in what were perhaps once bedrooms. On the walls are posters of Louis Farrakhan, the controversial leader of the Nation of Islam.

On a recent visit, the only bathroom in the school had a floor blackened with dirt and a sink coated in grime. The bathtub was filled with paint cans and cleaning supplies concealed by a curtain.

Muhammad said in a subsequent interview that the bathroom is used only in emergencies, and students typically use a restroom on the floor below in a day-care center that she had previously described as unrelated to the school.

Kevin P. Chavous, a former D.C. Council member and now a senior adviser to American Federation for Children, which lobbies for voucher programs nationwide, said schools receiving public funds should meet quality standards. But supporters of the D.C. program have been focused on overcoming political challenges, he said.

''There should be some accountability measures in all these programs,'' Chavous said. ''Our biggest challenge has been the constant threats to shut this down before we can even measure the schools.''

Since Congress created the voucher program in 2004, Boehner and Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman (I-Conn.) have regularly wrestled with Democrats over its fate. Republicans and Lieberman want to expand the program; Democrats want to phase it out.

''Our goal is to provide a quality education to all children—not just a few—which is why the Obama administration does not believe vouchers are the answer to America's educational challenges,'' said Justin Hamilton, a spokesman for Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D) and D.C. Mayor Vincent C. Gray (D) also are opposed to the voucher program, saying public dollars should go toward improving public schools where they can help the most students.

Still, the program has offered some children a crucial path out of troubled city schools.

Ophelia Johnson and her daughters were homeless when she learned about the voucher program. She obtained vouchers for both her daughters and enrolled them at the Calvary Christian Academy, which she credits with providing her children a secure, caring and consistent environment as she pulled her life together.

''It's wonderful,'' Johnson said about the voucher program that allowed her daughters to attend the academy. ''The atmosphere, the education, and it's also a Christian school. They taught my girls.''

Now, Johnson is employed, newly remarried and living with her daughters in a condominium on Capitol Hill. Her older daughter, Tabitha, is applying to colleges.

''She'll be the first to go in the family,'' Johnson said, pride in her voice.

Ms. NORTON. The Federal vouchers give these schools the Federal Government's seal of approval. Considering that the purpose of the voucher program is to improve student achievement, voucher bills are inconsistent with the congressional intent and should not be enabled with Federal funds or get the Federal imprimatur.

I appreciate that the majority indicated in committee and also on this floor that they, too, oppose voucher mills and are willing to work with me on this issue. I hope to continue to work with the majority as the bill moves forward in order to eliminate voucher bills, which surely no Member supports.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentlewoman's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, this is the same amendment that Delegate NORTON offered to the bill during markup, but it was rejected by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

The amendment would cap the enrollment of OSP students, the Opportunity Scholarship Program, at 50 percent of the school's population without affecting current voucher students or siblings. The amendment would also restore the randomized controlled study requirement.

Mr. Chairman, this program is about opportunity and choice. Parents should be able to choose the best schools for their children, and private schools should have the flexibility to determine whether or not to enroll OSP students.

I understand the Delegate's concern that students maintain quality standards. In fact, I share it. That is why H.R. 10 requires participating OSP schools to achieve accreditation no later than 5 years after the passage of the act. This is a more effective way to ensure the quality than by arbitrarily excluding students from the program.

Mr. Chairman, the accreditation process required by H.R. 10 will ensure education and administrative quality control. The process will help weed out poor performers from this program without setting a cap on OSP student enrollment.

As for the return to the control group evaluation, this is unnecessary for the OSP. The OSP has been rigorously evaluated using the Gold Standard since 2003, and it has demonstrated positive results. The Gold Standard Evaluation, using a randomized controlled evaluation, deliberately limits participation in the program.

Under this evaluation method, some student applicants received scholarships while other student applicants were placed in a control group that did not receive scholarships. Given the OSP's proven success under this standard, it is time to allow as many students to receive scholarships as funding permits.

Mr. Chairman, it is important to note that the bill does not forsake evaluation. Instead, the bill requires the OSP students' performance base to be compared to that of students of similar backgrounds of the D.C. public schools. The evaluation method means no more students will be barred from a good education through OSP for the sake of the experiment.

Mr. Chairman, on average, 2.5 students apply for each scholarship that is ultimately awarded. We should be focused on meeting the demand for access to a good education rather than arbitrarily limiting students' ability to succeed.

I urge my colleagues to reject this amendment, which would unnecessarily exclude children from the educational opportunities they desire and deserve.

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

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. ALLEN). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

The amendment was rejected.

The Acting CHAIR. There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana) having assumed the chair, Mr. ALLEN, 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. 10) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 480, he reported the bill, as amended by that resolution, back to the House with a further amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

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

The question is on the amendment.

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. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I am opposed.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Scott of Virginia moves to recommit the bill H.R. 10 to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end of section 6 the following new subsection:

(f) REQUIRING PROTECTION OF STUDENTS AND APPLICANTS UNDER CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—Section 3008 (sec. 38-1853.08, D.C. Official Code) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(i) REQUIRING PROTECTION OF STUDENTS AND APPLICANTS UNDER CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS.—In addition to meeting the requirements of subsection (a), an eligible entity or a school may not participate in the opportunity scholarship program under this Act unless the eligible entity or school certifies to the Secretary that the eligible entity or school will provide each student who applies for or receives an opportunity scholarship under this Act with all of the applicable protections available under each of the following laws:

''(1) Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000c et seq.).

''(2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.).

''(3) Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.).

''(4) The Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

''(5) The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.).

''(6) The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.).

''(7) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.).

''(8) The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).''.

□ 1715

Mr. CHAFFETZ (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 Utah?

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Clerk will continue to read.

The Clerk continued to read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage as amended.

I rise to speak in support of the Democratic motion to recommit that would protect the civil rights of students at schools that receive vouchers by requiring the schools to certify that they provide each student with all applicable civil rights protections.

The D.C. voucher program calls into question multiple Federal civil rights protections and turns a blind eye to the government-funded discrimination. For example, religious schools that accept vouchers are permitted to discriminate on the basis of religion in hiring, a violation of traditional principles prohibiting discrimination based on religion when using Federal money.

The fact is that most religious schools are part of a ministry of the sponsoring church, and these schools either cannot or will not separate the religious content from their academic programs. So it is impossible to prevent a publicly funded voucher program for paying for these institutions' religious activities and education.

Furthermore, schools that accept vouchers are allowed to discriminate based on gender in admissions, a violation of the principles of title IX.

In addition to the discrimination based on religion or sex, the D.C. voucher program also raises serious concerns about the civil rights of students with disabilities. IDEA requires that schools that receive Federal IDEA funds provide appropriate education to all students with disabilities, but at least one study found that the schools that accept D.C. vouchers serve students with disabilities at a much lower rate than public schools.

Failing to meet the needs of students with disabilities is just one of the shortcomings of the D.C. voucher program, but another issue is the performance of the school. A 2010 Department of Education report concluded that the use of a voucher had no statistically significant impact on overall student achievement in math or reading.

Additional studies found that students from schools in need of improvement have shown no improvement in math or reading due to the voucher program. Furthermore, participating in the voucher program had no impact on student safety, satisfaction, motivation, or engagement.

Mr. Speaker, many of those who actually won a voucher cannot use them because the voucher does not cover the full cost of attending a private or religious school. As a result, many who win a voucher find that they cannot use it because they can't afford the remaining cost of the education. So studies have confirmed that fewer than 25 percent of the students who use the vouchers are from schools that were ''in need of improvement.''

The D.C. voucher program fails on all counts. It violates principles of traditional civil rights laws, it makes no improvement on student achievement, and it fails to reach the very children it was designed to help.

Our public schools need more funding, not less. Rather than funnel taxpayer funding to private or religious schools that lack civil rights protections and fail to meet the goals of helping the right students, we should focus our efforts on initiatives that will result in overall improvement of the educational system for all of our students.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support our children by supporting this motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, as I said before, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia is one of my favorite people in this body. I have the greatest respect. His perspective is one that I often share.

I would just highlight for this body here, because I do urge a ''no'' vote on this motion to recommit, that we had a field hearing in May. We have had good debate. We had a good markup.

We had always projected to move this bill in the fall. I think it is time to bring up this bill. So we have never had this issue ever brought to my attention as chairman of the committee.

I would also highlight that section 3008, Nondiscrimination and Other Requirements for Participating Schools—I will read just point A.

''In General.—An eligible entity or school participating in any program under this division shall not discriminate against program participants or applicants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex.''

I do look forward to working with the gentleman and anybody else on these issues moving forward, but I would urge a ''no'' vote on the motion to recommit.

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.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of today, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the order of the House of today, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Passage of H.R. 692;

The motion to recommit on H.R. 10; and

Passage of H.R. 10, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

DEFAULT PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 692) to ensure the payment of interest and principal of the debt of the United States, 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 passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 235, nays 194, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 557]

YEAS—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
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
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
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—194

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Dent
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanna
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
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

NOT VOTING—5

Bishop (UT)
Fattah
Kelly (IL)
Payne
Roskam

□ 1751

Mrs. LAWRENCE and Ms. KUSTER changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

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. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call No. 557, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPORTUNITY AND RESULTS REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to recommit on the bill (H.R. 10) to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, and for other purposes, offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT), on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will redesignate the motion.

The Clerk redesignated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 185, nays 242, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 558]

YEAS—185

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
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
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
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
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

NAYS—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)
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
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
LaHood
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
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
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—7

Buchanan
Collins (GA)
Fattah
Kelly (IL)
Payne
Russell
Westmoreland

□ 1759

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. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 240, nays 191, not voting 3, as follows:

[Roll No. 559]

YEAS—240

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
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)
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
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lipinski
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
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
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—191

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Dold
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Graham
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee

Kilmer	Murphy (FL)	Scott (VA)
Kind	Nadler	Scott, David
Kirkpatrick	Napolitano	Serrano
Kuster	Neal	Sewell (AL)
Langevin	Nolan	Sherman
Larsen (WA)	Norcross	Simpson
Larson (CT)	O'Rourke	Sinema
Lawrence	Pallone	Sires
Lee	Pascrell	Slaughter
Levin	Pelosi	Smith (WA)
Lewis	Perlmutter	Speier
Lieu, Ted	Peters	Swalwell (CA)
LoBiondo	Peterson	Takai
Loebsack	Pingree	Takano
Lofgren	Pocan	Thompson (CA)
Lowenthal	Polis	Thompson (MS)
Lowey	Price (NC)	Titus
Lujan Grisham (NM)	Quigley	Tonko
	Rangel	Torres
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)	Reichert	Tsongas
	Rice (NY)	Van Hollen
Lynch	Richmond	Vargas
Maloney, Carolyn	Roybal-Allard	Veasey
	Ruiz	Vela
Maloney, Sean	Ruppersberger	Velázquez
Matsui	Rush	Visclosky
McCollum	Ryan (OH)	Walz
McDermott	Sánchez, Linda T.	Wasserman Schultz
McGovern		
McNerney	Sanchez, Loretta	Waters, Maxine
Meeks	Sarbanes	Watson Coleman
Meng	Schakowsky	Welch
Moore	Schiff	Wilson (FL)
Moulton	Schrader	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—3

Fattah	Kelly (IL)	Payne

□ 1807

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAKING IN ORDER CONSIDERATION OF VETO MESSAGE ON H.R. 1735

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that if a veto message on H.R. 1735 is laid before the House, then after the message is read and the objections of the President are spread at large upon the Journal, further consideration of the veto message and the bill shall be postponed until the legislative day of Thursday, November 5, 2015; and that on that legislative day, the House shall proceed to the constitutional question of reconsideration and dispose of such question without intervening motion.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken tomorrow.

AMENDING TITLE XI OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1362) to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs).

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1362

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

SECTION 1. CLARIFICATION OF WAIVER AUTHORITY REGARDING PACE PROGRAMS.

Subsection (d)(1) of section 1115A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a) is amended by striking ''and 1903(m)(2)(A)(iii)'' and inserting ''1903(m)(2)(A)(iii), and 1934 (other than subsections (b)(1)(A) and (c)(5) of such section)''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1362 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support for S. 1362, the PACE Innovation Act of 2015.

The companion bill in the House, H.R. 3243, was introduced by my longtime colleague and a real champion for the elderly and the frail, CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey.

This legislation is a commonsense, bipartisan approach to increasing flexibility in our healthcare system.

PACE, or the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, is an integrated care program that provides hands-on, long-term care and support to beneficiaries who need an institutional level of care but continue to live at home. Many of these beneficiaries are dual eligible, or eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid.

Hardworking Americans who care for these beneficiaries and want to keep their loved ones at home have relied on this program for well over a decade, as the program has now expanded to 32 States.

There are two programs currently operating back in Texas, and I am looking forward to monitoring the program's continued success back home.

However, currently, the PACE model is limited to seniors who meet a specific list of criteria, Federal and State, for needing a nursing home level of care. The PACE Innovation Act would allow Medicare to test the PACE benefit on other vulnerable populations.

With the popularity and success of the PACE program, it is clear that, to live up to its full potential nationally, other populations should be targeted to benefit from comprehensive PACE models.

These beneficiaries are some of our Nation's most vulnerable, who, along with their families, have chosen not to enter into full-time nursing home care at a facility.

Studies have shown that people receiving care from PACE organizations have better outcomes and less hospitalizations and, more importantly, have more time to spend with their families in their own homes—and that is key.

The PACE Innovation Act is revenue-neutral and widely supported.

I would like to thank fellow Ways and Means Committee members CHARLES BOUSTANY, MIKE KELLY, LYNN JENKINS, EARL BLUMENAUER, BILL PASCRELL, BILL MCDERMOTT, and RICHARD NEAL for their strong support of this effort and encourage that the whole House vote to pass S. 1362 under suspension of the rules and send it to the President's desk.

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

□ 1815

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments from my friend from Texas. Mr. Speaker, there is occasionally a little bit of controversy around the House, a modest amount of disagreement, and, of course, that is just in the Republican conference. There are lots of things that get the spotlight.

But I appreciate the leadership of my friend with our Health Subcommittee on Ways and Means for there are things below the radar screen where we have been working in a thoughtful and bipartisan way to try and see if we can thread the needle on a number of these things that don't have to cost a lot of money, and they enable us to be able to refine healthcare opportunities.

One of the biggest accomplishments of the session was getting the SGR monkey off our back to deal with the sustainable growth rate in a bipartisan fashion, and there have been, I want to say, about 12 bills that have moved out of our Health Subcommittee that deal with initiatives going forward.

What my friend from Texas said about the PACE Act is absolutely true. This is an opportunity for us to take a proven set of techniques to help seniors who want to stay at home, who do not want to be in nursing facilities, being able to give them the flexible needs in terms of services, and it works.

I represent a program in Portland, Oregon, Providence ElderPlace. It serves over 1,000 Oregonians. It has got a solid track record. It has costs that are lower than average if they were Medicaid beneficiaries. In some States, these savings can be nearly 30 percent.

There are opportunities here to be able to give better ongoing service. The hospital readmission rate, for example, the program I mentioned in Oregon, is far under the national average of 15.2 percent. It is about half that rate.

This simply extends this opportunity to a broader range of beneficiaries, people who have complex health conditions, but who are younger, for instance. They are no less deserving of this opportunity. I am absolutely convinced that the results will be every bit as strong.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate having this bill move forward, and I appreciate the advocacy of my friend, Mr. SMITH from New Jersey. We seem to find a variety of things to work on together in this Congress, and there is nothing that I think is more important and is going to have more long-term impact for people who are quite vulnerable. It is going to save the Federal Government money while it provides better outcomes for patients and for their families.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time urging strong support from my colleagues.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am really proud to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), a real champion for the elderly and the fragile who has really been a leader for so many years on this key issue.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank KEVIN BRADY, the chairman, for his extraordinary leadership on this and so many other issues, and Mr. BLUMENAUER, with whom we have worked together to build a strong bipartisan push for this piece of legislation.

I do rise in strong support for passage of S. 1362, the PACE Innovation Act. Identical to the companion bill that I introduced along with Mr. BLUMENAUER, this bill will provide PACE programs with flexibility to bring a proven model of care to new populations. The program for all-inclusive care for the elderly, or PACE, is a widely popular program serving over 30,000 seniors around the country.

For those unfamiliar with PACE, the program 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, eligibility for PACE is limited to those aged 55 and over who meet State-specified criteria for needing nursing home-level care. This program will provide wellness and keeps people in their homes. It is already doing it. Now more people will benefit from it. It improves outcomes. And this is all for people who otherwise would be paying catastrophic costs for nursing home care.

Mr. Speaker, PACE has seen a significant growth in recent years, including a 30 percent increase in the number of people receiving services over the last 3 years alone.

PACE has a proven track record in my own State of New Jersey where programs currently serve roughly 900 seniors throughout the State.

Just last week, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to attend the grand opening and ribbon cutting of a new PACE program in Monmouth County, and it is New Jersey's fifth program.

When I first heard about PACE, I worked hard to bring this valuable program to my State back in 2009. Even though it was around before that, it was one of the best kept secrets around.

They then formed the first PACE program called LIFE, Living Independently for Elderly, at St. Francis Medical Center in the Trenton and Hamilton area. I have visited St. Francis LIFE often since and on its fifth anniversary was overwhelmed by the appreciation of seniors and their families for the program's ability to raise or maintain their quality of life.

The limits, however, and operational restrictions placed on PACE do not allow these programs to serve many others in need. Chronological age should not be the determinant.

If somebody is disabled and could use and should use a nursing home and is eligible, this gives another option to the family to keep them at home. The legislation will allow CMS to establish pilot programs and waive restrictions and test how to best deliver results for new populations.

As Tim Clontz, the chairman of the National PACE Association's Public Policy Committee, testified before the Health Subcommittee on the Energy and Commerce Committee, he told stories about a man named Jim G., a 54-year-old man with early-onset Alzheimer's disease.

He was hospitalized for a lung infection and, as a result, stayed home alone during the day, where he was isolated and struggled with activities of daily living, such as personal grooming, household chores, and child care.

His wife quit her job to care for him full time, but his needs were more than she could handle. He was permanently placed in a memory care unit, and since PACE was not an option for Jim—remember, he is 54 years old—his wife is crowd-sourcing to try to pay his medical care. This heartbreaking story could have been eliminated.

I also chair the Alzheimer's Caucus, Mr. Speaker, here in the House, and I can tell you there are many patients with early onset who could benefit and benefit in a very, very significant way with this change in law.

I look forward to the President's signature. Again, I want to thank you, Kevin, for your leadership and your very distinguished staff.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close just by saying, again, I express my appreciation to the chairman and to Mr. SMITH for moving this forward.

We find that the evaluations of the PACE program have proven that participants experience better health outcomes, fewer unmet needs, less pain, less likelihood of depression, and fewer hospitalizations and nursing home admissions.

There are people out there now, if we make this change, that are ready to extend this higher quality of care for very deserving, needy, and vulnerable people who are younger than the threshold 55 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, I urge we vote tonight, enact it into law, and let these people get to work serving these people in a new and profoundly improved way.

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

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank again these champions, Mr. SMITH and Mr. BLUMENAUER, for coming together on a very important program that makes so much sense.

This is our mom or our dad, our loved one who wants to get care, but doesn't want to be in that nursing home. It is good for them, it is great for the family, and it is good for the taxpayers.

It just makes common sense. Having this strong, bipartisan support for this bill I think is every reason for it to pass through this House, to be signed by the President, and be expanded all across America.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong support for the PACE Innovation Act and urge its passage. With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COSTELLO). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 1362.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114–69)

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 the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo declared in Executive Order 13413 of October 27, 2006, is to continue in effect beyond October 27, 2015.

The situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been marked by widespread violence and atrocities that continue to threaten regional stability, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the 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 13413 with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *October 21, 2015.*

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE 2012 TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the Select Committee on Benghazi will hold hearings certain to drive congressional approval ratings to new lows. The majority leader, the leader of the Republicans, and the New York Republican, Mr. HANNA, and former Republican Committee staffers have all confessed that the purpose of this committee is no governmental purpose, but the political purpose of driving down Secretary Clinton's approval ratings and political prospects. And for that, we have spent 4.5 million taxpayer dollars.

Even before those admissions, it was apparent that that was the purpose of this committee. They have held four hearings in 17 months and developed nothing of significance. They have abandoned plans to have hearings with top intelligence and defense officials. They have done nothing up until now. Yet, tomorrow, they are set to spend 8 hours grilling one woman.

Nothing about the tragedy in Benghazi has been revealed by this committee, and nothing will be revealed tomorrow. All this committee has done is focus on what has been referred to as Secretary Clinton's damn emails.

Look at the rules that bind Congress on emails. We are free to use any server. We are free to keep and delete or to take the emails with us.

We have got an 8 percent approval rating. It is going down tomorrow as a result of what the Benghazi Committee plans to do.

TRINIDAD GARZA EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL NAMED NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the faculty, staff, and students of Trinidad Garza Early College High School at Mountain View for being named a 2015 National Blue Ribbon School.

For the last 33 years, the Department of Education has recognized superior schools for their academic achievement, their progress in closing achievement gaps, and for demonstrating that all students can achieve high levels of success.

Nominated by top education officials in Texas, Trini Garza is one of 335 schools across the country being recognized as a 2015 Blue Ribbon School and one of 28 such schools in the great State of Texas.

As a dual-degree school, Trinity Garza has made it a priority to make students college ready, life ready, and career ready.

I am proud to represent a school that has truly excelled since opening in 2006. Trini Garza, along with 334 other schools, will be recognized at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on November 9 and 10.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Trini Garza Early College High School on this important accomplishment.

□ 1830

ADDRESS THE DEBT LIMIT AND REACH A BIPARTISAN BUDGET AGREEMENT

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, there are just 9 more legislative days to act fully to protect the full faith and credit of the United States before November 3 in order to prevent the risk of a first ever U.S. default.

We know that a default is not what the American people want. It could shatter retirement savings and send interest rates for mortgages, student loans, credit cards, and car payments soaring. We know that even a threat of default has serious consequences.

We have experienced a downgrading in our credit before because our friends on the other side of the aisle—Republicans—took us to the catastrophic brink. And then, of course, we realized that what we did today, Pay China First Act, does not help the American people.

If we continue on this pathway, we will impact 1.4 million Active-Duty troops by not paying our debt, 4.1 million disabled veterans who served their country with honor by not paying our debt, 2.3 million veterans who receive home purchasing assistance by not paying our debt, American small businesses that sell goods and services to the government and most doctors and hospitals that treat the 53.8 million Medicare patients around the country by not paying our debt.

We cannot hold the United States hostage or our credit hostage. It is time to address in a fair and reasonable manner the debt of the United States, which is the people of the United States. Get rid of sequester, follow our responsibilities, and pay our bills so that we can help those veterans who need help.

Mr. Speaker, once again House Republicans are putting the narrow partisan interests of their right-wing base ahead of addressing the real challenges and problems facing the American people.

Congress has only 10 legislative days to act to fully protect the full faith and credit of the United States before November 3, in order to prevent the risk of a first-ever U.S. default.

A default would shatter retirement savings and send interest rates for mortgages, student loans, credit cards and car payments soaring.

We know that even the threat of default has serious consequences: plummeting consumer confidence, and drastic slowdowns in job creation and economic growth.

Instead of taking the threat of catastrophic default off the table, this week, Republicans are bringing forward a bill that would give priority to bondholders from China and other foreign nations would be paid first.

This bill, more accurately described as the "Pay China First Act," puts payments to Americans at risk, including those to: 1. 1.4 million active duty troops; 2. 4.1 million disabled veterans who served their country with honor; 3. 2.3 million veterans who receive home purchasing assistance; 4. American small businesses that sell goods and services to the government; 5. Doctors and hospitals that treat the 53.8 million Medicare patients around the country.

The credit rating of the United States is not a hostage to serve Republicans' toxic special interest ideology.

Republicans should bring forward a clean bill to honor the full faith and credit of the United States immediately.

Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have wasted enormous amount of time on irresponsible, futile, and reckless diversions such as trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act, defund Planned Parenthood, and use the Benghazi Select Committee as an adjunct of the Republican National Committee to engage in partisan attacks on the leading candidate for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination.

Because so much time has been wasted on these frivolous issues, we now have the following critical deadlines staring us in the face:

1. October 29: Highway & Transit Trust Fund expires, endangering good paying jobs and critical construction projects throughout America;

2. November 3: Deadline to raise debt ceiling to protect full faith and credit of the United States.

3. December 11: Deadline to pass a funding bill that keeps the government open.

Americans are already paying a heavy price for House Republicans' legislative mismanagement.

Earlier this summer, Republicans shut down the Export-Import Bank for the first time in its 81-year history.

The Bank provides critical financing assistance—at no cost to taxpayers—to small, medium, and large-sized U.S. businesses that helps them create jobs here at home and sell their products overseas.

Just two months after the Bank shut down, companies across the country are already feeling negative impacts on their ability to compete in the global marketplace.

House Republicans also let the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) expire on September 30.

Created in 1965, it is one of the nation's most successful conservation programs.

The LWCF uses a small percentage of revenue from offshore oil and gas drilling to invest in public lands and local recreation projects, and helps to support more than 6 million U.S. jobs connected with outdoor recreation.

Mr. Speaker, I renew my call that all Members of the House and Senate work together and address the real problems and challenges facing the American people and to work with the President to reach agreement on an appropriate budget framework that ends sequestration but does not harm our economy or require draconian cuts to middle-class priorities.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DON EDWARDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. LOFGREN. 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 gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the California Democratic congressional delegation to honor the life of Don Edwards, who passed away earlier this month at the age of 100 in his home in Carmel.

Congressman Don Edwards was someone I was proud to know for many years. He was born in San Jose, California, in 1915, growing up on South 13th Street. Living in San Jose at an idyllic time, he took the trolley to play golf as a young man, attended public schools in San Jose, received his bachelor's degree from Stanford University, where he later studied law, and was admitted to the Bar Association of California in 1940.

He became an FBI agent during the Depression. He used to talk about his service as an FBI agent, which he jokingly referred to as ''long hours looking for auto thieves in Indianapolis.'' But, in fact, he served with great distinction in the FBI, and he went on to serve in the United States Navy as an intelligence officer and a gunnery officer in World War II.

He was first elected to represent what was then California's Ninth Congressional District in 1962, and he served for 32 years, until January 3, 1995.

I remember the first time I saw Congressman Don Edwards. It was before he was a Congressman. He was giving a speech in Mitchell Park in Palo Alto, California. I was just out of elementary school, and I remember how impressed I was and inspired I was by his words. He, in turn, had been inspired by President Kennedy to run for Congress, and he was successfully elected that year.

Over the years, he represented such communities as San Jose, Gilroy, Morgan Hill, parts of Milpitas, Fremont, and Union City. He served on the Judiciary Committee and served as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Civil Liberties and Civil Rights for 23 years. He also sat on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Now, Congressman Don Edwards was one of the foremost defenders of civil liberties in Congress. In the 1970s, along with Senator Frank Church and his committee, they exposed the pervasive abuses of civil liberties in J. Edgar Hoover's COINTELPRO, which monitored, infiltrated, and disrupted entirely lawful civil rights and antiwar organizations; and his stature as a former FBI agent really allowed him to be effective in this role.

In his first year in the House, he voted to abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee, and he was involved every year. In fact, I helped him in the early seventies in trying to abolish HUAC. He finally succeeded in 1975. He was involved in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. He was a dignified and important member of the House Judiciary Committee during the consideration of the impeachment of Richard Nixon. And he was known throughout the country as somebody who stood up for the Constitution.

Earlier today, former Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman came on the floor, and we were talking about former Members' right to be present on the floor, but they do not have the right to address the Congress as a former Member. She wanted everyone to know that she was so proud that she was able to serve with Congressman Edwards on the Judiciary Committee, and she is not alone where people were able to serve with him.

His contributions will live on for many generations, as demonstrated by the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildfire Refuge, which was the first urban wildfire refuge in the United States. I remember he used to call the chairman of the committee in the seventies every single morning, saying, ''Where is my wildfire refuge?'' because such endangered species as the California Clapper Rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse were on the verge of extinction, and now they are not because of his work.

As I said, he was a stalwart defender of the Constitution, a tireless advocate for the rights of women, and was known as the ''Father of the Equal Rights Amendment,'' which he introduced every year.

Congressman Edwards was also known as a champion of civil rights. After becoming chairman of the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, then known as Subcommittee Number 4, he managed the Equal Rights Amendment on the House floor in 1971, the extension of the Voting Rights Act in 1982, and all other civil rights bills of the era.

Now, outside of Congress, he took part in civil rights marches in the South. His son Len was a Freedom Rider, and he joined Len Edwards during the Mississippi Summer. He visited Dr. Martin Luther King when Dr. King was imprisoned in the Birmingham, Alabama, jail. And Don Edwards spoke out against apartheid while visiting South Africa.

Congressman Don Edwards had a long, fulfilling life, and part of that fulfillment was his marriage to Edie Wilkie Edwards until her death in April of 2011. She and he were very involved in a group that no longer is active in the House called Members of Congress for Peace Through Law because they were people who believed that we could have a peaceful world, and the route to peace was the rule of law.

Congressman Edwards is survived by four sons, Len Edwards, Samuel, Bruce, and Thomas, as well as four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He died peacefully and with a great deal of grace. According to his son Len Edwards: ''He died as he lived, an elegant man.''

He leaves a legacy of supporting civil rights, advocating for those less fortunate in our society, and as being a strong defender of our Constitution. In fact, in his district, they used to call him not the Congressman from the Tenth Congressional District, but the Congressman from the Constitution.

I am fortunate that when I graduated from college in 1970 and I came to Washington without a job, I walked into his office and he hired me. I worked for him for nearly 9 years, both here in Washington and in his district in San Jose. He helped me enormously by giving me time off to take exams while I was taking my law school classes. He helped me and mentored me, and I feel a great debt of gratitude to him personally for all he did to help me, but mainly to inspire me and a whole generation of Americans to believe in their country and to believe in their Constitution and to believe in the rule of law and civil rights.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from California, (Mr. FARR), my colleague.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. LOFGREN for yielding, the chair of our wonderful California delegation, the largest Democratic delegation in Congress.

When I arrived in Congress in a special election in 1993, Don Edwards was

the dean, the chair of the Democratic delegation, the same delegation that his former employee, Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, now holds. He was the father figure for all of us from California, and I think of this entire Congress when you look at his remarkable record.

It is ironic that Don Edwards grew up in a Republican family in the Stanford area in Santa Clara Valley, attended Stanford University, was captain of the golf team, did very well in golf, and so much so that the district that I represent every year hosts what was formerly known as the Bing Crosby Clambake, now the AT&T Pro-Am Golf Tournament. And Don Edwards told me that he carried his pro, he got a better score than his pro, and they won the tournament the first Clambake at Pebble Beach.

He soon became president of the Young Republicans. He quickly thereafter left the Young Republicans and became a very, very liberal Democrat. I asked him once as he retired, as Congresswoman LOFGREN said, to Carmel, California—he retired to a home right next to the home that I grew up in and my sister still lives in, so we had many, many nights with him and Edie discussing politics, and I once asked him: What made you become a Democrat? He said: Well, you know, Sam, after I got out of Stanford, I was in the FBI right after law school, and after I knew what the government could do to you through the FBI, I decided that I better be on the other side to protect the rights of individuals.

He then became a Navy intelligence officer. One of the things that happened when he left the FBI—he was no fan of the head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover—he asked Congress to audit the FBI. Well, the FBI had never been audited. All of the seizure of the equipment and goods and things that they had taken in the arrest were used to support them internally, and people thought that there might be some foul play there. Because he asked for that audit, he was on their blacklist. A former FBI agent knew a little bit too much about what was going on inside the FBI and with J. Edgar Hoover.

As a Member of Congress—it is really interesting. He got elected when John F. Kennedy was President, and he left Congress when Bill Clinton was President, so all of those President's between Kennedy and Clinton, Don Edwards had served with. If anybody, he was probably the most dapper, best dressed, politest, nicest human being on this floor.

He had great friends on the Republican side of the aisle, even though he was such a liberal Member of the Democratic Party. One of his friends was Hamilton Fish from New York. They worked together on many of these remarkable acts: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the rogue Voting Rights Act of 1965. He became chair of the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, and he managed the equal rights amendment on the House floor. He was a constitutional civil rights-human rights expert and passionate about his feelings of the law to protect people.

When Don and Edie retired to Carmel, California, they brought with them a lot of their friends from Washington, and in his home State of California, we used to have wonderful dinner parties together. He was still a member of Cypress Point Golf Club, a very exclusive golf club. In fact, he was the longest surviving member of that club.

□ 1845

Unfortunately, Edie predeceased him—his wonderful wife for many years, whom we all loved—and we were saddened about her development of lung cancer, and she died.

Don wanted to have a memorial service for her at a local church and then the reception at the Cypress Point Country Club, one of the most conservative golf clubs in the United States. Don was very proud after the church service to have invited everybody, and he proudly stated that this was the largest collection of Democrats that had ever been at the Cypress Point Country Club.

He had a great sense of humor, lots of friends. He was a remarkable human being who was able to work across the aisle, something we miss today. With that, he was able to accomplish some of the greatest laws of this country in the modern era.

He was a good friend of Republicans and Democrats, but, most of all, he was the friend of the animals and of the people who could not speak for themselves. We will sorely miss this great man, who served this great institution for a long, long time.

My wife sends all her best. She was at his bedside when he died, and she was part of his caretaking team. We will have services for him in Carmel this Sunday, and there will be services in the San Jose area and future services here in Washington.

So I just stand tonight to give you my thoughts on my relationship with a great man, Don Edwards, who championed civil rights and died at the age of 100.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, SAM FARR.

I now yield to the gentlewoman from San Francisco, California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Thank you very much, Congressman ZOE LOFGREN, the chair of the House Democrats of California, for calling us together in a Special Order to honor a truly great man.

I want to associate myself with the remarks that have gone before and to say to SAM FARR: Thank you to you and to Shary for the love and affection and care that you gave not only to Don Edwards, but to Edie Wilkie, for such a long time. We all talked about how much we loved them. You were there for them all the time, and we are completely, entirely, in your debt. Thank you for the love that you gave them.

Thank you again, ZOE LOFGREN and the entire California delegation, for orchestrating this Special Order hour.

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, we honor an august statesman who labored with dignity, led with integrity, and lived with courage, William Donlon—otherwise known as ''Don Edwards''—who passed away last month at the age of 100.

His life was a gift to the Nation.

He protected our communities through his service as an FBI agent. He protected our country through his service in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He moved our country forward through his service as a U.S. Congressman.

Service. Leadership. Patriotism. Don Edwards.

Don reminded us that how we live our values matters; so he fought for fair pay, becoming the ''Father of the Equal Rights Amendment.'' He stood with the Freedom Riders at a time when they were written off as troublemakers and agitators. He championed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and fought to protect freedom of speech. He spoke up for workers, for our environment, for the resources needed to improve our country, and for future generations.

As chair of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights for more than 20 years, Don became the ''conscience of the Congress'' and strived to ensure that all Americans enjoyed equality of opportunity.

He took great pride in the fact that he was the floor leader for the Equal Rights Amendment, that he managed that bill. During his 32 years in the House, Congressman Edwards helped change the course of history. So significant was his leadership.

Oddly enough, Don won his first election to any office in 1950 when he was elected president of the California Young Republicans. Throughout his life, Don's ability to respect all viewpoints made him a remarkable leader who was respected by Members on both sides of the aisle. When he was 88 years old, Don reminded us that the world works better when we get along, and that is what we owe everybody.

In California, we hold a special place of honor for Congressman Edwards, the long-time dean of the California Democratic delegation. The beautiful, pristine Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge serves as a tribute to his efforts to preserve our environment and our ideals for future generations.

In fact, he, as a modern-day man and as a Member of Congress, with his love of nature and all living things, was probably as close to a model of St. Francis of Assisi as we have ever seen—Don Edwards, a gentle, beautiful man.

Don Edwards never stopped serving our country, and his achievements will stand forever as a living monument to his determined vision and legendary ability. But it wasn't just about that. It is how he encouraged others.

I can tell you, when I came to Congress 28 years ago, there were only 23

women in the House out of 435—12 Democrats, 11 Republicans. To say that we weren't always paid full attention to sounds almost like complaining, but it was a fact. Nobody ever asked, ''What do you think?'' to any of the women Members. I mean, we made our voices heard, of course, but nobody ever asked, ''What do you think?'' except Don Edwards.

Don Edwards would ask, ''What do you think of this?'' to each of us, especially when he was dealing with issues that related directly to us. But even well beyond that, whether we were talking about national security, economic growth—whatever the subject—Don would always ask us, ''What do you think?''

I can remember hearing him ask, ''Nancy, what do you think?''

And I said, ''Don, do you know how unusual that is, to hear you say that?''

And he would ask, ''Why do you say that?''

And I said, ''Because not many people around here, of the four hundred and something versus the 23, come up and ask the few women who are here what we think.''

But he was always about encouraging people to reach their fulfillment and to see what their contribution could do for the common good.

Sadly, we lost Edie Wilkie a few years ago. As SAM FARR mentioned, she predeceased Don by a number of years. He worshiped Edie, and they were a real team for equality, for peace, for disarmament, for protecting the environment, for promoting opportunity and fairness. They were such a team.

So I hope it is a comfort now to his children and to his grandchildren—to all he loved—that so many people throughout the world and, certainly, in our country mourn the loss of a consummate public servant, a proud Californian, and a proud American.

May his legacy long endure in this House, and may it challenge all of us to do more and to do better on behalf of America's working families.

Thank you again, Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, for bringing us together.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, Madam Leader.

It is wonderful for those who served with Don Edwards, for those who knew him by reputation, and for those who worked for him to—

Ms. PELOSI. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. LOFGREN. I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. PELOSI. I would like to say how proud he was and thrilled he was that Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN was going to succeed him in the Congress. He made that well known to all of us. So his service continues his leadership in your excellent service and leadership in the Congress.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, Madam Leader.

Now I turn to my colleague from California who was able to serve with Congressman Edwards for the first 2 years of her service here in the Congress, Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO.

Ms. ESHOO. I thank the gentlewoman from California, the chair of the California Democratic delegation, and my dear friend and colleague.

Mr. Speaker, it is really, I think, bittersweet this evening because we loved Congressman Don Edwards so much, and it is hard to imagine the world without him.

He was the kind of human being that you wanted to have live forever. Instead, his contributions to our Nation, to the State of California, to his community are a record that will be revered for generations and generations and generations to come.

There is a lot that has already been said about Don, beautiful things that have been said about Don, how he graduated from Stanford University and Stanford Law School, how he began his professional career as an FBI agent, and how he joined the Navy as an intelligence officer.

So he served our country in many different roles, and, of course, the crown of his public service career was right here in the House of the people, the House of Representatives. He was a small-business man in a business that his father owned and that he became a part of during the 1950s, and then, of course, he was elected as a Democrat.

In fact, I still have in my office an invitation that Don had sent out. I think it must have been for some fundraiser that he had had, but the cover of that invitation has Don Edwards standing next to a very young President of the United States, John F. Kennedy.

Young children and those who helped elect John F. Kennedy and anyone else who comes through my office very often remark about the picture. It is something that I cherish, that my staff cherishes, and my constituents do.

It has been said that he was elected to be the president of the California Young Republicans. That is a very prestigious organization, and I can just see Don, elegant in every way.

He dressed magnificently. He had the most beautiful posture. The way he carried himself, he almost kind of glided down the hall.

But he had a deep sense of humility about him. We talk about his greatness and his goodness, and he was never one to want to be served. His joy was in serving. And so he had more than a healthy dose of humility about him.

Don Edwards had an eloquence about him that ran as deep as his beliefs. In my lifetime, he had two great love affairs. One was Edie, and the other was the Constitution. He loved the flag.

He understood that that was a symbol of our country, but he knew that the Constitution, our Constitution, was the soul of our Nation, and that is where he embedded himself—in the Constitution and in the subcommittee that did its work to always reinforce and establish the constitutionality and make the Constitution live for people who it had not touched yet.

If there is anything that would be noble, I think that that is, and the record that he built was one where he was the foremost champion of civil rights, having drafted every civil rights bill in the House of Representatives for two decades. What a record. What a magnificent record.

He loved his community. I remember when he announced that he was retiring. He thanked his constituents for the patience that they had extended to him because, I think, many times in the debate about what is constitutional and how to extend rights to people, it is not always very popular in the beginning.

We love our history once it has been made, but we struggle very hard and don't always recognize the opportunity at hand in that history is being made. In his gentle, elegant way, he thanked his constituents for the patience that they had had with him in that they had stayed with him so that he could do the work that he did on their behalf.

□ 1900

He famously said, in the 1982 extension of the Voting Rights Act: ''If you can't vote, you are not a real citizen.'' So he understood where the nub of the dignity of citizenship rested: voting. I don't think he could really comprehend why the Voting Rights Act is not being brought up today so that we can all vote on it and improve what is so essential in the life of the citizens of our country.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that Congressman Edwards would be very proud of his colleagues in the California Democratic delegation today, starting with our chair, ZOE LOFGREN, who not only worked side by side with him, but now chairs our delegation.

The values that he carried, the values that he loved and that he made so real and shared with everyone in the House, whether colleagues agreed or disagreed with him, they drew a great sense of joy from him because they knew the love of our Constitution and of our country that he carried, and so they respected him. What he carried and did here, I think he would be very proud of his fellow Californians for carrying those traditions on.

I want to pay tribute especially to Shary Farr, Congressman SAM FARR's wife. As I said to Shary, because she was there when Don took his last breath, I feel that we were all there with him because she was. She did so much in seeing to the great care that was given to him until he took his last breath.

There is a poet that wrote: And so he passed on, and all the trumpets sounded on the other side.

God bless you, Don Edwards, for what you gave and created for our country. We bless your name, and we thank you for your service. It is an honor to honor you. We love the Edwards family, and we always will.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, Congresswoman ESHOO.

You know, it is a small community that we have in Santa Clara County, even though we have millions of people who live in the region.

After Don Edwards was elected, there was a young mayor called Norm Mineta who wanted to run for Congress. We went to the max trying to help Norm Mineta trying be elected to Congress, and he ultimately was.

Later, Norm Mineta helped a young fellow to the max get elected, and we were so proud that that young legislator was also successful in being elected to Congress, actually in the seat that overlapped that was formerly Norm Mineta's seat.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA), my colleague in Santa Clara County and also southern Alameda County.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN. I just want to thank her for putting this event together this evening.

Tonight, we heard many words described by folks who have known Don Edwards personally in work and part of his life. We are here tonight to honor my friend Congressman Don Edwards.

Also, a native San Jose, Don was really a true statesman, the likes of which you don't find often these days. Today, we work to further the modern progressive agenda that he believed in. Our work would not be possible without standing on the shoulders of giants such as Don Edwards who came before us. Don was one of those people that I stood upon his shoulders.

When I first ran for Congress, I went to him and I asked for his advice, because I never had the opportunity to work him. I did work with his sons, and one especially, Len Edwards, who was a judge.

As a school person, I could see the kind of impact that Don has had on his son, Len Edwards, who was a judge. Len was the kind of guy that extended himself, also, as did his dad. He used to run truancy court in the school site that I was a principal of, which is really unique. And this is the kind of legacy that Don Edwards has left behind, a uniqueness of the kind of person that he was.

Don was never afraid to take a stand if he knew it to be right. At every turn, he stood up for what he believed in.

When I ran for Congress, I asked him for his advice, and he just very comfortably looked at me and said: Just do the right thing.

I think that, here in Congress, we often are challenged to do the right thing and not the political thing. Sometimes to do the right thing means to stand in the face of popular winds, knowing that you are doing the right thing in spite of the fact that other folks, other dynamics are trying to move the ship in another direction.

He was the kind of person that was really a stalwart, a true champion of civil and constitutional rights in his nearly three decades in Congress. In 1963, in his first year in Congress, he voted to abolish the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He went on to be the champion of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. And as early as 1972, he was effectively working to protect our environment, authoring a bill to establish the National Wildlife Refuge in San Francisco Bay.

Although he was a self-described liberal Democrat, Congressman Edwards consistently worked across the aisle, including the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 and the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which bolstered employees' rights.

Because of his fearlessness, today we are able to work for more progressive change. Because of his leadership and his modeling, I have been able to use him as my compass in making the right decisions and understanding, to do the right thing. We have to stand up to fear-mongering and seek to ensure that all people are free of fear from bullying, persecution, racism, and sexism. We talk today about equality for women and the need for equal pay for equal work.

As an educator myself and a principal for over 30 years, I am really grateful for the legacy that Don left in the field of education. Himself a product of California public schools, he started the conversation that I now proudly bring my voice to, and that is the need to preserve the civil and constitutional rights for all people.

I know that he agreed that education is also a civil right, and we must find a path to a quality education that is equitable for each and every child.

I thank my friend and colleague, Congresswoman LOFGREN, for hosting this Special Order. It has been said that her experiences and her life experiences are entwined with Congressman Don Edwards. She knew Don better than most of us. Not only was she one of his staffers, but she went on to hold his seat in Congress, as it was said before.

I think that Don would look upon her work and her leadership and her stalwartness and say she is doing the right thing, she is doing it the right way, and she is a person of conscience. I think that would make him very proud.

Not long ago, I was incredibly honored to have someone tell me that I come from a place of fairness and equality. That is our area. That is the area that all of us represent: Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO, ZOE LOFGREN, Leader PELOSI, myself, and others.

Congresswoman LOFGREN has said once that Congressman Edwards had a tremendous sense of fair play, and it is my hope that, together, my colleagues and I can honor his legacy not just tonight, but as we approach our work. When we stand up for religious liberties, true equality for women, for American workers, I think Don might look down and smile upon the kind of work that we are attempting to do.

I learned one thing also from Don Edwards: the importance of giving voice to those who don't have one.

It was mentioned that Norm Mineta was one of the folks that Don Edwards has maxed out for. When Norm Mineta was leading the effort to pass the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, Don Edwards was right there with him to make sure that the mistake that this country had foisted upon Americans of Japanese descent in 1942 was recognized. Because of his work and his leadership, along with Norm Mineta, they were able to be successful in the 100th Congress passing H.R. 442, which was signed into law by President Reagan.

That was done because there was an intense understanding of the Constitution and the violation of the Constitution back in 1942 that our government had consciously foisted upon 120,000 members of its own country. That effort took over 10 years here in Congress. So it is persistence and an understanding that to do the right thing, sometimes it takes persistence and educating other people who would not otherwise have thought about what happened in 1942.

So I am here because of that work. I am here because of that tremendous effort to make sure that people of different backgrounds, although they may look different, have different religions, different upbringing, different language, different culture, different foods, that they also are accepted as Americans. He gave a voice to us, and that voice allowed us to be able to become participating Members of this Congress.

So, in that modeling, when folks in my own district come up to me and say, we know that you didn't have a voice and someone gave you a voice afterwards, we need a voice in Congress also, that sort of led me to understand and to move in the same direction that Don Edwards would want us to and to be a voice for those who don't have a voice.

For the Ethiopian community, we became a voice. For the Sikh community, we became a voice. For the Muslim community, we became a voice. For those who have been bullied day in and day out because of who they are, we became a voice. This is the legacy that Don Edwards has left with us, and it is an unfinished business that we need to continue to move forward on. It was because of his consciousness, his leadership, his firm belief in doing the right thing in every instance, in spite of the fact that it may not be popular at the moment but it is constitutional, that we continue to move forward.

So I just want to end with thanking my friend, Congresswoman LOFGREN, for hosting this hour. I am truly honored and privileged to stand here today and pay tribute to the long legacy of our friend, Don Edwards.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman HONDA for that statement and for his leadership in following the example of Don Edwards.

You know, when Don Edwards announced he was going to retire after 32 years in Congress, I called him—actually, I heard a rumor—and I begged

him not to do it, that we needed him in Congress.

He said, there are some new guys on the Judiciary Committee. You don't have to worry about civil rights and civil liberties because they are in good hands, and one of those people was BOBBY SCOTT.

I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

□ 1915

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for giving me the opportunity to speak in honor of the recently departed Congressman William Donlon ''Don'' Edwards, a civil rights champion, supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment, defender of the Constitution.

I am proud to say that, as a freshman in Congress, I had the honor to serve with Congressman Edwards on the Committee on the Judiciary. I would just like to say a few words about his work on that committee.

Congressman Edwards was the living embodiment of the phrase ''Equal Justice Under Law,'' the words etched above the main entrance of the United States Supreme Court Building. When he arrived to Congress in 1963, he noted: ''11 States in the Old South practiced apartheid. There was a House Un-American Activities Committee. And the FBI was out of control threatening individual liberties.''

As a freshman, he wasted no time adapting to his new role in Congress because he recalled that, when he arrived on Capitol Hill, ''Black people couldn't vote in large parts of the country, and if they did, they'd get hanged.''

After visiting the American South where his son Leonard worked to register African Americans to vote, he wrote a letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, telling him that he understood ''the absolute necessity for the immediate passage'' of the Civil Rights Act, and he told Dr. King that ''we stand ready to support your efforts here in Washington.'' With that, he proceeded to work to secure the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

He rose quickly to the rank of chairman of the House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights in 1971. In that capacity, he took on major issues, such as the Equal Rights Amendment, which fell just three States short of ratification.

Congressman Edwards said, ''It is the irresistible impulse of government to assume more power. My role has been to say no.'' That statement perfectly captures his drive to eliminate the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1975 and his disapproval of President Nixon's unauthorized use of government agencies to harass political opponents.

Congressman Edwards worked tirelessly to gain the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, the Fair Housing Amendments Act, and the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

He successfully fought to extend the Voting Rights Act in 1982 over the objections of President Reagan, who wanted to end the Justice Department's preclearance power. At the time, Congressman Edwards said simply, ''If you can't vote, you are not a real citizen.''

Unfortunately, in 2013, the Supreme Court essentially struck down the Justice Department's preclearance powers under the Voting Rights Act in the Shelby County v. Holder decision.

When Congressman Edwards retired in 1994, the late Republican Congressman and former chair of the House Committee on the Judiciary, Henry Hyde, said this of Congressman Edwards: ''He is relentlessly liberal, but that's not a vice. The battle for the fullest expression of civil liberties is losing a general, not a foot soldier.''

Mr. Speaker, I was honored to serve, although briefly, with this great general who battled for equal justice and equal rights.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman SCOTT for those wonderful words.

We have quite a number of California Members as well as others who have asked for their statements to be put in the RECORD, as our time is expiring at this point, but I just would like to make a couple of final comments.

We have talked about Don Edwards' legislative record, but it really was rooted in his values. He was someone who cared about people who didn't have enough, and when he rewrote the Bankruptcy Act, he was thinking about working people who couldn't actually make ends meet.

When the service workers in the House were laid off every time the House recessed and without any ability to actually have a paycheck, the one person they sought for help was Congressman Don Edwards.

I remember lobbyists came in to lobby in favor of discrimination against women, and I was on his staff. He said, ''Well, let me call in the young lawyer I rely on for this.'' When I walked in, that was sort of the end of the conversation.

He lived a long time. He changed this world for the better. We loved him greatly. The fact that so many people went out to California to help him—former staffers, people like Jim Copeland and Debbie McFarland, who actually went out to make sure he had what he needed—was a tribute to the kind of person he was.

As has been mentioned, he was very liberal, but he got along with people who were very conservative. I remember he and Henry Hyde, as ranking member, got along quite well and had a great deal of respect for each other.

At this point, I would just like to say that we miss Don Edwards. We honor his life and contributions. We know that we cannot mourn him. For his 100 years, he made a difference, he made our country better, and we love him for it.

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

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Congressman Don Edwards, a champion for civil rights, a defender of civil liberties, and a tireless advocate for the residents of California.

Congressman Edwards dedicated his life to public service, from serving as a naval officer during World War II, to his time at the FBI, to his decades of work in the House of Representatives on behalf of his constituents.

Through all of the phases of his life he remained true to his principles, fighting for underserved and underrepresented communities no matter what the cost.

A San Jose native and graduate of Stanford University, Congressman Edwards entered the House of Representatives in 1962, ultimately participating in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

In the following decades, the Congressman diligently defended, and led efforts to preserve, this critical legislation so that all Americans can today better exercise their Constitutional rights. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights in the House Judiciary Committee he was dedicated to increasing legal protections for women and minorities. His work to level the playing field continued with his leadership in the House Judiciary Committee on the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which ensured that citizens with disabilities have access to the same opportunities as all Americans.

Congressman Don Edwards was also instrumental in preserving some of our greatest national treasures in California. In the early 1970s, Congressman Edwards was one of the key leaders in the creation of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, which was later named in his honor in 1995. His dedication to environmental protection, specifically preserving urban wetlands, will ensure that generations to come will enjoy California's beautiful landscape.

During his 32 years in the House of Representatives and as the dean of the California Democratic delegation, Congressman Edwards was always guided by a sense of justice and fairness; earning the respect of his colleagues and working with both parties to get things done for the people of California and the citizens of our great nation. His legacy will continue to serve as an example for us all in Congress and he will be greatly missed.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of former Congressman Don Edwards, a man this body remembers as a champion for civil rights and American workers, and I remember as a kind and compassionate mentor.

With civility and dignity, Congressman Edwards fought the most important civil rights battles of our generation. He challenged discrimination against African-Americans, women, people with disabilities, and others seeking equal protection under the law.

He was also a strong defender of free speech and a fierce advocate for the environment, well before protecting the environment was a common or popular cause.

Congressman Edwards fought for the little guy and everyone knew it. In fact, when Congress would routinely fire all the food service workers on Capitol Hill as a quick fix to budget issues, the workers would appeal to the Congressman from California to stand up for

them—even though he wasn't on the committee that made the decision.

He truly was the conscience of the Congress.

My most vivid memory of Congressman Edwards was in 1992, when I narrowly lost my first race for the House. He was the dean of the California delegation at the time, and I was attending the orientation for new Members of Congress, not knowing whether I would ultimately be elected.

In those moments of great anxiety, he showed me great kindness. He walked with me, distracted me from the election news and demonstrated the class and sincerity that he was known for.

Congressman Edwards had a tremendous impact on me and many other people across the country. His legacy is a reminder of Congress' capacity to do great things.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3762, RESTORING AMERICANS' HEALTHCARE FREEDOM RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2015; WAIVING A REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(A) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE ON RULES; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–303) on the resolution (H. Res. 483) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3762) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016; waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules; and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, October 22, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the third quarter of 2015, pursuant to Public Law 95–384, are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. John Moolenaar	9/23	9/23	Cuba				(3)				
Committee total											

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR, Oct. 5, 2015.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]

HOUSE COMMITTEES
Please Note: If there were no expenditures during the calendar quarter noted above, please check the box at right to so indicate and return. ☒

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

HON. ROB BISHOP, Chairman, Oct. 7, 2015.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON RULES, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JULY 1 AND SEPT. 30, 2015

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem [1]		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency [2]
Hon. Louise Slaughter	*								253.96		253.96
Rose Laughlin	*								253.96		253.96
Hon. James McGovern	6/27	6/28	Kuwait		105.00		(3)				105.00
	6/28	6/29	Iraq		11.00		(3)				11.00
	6/29	6/30	Jordan		191.00			(3)			191.00
	6/30	7/2	Turkey		178.00			(3)			178.00
Committee total					485.00				507.92		992.92

[1] Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
[2] If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
[3] Military air transportation.
* Travel Cancellation.

HON. PETE SESSIONS, Chairman, Oct. 6, 2015.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3216. A letter from the Director, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs — Specific Administrative Provisions for the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Grants Program (RIN: 0524-AA65) received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Agriculture.

3217. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, FDA, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Infant Formula: The Addition of Minimum and Maximum Levels of Selenium to Infant

Formula and Related Labeling Requirements; Confirmation of Effective Date [Docket No.: FDA-2013-N-0067] received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3218. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.1216 of the Commission's Rules Related to Broadcast Licensee-Conducted Contests [MB Docket No.: 14-226] [RM-11684] received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3219. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3220. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive and Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3221. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3222. A letter from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-277; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3223. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Alaska; Hunting and Trapping in National Preserves [NPS-AKRO-18755; PPAKAKROZ5, PPMPRLE1Y.L00000] (RIN: 1024-AE21) received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3224. A letter from the General Counsel, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — List of Pro Bono Legal Service Providers for Individuals in Immigration Proceedings [EOIR Docket No.: 164P; A.G. Order No.: 3565-2015] (RIN: 1125-AA62) received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3225. A letter from the General Counsel, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Separate Representation for Custody and Bond Proceedings [EOIR Docket No.: 181; AG Order No.: 3563-2015] (RIN: 1125-AA78) received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3226. A letter from the Principal Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Administrative Wage Garnishment Procedures (RIN: 1290-AA27) received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251;; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3227. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Temporary Agricultural Employment of H-2A Foreign Workers in the Herding or Production of Livestock on the Range in the United States (RIN: 1205-AB70) received October 19, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3228. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled ''Recovery Auditing in Medicare for Fiscal Year 2014'', in accordance with Sec. 1893(h) of the Social Security Act; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. MILLER of Florida: Committee on Veterans' Affairs. H.R. 1384. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law (Rept. 114–302). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WOODALL: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 483. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3762) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016; waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules; and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 114–303). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia:

H.R. 3776. A bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to provide for automatic continuing resolutions; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. RIGELL:

H.R. 3777. A bill to provide for relief from sequester under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 and offsets to such relief through reforms in certain revenue and direct spending programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on the Budget, Energy and Commerce, the Judiciary, Education and the Workforce, Oversight and Government Reform, Homeland Security, Financial Services, 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. DUFFY (for himself and Mr. RIBBLE):

H.R. 3778. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to vehicle weight limitations for certain logging vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. VALADAO (for himself, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. KNIGHT, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. COOK, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. COSTA, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. JONES, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. DENHAM, and Mr. DESAULNIER):

H.R. 3779. A bill to restrict the inclusion of social security account numbers on documents sent by mail by the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. ZINKE):

H.R. 3780. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to sunset certain penalties relating to meaningful electronic health records use by Medicare eligible professionals and hospitals, 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 Mr. DOGGETT (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mrs. DINGELL, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. COHEN, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 3781. A bill to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to invest in funding prevention and family services to help keep children safe and supported at home with their families, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. VARGAS):

H.R. 3782. A bill to amend the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to eliminate the use of valid court orders to secure lockup of status offenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. VARGAS):

H.R. 3783. A bill to provide definitions of terms and services related to community-based gang intervention to ensure that funding for such intervention is utilized in a cost-effective manner and that community-based agencies are held accountable for providing holistic, integrated intervention services, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CARNEY (for himself, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. CRENSHAW):

H.R. 3784. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to establish an Office of the Advocate for Small Business Capital Formation and a Small Business Capital Formation Advisory Committee, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 3785. A bill to prohibit Executive agencies from using the derogatory term ''alien'' to refer to an individual who is not a citizen or national of the United States, to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, to establish a uniform definition for the term ''foreign national'', 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 Mrs. DAVIS of California (for herself and Mr. PETERS):

H.R. 3786. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Truth in Lending Act to clarify the application of prepayment amounts on student loans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on 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. DESAULNIER (for himself, Mrs. BUSTOS, and Mr. CRAWFORD):

H.R. 3787. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to improve public understanding of how transportation investments are made by public agencies through establishing greater transparency and accountability processes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 3788. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to develop performance measures for assessing transportation connectivity and accessibility for highway and public transportation systems, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GUINTA:

H.R. 3789. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish a memorial headstone or marker to commemorate an eligible individual whose remains are identified and available but the location of the gravesite is unknown; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3790. A bill to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. LOVE (for herself and Mr. LUETKEMEYER):

H.R. 3791. A bill to raise the consolidated assets threshold under the small bank holding company policy statement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. MOORE:

H.R. 3792. A bill to assist young adults with obtaining or regaining driver's licenses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida (for himself, Mr. DEUTCH, and Ms. BONAMICI):

H.R. 3793. A bill to amend the Older Americans Act of 1965 to provide equal treatment of LGBT older individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROSS (for himself and Mr. PERLMUTTER):

H.R. 3794. A bill to amend the Liability Risk Retention Act of 1986 to expand the types of commercial insurance authorized for risk retention groups serving nonprofit organizations and educational institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:

H.R. 3795. A bill to improve certain provisions relating to charter schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. WALKER:

H.R. 3796. A bill to amend section 232 of the National Housing Act to provide that nursing homes receiving low ratings for purposes of the Medicare or Medicaid programs are ineligible for mortgage insurance under such section, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CHABOT:

H. Res. 484. A resolution congratulating the Government and people of the Republic of Turkey as they celebrate Republic Day, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. MCSALLY (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. COOK, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. PERRY, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. SALMON, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. ZINKE, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. DOLD, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. ROUZER, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. DENT, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. GOSAR, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. KATKO, Mr. CRENSHAW, and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H. Res. 485. A resolution expressing solidarity with the people of Israel in the wake of recent terrorist attacks and condemning the Palestinian Authority for inciting an atmosphere of violence; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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. MOONEY of West Virginia:

H.R. 3776.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution:

''The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, inposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''

Article I, Section 9 of the Constitution:

''No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statemetn and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. RIGELL:

H.R. 3777.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 11: ''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.''

Article 1, 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 Constitition in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or officer thereof.''

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 3778.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. VALADAO:

H.R. 3779.

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.

By Mr. KING of Iowa:

H.R. 3780.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. DOGGETT:

H.R. 3781.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CÁRDENAS:

H.R. 3782.

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. CÁRDENAS:

H.R. 3783.

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. CARNEY:

H.R. 3784.

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. CASTRO of Texas:

H.R. 3785.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Constitutional Authority—Necessary and Proper Clause (Art. I, Sec. 8, Clause 18)

THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I, SECTION 8: POWERS OF CONGRESS

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 Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 3786.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. DESAULNIER:

H.R. 3787.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 3788.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States, which states:

The 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. GUINTA:

H.R. 3789.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section VIII, Clause XVIII—The Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying in to execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested . . .

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 3790.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mrs. LOVE:

H.R. 3791.

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 Ms. MOORE:

H.R. 3792.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 3793.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 3794.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Clause 3.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio:

H.R. 3795.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

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. WALKER:

H.R. 3796.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Sec. 8, Cl. 1, 3, and 18 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 169: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 224: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. HAHN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. KEATING, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SIRES, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 226: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.

H.R. 290: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 309: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 343: Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. POLIQUIN.

H.R. 379: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 425: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 532: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 542: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 556: Mr. BOST.

H.R. 581: Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 592: Ms. MCSALLY and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 703: Mr. HOLDING.

H.R. 731: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 746: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 775: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 814: Mr. KATKO.

H.R. 836: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 842: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 850: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 870: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 921: Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 938: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 953: Ms. LEE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 985: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 989: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 1019: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1061: Ms. LEE and Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 1062: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.

H.R. 1090: Mr. JOLLY.

H.R. 1178: Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 1185: Mr. DOLD.

H.R. 1211: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1220: Mr. HURD of Texas, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. COLE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. REED, Ms. ESTY, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. BASS, and Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 1258: Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 1266: Mr. ZINKE.

H.R. 1301: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. MACARTHUR.

H.R. 1309: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.

H.R. 1312: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.

H.R. 1343: Mrs. DAVIS of California and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 1384: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia and Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 1388: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.

H.R. 1401: Mr. KEATING, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 1430: Mr. HOLDING.

H.R. 1453: Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 1457: Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 1475: Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. COOK, and Mr. NORCROSS.

H.R. 1542: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 1567: Mr. JOLLY, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 1651: Mrs. LOVE.

H.R. 1680: Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 1692: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 1726: Mr. RANGEL and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 1733: Ms. NORTON and Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 1737: Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. MARINO, and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.R. 1747: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1758: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 1761: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 1769: Mr. LUCAS and Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 1786: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. HECK of Washington, and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 1793: Mr. ZINKE and Mr. SIMPSON.

H.R. 1834: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 1855: Mr. HECK of Washington and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1858: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1901: Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 1933: Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 1941: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 1942: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. NEAL, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 1943: Mr. VISCLOSKY.

H.R. 1964: Mr. DENT, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 1966: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1974: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 2050: Ms. MOORE, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 2090: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 2121: Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. WILLIAMS, and Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 2156: Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 2205: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 2209: Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 2224: Ms. CASTOR of Florida and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 2257: Mr. BUCK.

H.R. 2260: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 2287: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 2293: Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. NEAL, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. VELA, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 2380: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2406: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2494: Mrs. LOVE and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 2530: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 2536: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.

H.R. 2546: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 2566: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2588: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 2590: Mr. ASHFORD.

H.R. 2597: Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 2612: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 2613: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 2646: Mr. ZINKE, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. POMPEO.

H.R. 2654: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 2689: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 2710: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. LABRADOR.

H.R. 2726: Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 2738: Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 2753: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 2759: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 2799: Mr. STUTZMAN and Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2805: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 2823: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 2844: Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 2847: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2849: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 2858: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 2903: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 2911: Mr. WELCH, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BARLETTA, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. YODER.

H.R. 2939: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 2944: Mr. DOLD and Ms. GABBARD.

H.R. 2957: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 2994: Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 3024: Mrs. NOEM and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 3026: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 3033: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3051: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 3064: Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 3067: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 3094: Mr. MICA.

H.R. 3126: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 3137: Mr. JOLLY.

H.R. 3150: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3180: Mr. MOULTON and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 3190: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 3193: Miss RICE of New York.

H.R. 3201: Mr. CURBELO of Florida and Mr. BECERRA.

H.R. 3226: Ms. NORTON and Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 3229: Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 3235: Mr. LYNCH and Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 3255: Mr. BOST and Mr. HURD of Texas.
H.R. 3296: Mr. ADERHOLT.
H.R. 3299: Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California and Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H.R. 3314: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 3326: Mr. CARNEY and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3351: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 3355: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 3364: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico and Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 3378: Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 3381: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 3395: Mr. DESAULNIER and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 3411: Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3423: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 3427: Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3455: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3459: Mr. WOMACK and Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 3471: Mr. COOK, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 3473: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 3484: Mr. KNIGHT, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Ms. HAHN.
H.R. 3488: Mr. LABRADOR.
H.R. 3516: Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. BOST, Mr. HARDY, and Mr. BENISHEK.
H.R. 3537: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H.R. 3539: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. DOLD.
H.R. 3549: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 3558: Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 3573: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3618: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 3626: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 3632: Mr. ELLISON and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 3655: Mr. LUCAS.
H.R. 3659: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 3661: Mr. POLIQUIN.
H.R. 3666: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 3683: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 3686: Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 3692: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 3696: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. CUELLAR, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SIRES, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 3699: Mr. LUCAS.
H.R. 3709: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 3711: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3726: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 3733: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
H.R. 3740: Mrs. NAPOLITANO and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 3743: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 3756: Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. HONDA, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. POLIQUIN.
H.J. Res. 29: Mr. JOLLY.
H.J. Res. 67: Mr. LUCAS.
H.J. Res. 68: Mr. LUCAS.
H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mrs. ROBY, and Mr. DONOVAN.
H. Con. Res. 40: Ms. CLARKE of New York and Ms. GABBARD.
H. Con. Res. 75: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. TONKO, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. LEE, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. NEAL, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. MOOLENAAR.
H. Con. Res. 80: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H. Res. 28: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H. Res. 54: Ms. DELAURO and Mr. ZINKE.
H. Res. 110: Mr. ISRAEL.
H. Res. 293: Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. LATTA, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. DENT, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H. Res. 393: Mr. FATTAH, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. COHEN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. WELCH.
H. Res. 416: Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. CALVERT.
H. Res. 417: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
H. Res. 428: Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H. Res. 433: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H. Res. 443: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
H. Res. 445: Mrs. BUSTOS and Ms. BONAMICI.
H. Res. 471: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. TAKAI, and Mr. TAKANO.
H. Res. 475: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H. Res. 479: Mr. KING of New York.

United States of America

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2015 No. 154

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.

Eternal Spirit, for the beauty of the Earth and the glories of the skies, we praise You. For Your love that extends to us undeserved mercies, we lift our hearts in grateful thanksgiving.

In this challenging season of our national life, give our lawmakers the wisdom to look to You. May they remember that You are the author and finisher of our Nation's destiny, guiding us with Your prevailing providence. Lord, inspire our Senators to remove obstacles that hinder them from accomplishing Your purposes. May they seek only to please You.

God of grace and glory, thank You for continuing to be our refuge and strength.

We pray in Your Holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The Democratic leader is recognized.

BENGHAZI SELECT COMMITTEE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, former First Lady, U.S. Senator of the State of New York, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will testify before the so-called Benghazi Select Committee tomorrow. In recent weeks, it has become absolutely clear that this committee is nothing more than a political hit job on Hillary Clinton.

I remember a program, ''Queen for a Day.'' I guess this is ''Speaker for the Day.'' Republican Majority Leader of the House of Representatives MCCARTHY—here is what he said on a TV show, radio show, or whatever it was:

Everybody thought Hillary Clinton was unbeatable, right? But we put together a Benghazi special committee, a select committee. What are her numbers today? Her numbers are dropping.

Well, that is one reason he was Speaker for the day. There were other reasons, of course. But he told the truth. He told the truth. Congressman MCCARTHY isn't the only Republican to speak the truth about this so-called committee. Last week Republican Congressman RICHARD HANNA of New York said:

Sometimes the biggest sin you can commit in D.C. is to tell the truth. This may not be politically correct, but I think that there was a big part of this investigation that was designed to go after people and an individual, Hillary Clinton. After what Kevin McCarthy said, it's difficult to accept at least a part of it was not true. I think that's the way Washington works. But you'd like to expect more from a committee that's spent millions of dollars and tons of time.

That is an understatement—about $5 million just for this one select committee. There have been other hearings that have cost huge amounts of taxpayer dollars. They are going again tomorrow, and they said be ready for 8 hours—8 hours of interrogation. And that is what it is, an interrogation.

These two quotes are from two House Republicans. HANNA from New York is not a Democrat, he is a Republican.

The message is clear: The Benghazi Committee is a political calculation meant to influence Presidential elections. And there is more. Now we have found out that one of the Republican staffers on the committee claims that he—the staffer—was unfairly fired because he refused to unfairly target Secretary Clinton. But what else could be expected from a committee whose sole purpose is to drag a Presidential hopeful through the mud?

It is no secret that for the last 2 years, numerous Republican-directed organizations with huge amounts of money have been targeting Hillary Clinton—for more than 2 years—because they knew she would likely run for President and they wanted to soften her up, just as MCCARTHY said.

Look at the committee's record. In 17 months, committee Republicans have held a whopping three hearings—in 17 months. Tomorrow's hearing will be the first public hearing since January. It is October. October is winding down. Instead, Republican Chairman TREY GOWDY and his committee have focused millions of dollars and thousands of staff hours on Hillary Clinton—and Hillary Clinton only. The committee has interviewed or deposed eight Clinton campaign staffers. Yet Chairman GOWDY has held only one hearing with an expert from the intelligence community and not a single hearing with anyone from the Department of Defense, which is clearly a key entity responding to attacks on our diplomatic post. And what have they learned in all that time? Nothing. A recent report by the Democrats on the Benghazi Select Committee confirms that none of the witnesses they interviewed supported any of the wild conspiracy theories regarding those attacks.

Contrast the Benghazi Committee with the work of the legally required investigation of these attacks, the Accountability Review Board. This independent review was overseen by respected leaders, Ambassador Thomas Pickering, who is one of the great diplomats of our time, and ADM Michael Mullen. They completed their work in less than 3 months, not 17 months. The review board immediately put out a hard-hitting report with a series of recommendations to make sure an attack

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

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like this doesn't happen someplace else around the world. And what was Secretary Clinton's reaction to that report? She took responsibility immediately and began to implement the recommendations from the Accountability Review Board.

In summary, Republicans spent at least $5 million to attack Secretary Clinton. On this one committee, this one select committee, they have spent $4.7 or $4.8 million. Republicans have done little to investigate the Benghazi attacks. And what little work House Republicans actually did only reconfirmed the basic findings of all three of these previous investigations.

House Republicans sadly have used the tragic deaths of four innocent Americans and turned it into an appalling political farce. The very notion that an official House committee was used as a political tool is inexcusable. I would suggest that the chairman of that committee should be ashamed of himself. It is even more disgraceful when nearly 5 million taxpayer dollars were spent on this political hit job.

Senate Democrats will continue to fight to get this sham of a committee disbanded. Weeks ago, we sent a letter to Speaker BOEHNER urging him to bring this disgraceful committee to an end, but, no, they are plodding forward. Today, Senate Democrats sent a letter to the Republican National Committee requesting that it reimburse the American people for the Benghazi Committee's expenses. Why did we do that? It is only fair since the so-called committee is clearly a Republican political organization.

CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION SHARING BILL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Senate turns its attention to the cybersecurity bill. It is way overdue. The bill, which is OK, is better than nothing—let's put it that way.

The ranking member of the Intelligence Committee, Senator FEINSTEIN, and the chairman of that committee, Senator BURR, have worked hard on this legislation, which addresses a serious national security issue. In fact, it is so serious that we should have addressed this topic long ago. We tried to. As Senate Democrats, we tried so very hard. We had a comprehensive cybersecurity bill on the floor 3 years ago which was much deeper and better than this one—3 years ago—but our Republican colleagues blocked us from even debating the bill. We couldn't even debate the bill. Why? They, the Republicans, were told the chamber of commerce didn't like it. At about the same time, the chamber of commerce's whole operation was hacked by the Chinese. The people who worked down there expected things to come out in English, but they came out in Chinese. But they didn't like the bill anyway, so they told the Republicans to oppose it, and they marched over here and opposed it.

Democrats, however, realize cybersecurity is a serious issue. We know how important cybersecurity is for the national security of our country and the financial security of our economy.

Even though this bill is not our perfect bill, we are going to cooperate with our Republican colleagues. Several months ago we reached an agreement with Republicans to begin debating this legislation, and now we can process it in an efficient and bipartisan manner.

Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein.

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

I withdraw that. The reason we were going to have a quorum call—I know other people want to have a chance to speak, but Senator MCCONNELL is on his way.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

DRUG ABUSE EPIDEMIC

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, before discussing the bill currently before the Senate, I would like to note that President Obama will be heading to West Virginia today with Drug Czar Botticelli to announce additional steps the Federal Government will take to address America's prescription drug abuse and heroin epidemic.

This epidemic has been particularly devastating to my constituents. Today, drug overdoses—principally driven by painkillers—claim more Kentucky lives than car accidents. Today, increased heroin overdose rates account for nearly one-third of all drug overdose deaths in the Commonwealth. Today, thousands of innocent babies are born dependent on opioids.

I recently hosted Director Botticelli in Kentucky to discuss critical issues such as these. I am encouraged to see him and the President engaged and proposing certain steps that my home State of Kentucky has already embraced.

Drug abuse certainly isn't a partisan issue. Many Members of the Senate are actively engaged on the matter. I know the President will be joined today by West Virginia's Republican Senator and Democratic Senator. Finding solutions to this epidemic will require all of us, Republicans and Democrats alike, to work together at the Federal, State, and local levels. Today's announcement is encouraging because it is always positive to see Republicans and Democrats working together to address this epidemic.

Here is another bipartisan opportunity for us to work together on this issue: Let's pass S. 799, the Protecting Our Infants Act. I hope the Senate will pass that important bipartisan legislation very soon.

CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION SHARING BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, earlier this year, millions of people were affected when the Obama administration was hit by a devastating cyber attack. It is an attack that has been described as ''one of the worst breaches in U.S. history,'' but it is hardly the last one we will face.

The challenges posed by cyber attacks are real, and they are broad. They threaten governments, businesses, and individuals. Americans see these threats in the public sector. For instance, as reports have indicated, the sensitive personal information of millions who purchase insurance through ObamaCare is especially vulnerable. Americans see these threats in the private sector as well. For instance, despite the cyber deal recently agreed upon between China and the administration, press reports indicate that Chinese hacking attempts on American companies and businesses appear to be continuing unabated. Americans also know that a cyber attack is essentially a personal attack on their own privacy. It is violating to think of strangers digging through our medical records and emails. It is worrying to think of criminals accessing credit card numbers and Social Security information.

That is why the Senate will again consider bipartisan legislation to help Americans' most private and personal information. It would do so by defeating cyber attacks through the sharing of information. It contains modern tools that cybersecurity experts tell us could help prevent future attacks against both public and private sectors. It contains important measures to protect individual privacy and civil liberties. It has been carefully scrutinized by Senators of both parties. In short, this legislation is strong, transparent, and bipartisan. Republicans and Democrats joined together to pass this legislation through committee, the administration supports it, and the House has already passed similar legislation. With a little cooperation, we can pass it here shortly as well.

The chair of the Intelligence Committee, Senator BURR, is working to set votes on pending amendments and has accommodated other Senators in the form of a substitute amendment. I wish to thank him for his hard work on this legislation. I wish to also thank

the vice chair, Senator FEINSTEIN, as well. Every Senator should want to protect Americans' most private and personal information, which means every Senator should want to see this bill pass. With a little cooperation, we will.

OBAMACARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, barely a week goes by that we don't see another harmful consequence of ObamaCare, a poorly conceived and badly executed law. It has caused costs to millions of Americans. It has harmed the quality and availability of care. Now comes further evidence that ObamaCare is a mess of a law, filled with broken promises.

We recently learned the Kentucky Health Cooperative, a nonprofit health insurer created by ObamaCare with Federal taxpayer funds, will cease operations and stop offering health care plans at the end of the year. For the second time in as little as 3 years, as many as 51,000 Kentuckians will lose the health care coverage they currently have and will be forced to choose a new plan—all thanks to ObamaCare. This Kentucky co-op was a boondoggle from the start. It received nearly $150 million in Federal loans, including a solvency loan this past November in a failed taxpayer bailout to try to keep it afloat. It had the largest recorded loss of all 23 co-ops in our whole country. The Kentucky co-op had the biggest loss of any co-op in the whole country—more than $50 million in 2014.

Things were hardly much better for the Kentuckians who actually enrolled in it. Over the past 2 years, the co-op saw double-digit premium increases on the individual market. If it had survived, it was planning on increasing premiums for its members by 25 percent in 2016. If this contraption had survived into next year, it was going to increase premiums by 25 percent.

Here is what the Kentucky co-op's CEO said about this particular government-subsidized health care plan: ''In the plainest language, things have come up short of where they need to be.''

That is for sure. If only we would have that kind of honesty from the Obama administration on the many failures of ObamaCare. The collapse of the Kentucky co-op is emblematic of the situation across the land. The Obama administration claimed their government-subsidized co-ops would provide affordable and sustainable alternatives to private insurance. The truth is anything but that. What is even more disappointing is that the Obama administration itself predicted a nearly 40-percent default rate on its taxpayer loans to co-ops.

Now, 21 of 23 co-ops nationwide were losing money as of the end of last year. Enrollment in these co-ops fell below projections for the majority of plans. Kentucky's neighbor to the south, Tennessee, will shut down its co-op, leaving approximately 27,000 enrollees looking for new coverage at the end of the year. In Colorado, the State's biggest health insurer on their exchange—a nonprofit co-op—also announced its closure this month, forcing 83,000 Coloradans to find new insurance for next year. The same is true in Iowa, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, and Louisiana. From the bayous of Louisiana to the Pacific Northwest, from the Big Apple to the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains, ObamaCare co-ops are failing all over America. In all, one-third of the 23 ObamaCare health co-ops have failed, leaving about 400,000 policyholders nationwide looking for new coverage for 2016.

These failures of ObamaCare health co-ops come as absolutely no surprise to those of us who predicted that giving the government more control of our health care system would be detrimental to the health care coverage people rely on. I said so on the Senate floor as far back as 2009.

The administration knew beforehand that this plan was not viable and that tens of thousands of people could lose their coverage. They chose to cling fast to a disastrous leftwing experiment with our health care system over choosing stability and affordable coverage for the many people caught up in ObamaCare and these failed health co-ops. What a colossal mess.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to associate myself with the remarks of the majority leader and point out in today's New York Times, Wednesday, October 21, the big headline—''Insurance Out of Reach for Many, Despite Law.'' Despite this law, insurance is out of reach for many. I know my colleagues who were back home visiting with people around their home State last week, listening to what was on constituents' minds, heard exactly this—the problems of the health care law.

I was at home in Wyoming, and I heard from a lot of people who are very concerned about President Obama's collapsing health care law. That is what this law is doing; it is collapsing. People in Wyoming learned that one insurance company—WINhealth—will no longer be selling insurance through the ObamaCare exchange in our State. The company said it had to stop selling ObamaCare plans because there was no way to make money without big taxpayer subsidies coming from Washington. This company was already planning to raise rates significantly next year, and it turns out that even that wasn't going to be enough money to make it worthwhile. In less than 2 weeks, ObamaCare exchanges across the country will start selling insurance for next year. The total number of companies left selling insurance in the exchange for the State of Wyoming will be exactly one—one. There will be no competition at all in the ObamaCare exchange. If your doctor doesn't take that insurance, you are out of luck. If you can't afford it, you are out of luck. Is that how ObamaCare was supposed to work? Is that what the President promised the American people?

I got an email from one of my constituents yesterday—Al Harris, a great guy, in Green River, WY, and he wrote: ''HELP!!!!!!'' He said: ''WINHealth has become the latest casualty of ObamaCare.'' Al says that at his business ''I have about 30 people that now will have no insurance . . . at least not this insurance. I am scrambling with few options and I'm convinced any option will be substantially more expensive.'' Al said: ''This train wreck needs to be stopped.''

I agree. President Obama and Democrats in Congress made a mess of the health care system in our country, but they said they had a better way of doing things. They said they knew best how to create competition and how health care should operate in America. They created all these Washington mandates. They required people to buy expensive coverage that was more than most people wanted, needed or could afford. Then they created the exchanges where people could buy this new, expensive Washington-mandated insurance coverage. Now the people of Wyoming are left with one option on the ObamaCare exchange. Buy this insurance from this one company or the IRS will come knocking at your door to collect a big tax penalty. The penalty is going up next year.

Because of the significant failures of the Obama administration, rural Americans now have fewer choices. It is not just in Wyoming. We learned last week that insurance co-ops in Colorado, Oregon, and Tennessee are all closing their doors. Why? Because they have lost so much money. Eight of the twenty-three health care co-ops in the country have collapsed, completely collapsed in the last couple of months. Co-ops have closed in New York, Kentucky—as the majority leader said—in Louisiana, in Nevada, in Iowa, and Nebraska. Many are in rural areas where people already don't have a lot of choice.

We are talking about one-half million people who are going to lose their coverage, losing their insurance. Remember that promise President Obama made: If you like your coverage, you can keep your coverage. Where is the President now? The President says the health care law is working better than he even thought. Amazing. ObamaCare created these co-ops claiming to provide low-cost insurance. Then it saddled each of them with so many mandates and so many restrictions that they needed massive taxpayer bailouts. All together, these failed co-ops collected nearly $900 million already in taxpayer loans to get the help they needed to get going. That is how President Obama put this together.

Now these co-ops have sunk, others are sinking, and they are taking the taxpayer loans with them. The ones that are trying to survive have been saying we are going to have to hike our rates. The co-op in Utah plans to raise its premiums by 58 percent starting in January just to be able to stay open. Is that what the President promised when he said rates would drop $2,500 per family?

In Montana, the rates are set to go up 43 percent for some co-op plans. That is not what anyone in America needed, and it is certainly not what rural Americans need. President Obama said the American people were going to get more choices—more choices—because of his law instead of getting fewer choices. Yet he stands up and boldly says it is working better than he expected.

ObamaCare created the illusion of coverage. Now even the illusion is disappearing. What is even worse for rural Americans is that it is not just the coverage that is turning out to be an illusion under ObamaCare. The care is actually disappearing. Earlier this month, we learned that Mercy Hospital in Independence, KY, will be closing soon. This is the 56th rural hospital to close in the United States since 2010 when ObamaCare became law. Another 238 hospitals are in danger of closing. The added expense, the regulations, and the other destructive side effects of ObamaCare are a big reason for this. The patients who rely on these hospitals will have to find some other place to go to get their medical care—somewhere further away from home.

Democrats in Congress—many who live in big cities—may take for granted they can get to a hospital quickly. It is not the case in rural America. As a doctor who has practiced medicine for 25 years, I can tell you that the extra time people spend traveling to a hospital can make all the difference in the world between life and death. For someone who has had a heart attack or has been in a traffic accident or for a woman with a high-risk pregnancy, every minute counts. Only 20 percent of the U.S. population lives in rural areas, and these areas account for 60 percent of all trauma deaths. Americans living in these rural areas don't and didn't need President Obama making it tougher for their rural local hospital to stay open. Mercy Hospital was the center of medical care in the community for 100 years. It has provided jobs for nearly 200 people.

In many parts of the country, such as in Independence, KS, and in much of my home State of Wyoming, the local hospital can be the biggest employer in the community. If the hospital closes, these people lose their jobs and the tax base for the community goes down, which means fewer services, such as schools, firefighters, and public safety, and maybe the local restaurant or florist won't have enough business to stay open. Nurses, teachers, and other workers may move away looking for a better opportunity somewhere else. It would also make it harder for the town to attract new businesses, new doctors, and more teachers, and the town suffers.

That is what these communities across America are facing. Is that what President Obama promised the American people? Is that how ObamaCare was supposed to work?

Ezekiel Emanuel is one of the President's architects of the health care law. He says that shutting down 56 hospitals is not enough. He has actually written a book about this. It is astonishing. The architect of the President's health care law has written a book, and he says that over the next few years—between now and 2020—more than 1,000 hospitals will close. There will be 1,000 American communities where people will be farther away from medical care. We will have 1,000 American towns in danger because of the lost jobs and lost health care.

There is no dispute that we needed health care reform in this country. We did not need this destructive, disruptive, and dangerous ObamaCare law. It has been bad for patients, it has been bad for the providers—the nurses and doctors who take care of those patients—and it has been terrible for the American taxpayers. It has been especially hard on rural communities.

We have to do something to stop this corrosive condition that causes hospitals to close, insurance co-ops to collapse, and health care choices to disappear.

Democrats in Congress need to sit down with Republicans and start talking about the kind of health care reforms that the American people need, want, and deserve.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Indiana.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I return to the floor this week for my 24th edition of ''Waste of the Week.'' I have been coming down every week that Congress has been in session during this cycle talking about waste, fraud, and abuse of hard-earned taxpayer dollars. This is the 24th edition, and today I want to highlight improper Medicare payments.

We all know that Medicare is important to our older citizens, of which I am one. Tens of millions of Americans depend on Medicare for their health care coverage, and we all know that we have the responsibility here in this body to preserve these important health benefits for those who depend on them. Preserving these benefits is protecting Medicare from waste, fraud, and abuse. Unfortunately, throughout the history of Medicare, it has been plagued by improper payments, and it is shocking to hear the numbers.

The Government Accountability Office has reported that improper Medicare payments totaled nearly $60 billion in 2014 alone, and over the last 10 years, there has been $336 billion of improper payments in the Medicare system. This figure does not even include improper payments for certain Medicare programs whose record keeping does not date back that far.

Examples of improper Medicare payments include services that are not medically necessary, duplicative billing for services by providers, ineligible practice locations, and spending on services that actually never took place. Yes, actions that never took place have been billed to the government. It wasn't discovered until later that those reimbursements were improper, and it is rampant. This is taking money out of American people's pockets. It is also denying those who have Medicare the coverage that they are entitled to under the program. It is driving Medicare down a road to insolvency that we are going to have to deal with, and I think we should have been dealing with it over the past few years.

Since we can't summon the political will—to my great distress—to recognize the fact that Medicare is careening toward insolvency at some point, which will result in significantly cutting benefits for current members receiving benefits under Medicare or require massive tax increases to cover the deficit, one of the areas we can deal with now is to at least address those issues where we know that abuse has taken place.

This is the 24th time I have come down to the floor to talk about this issue, and I have this chart with a thermometer on it to demonstrate the spending that has taken place. We wanted to reach the goal of defining $100 billion of waste, fraud, and abuse. Well, we shot way past that. I mean, we just can't catch up with it. These are matters that have been accounted for by the Government Accountability Office. This is not something that Republicans are just making up or drawing from anecdotal items that appear in the paper or are raised on the talk shows. These are examples of what we have already documented.

Every once in a while when I come down here, I could talk about the $60 billion, and we could add $60 billion to our climbing accountability of the total of waste, fraud, and abuse. But every fourth or fifth time I like to address something that is so egregious that it draws the public attention to say that we ought to look into this or to press their elected representatives to do something about this matter and say: Can you believe we are wasting money on something as frivolous as this?

The Washington Post recently said in an editorial about improper Federal payments: ''Every misspent dollar lining an undeserving pocket is a dollar not available for those who need the help.''

Now, from time, as I have said, I try to bring up something that catches the

public interest. We have talked about Federal grants that were used to prove that massaging of rabbits—using rabbits as an example—makes them feel better after a strenuous workout. I think most of us could have figured that out without having to spend some $300,000. I think it was even more than that—as a grant. Somebody came to the conclusion that this would be a worthy project and a good use of taxpayer dollars. That got a lot of attention.

Today I will talk about improper payments that were made to ambulance suppliers. Medicare coverage allows ambulance transports when a patient's medical condition at the time of transport is such that any other means of transportation would endanger the patient's health.

If something happens with the patient at home where the spouse decides to drive the patient to the hospital but then comes to the conclusion that, no, that could potentially endanger the person's health further and decides to call 911 instead for an ambulance and they decide they need to transport this person so he or she has medical care on the way to the hospital, then a person is eligible under Medicare for transportation by the ambulance if they can prove that is necessary. The transport has to be for a patient who has a condition that is covered under Medicare in order to get a ride home from the hospital. So the patient gets transferred both to the medical provider, usually the hospital, and is then transported back to his or her house if it is medically necessary.

As a further requirement to qualify for the reimbursement, the provider who is providing the ambulance service has to meet specific qualifications in addition to what I just said. It can only be transportation that takes you to a hospital, a skilled nursing facility or a dialysis facility for certain patients, and then the ambulance can take them back home after they have received the care. Unfortunately, even with these guidelines, fraud is taking place and millions of taxpayer dollars are being wasted.

A recent report by the inspector general from the Department of Health and Human Services, which oversees Medicare, found that Medicare made $207 million in questionable ambulance service payments during the first half of 2012. Shockingly, these payments include $30 million where Medicare paid for transportation even though the beneficiaries may not have received any Medicare services at either the time of pickup or dropoff or at the locations or anywhere else. Thus, we are talking about millions of taxpayer dollars that may have been spent on phantom transports.

These improper charges were made and sent to Washington and the ambulance services were reimbursed.

Can you imagine an ambulance with its lights flashing and going down the road on its way to the hospital while cars pull over to the side of the road, as we are required to do, because presumably the person in the ambulance is in danger and their health is at risk? They need to get them to the hospital or maybe the person needs dialysis and doesn't have means of transportation. No, these may be empty ambulances with their lights flashing—cars pulling over. Then they bill the government and are getting reimbursements for the trip to and from the hospital. There has been $207 million of documented improper billing for these services.

Let me give one example. One of those services is a Pennsylvania company that fraudulently billed Medicare $3.6 million for transports, and the supplier recruited patients that did not require any transport. They made a deal with them. They said: Look, we are going to use your name to submit the billing for reimbursement. We know that you don't need the transportation for anything, but we need to document this so we can get our money back. So what we will do is give you part of the reimbursement. We will pay you some of the money that we get if you will allow us to use your name and identity—maybe your Social Security number or Medicare card number—and you will be in on the deal. So if you get a call from an inspector or somebody trying to verify this reimbursement, say: Yeah, I had to go to the hospital or dialysis, and yes, that was a legitimate charge. This company was finally identified after charging $3.6 million for transportation that did not meet Medicare coverage requirements.

You might say: OK, that is one company charged with fraud. You read about that in the paper. The inspector general found that one out of every five suppliers had a questionable billing practice, and that is how it totals up to $207 million. Clearly, this is a problem that has to be addressed, and if we address this problem, we can save the taxpayer money or we can at least make sure that this money is going to cover the necessary medical treatment for those under Medicare. With 10,000 retirees entering the Medicare program every day, we need to slow down the movement toward insolvency. We need to deal with that here in Congress. We should have been dealing with this issue before. So by putting these proper safeguards in place, over $207 million in questionable ambulance services could be eliminated and taxpayers' dollars could be saved.

This is a small addition to an ever-growing list of savings to the taxpayer if we can eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse.

I will bring up my chart. As I said before, we used to have a thermometer here to show this, how we were creeping up, and it went so high, it started going to the ceiling. We now have a total of $117,141,182,855 and change in terms of waste, fraud, and abuse. We will be back next week for the next installment of many more to come.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, last night the National Defense Authorization Act arrived at the White House and on the desk of the President of the United States. President Obama has said he is going to veto it or he has threatened to veto it. I rise on the floor of the Senate today to beg him to rethink his position and caution him before he moves too swiftly to send the message to the rest of the world that America is disengaged. If he vetoes the National Defense Authorization Act, he is convincing and confirming for Vladimir Putin, Kim Jong Un, the Chinese Government, the Ayatollah in Iran, and the rest of the world that America is relegating itself to a spectator on the sidelines of world affairs rather than a beacon of hope for the oppressed, those in search of democracy, and those who are at the feet of dictators.

It is time that we make sure our military is funded and authorized to the levels that are necessary to confront the world's challenges, which are more today than I have ever seen. I have just returned from the Mediterranean, where I was on the USS *Winston Churchill*, the destroyer that is dealing with some of the problems of the migration of people fleeing totalitarian governments in the Middle East. I was at Fort Gordon, GA, where the cyber command is now being set up by the U.S. Army. Cyber terrorism and cyber threats are the biggest threats we face today. I was at Fort Benning, and our Strykers in the brigade are there and in need of upgrades and continuation of improvements. I was at Fort Moody in Valdosta, GA, where the A–10s are housed, but they are going away unless we extend them, and this Defense authorization bill will do that.

While the rest of the world is burning and falling apart, this President is looking the other way and saying: No, I am not going to agree with the overwhelming majority of Congress. Instead, I am going to put America on the sidelines of world affairs.

We cannot afford for that to happen. We are the greatest country on the face of this Earth. We don't find anybody trying to break out of the United States of America; they are all trying to break in. But if we abandon our role of strength, we will never have the peace and the prosperity and the democracy we want to see around the world. Instead, we will be a second-string player in the influence of world affairs.

The National Defense Authorization Act is one thing the Congress—House and Senate alike—has agreed upon overwhelmingly. The vote in the Senate was a veto-proof vote. The vote in the House was a very significant vote. The President should read that to understand that the representatives of

the people are saying to him: We want America to be strong. We don't want our military to be reconstituted. We don't want the dictators of the world taking advantage of vacuums that we have created because we looked the other way and we abandoned ourselves.

We need to think about something and think about it closely. Right now in Greece, for example, half a million people in the last year have gone through there, fleeing Syria, trying to find their way to Europe—half a million. A million and a half will probably go through there next year. The world is trying to flee oppression and dictators wherever they are, and the rest of the free world cannot afford to take care of the rest of the world unless we stop what is happening in the Middle East.

Bashar Al-Assad should be stopped. The Russians should be asked to retrench and come back. We should get back to the table, being the strongest power in the world and being an effective player in the Middle East and being a power that is feared rather than one that is looked at and left wondering. America is abandoning the role it has always held since the end of World War II, and it would be a shame for us to do that.

So, Mr. President, let me ask you to do this: Think real hard before Halloween because that is when the time runs out and you have to either sign the bill or veto it. Think real hard about the America that you took over running as President of the United States 7 years ago. Think about how we got to where we are today. Think about all those who have sacrificed and who have lived and died, in some cases, to keep America free. Are you going to look them in the face or their memory in the face and say to them: I am just not going to reauthorize the National Defense Authorization Act. I would rather play politics with those who have fought and risked their lives for the United States of America.

In closing my remarks, I want to tell my colleagues what we did in the NDAA because I want the people of Georgia and the people of America to understand what the President will be vetoing.

He will be vetoing the improvements in our cyber command as we move our new cyber command of the U.S. Army to Fort Gordon.

He will be saying to Guantanamo Bay: It is OK, we can move the rest of the prisoners from Guantanamo Bay and move them into the United States of America and close Guantanamo Bay—because the NDAA bill prohibits that from happening.

He will be able to say to Stryker Brigade units: You will just have to wait a little bit longer for modernization.

He will have to say to our marines on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan and in the Middle East: We are going to do away with the A–10s, so you won't have the close air support you have to have in the infantry and in the military to fight the battles of the 21st century.

He will be saying to our veterans who come back home from around the world: No, we are not going to do job training so that you can easily transfer from the military into a meaningful job in the private sector.

He will say to husband and wives of military families: We are taking away your basic housing allowance because there are two of you in the same family getting it and we are cutting it in half. Even though you signed up for a program that guaranteed you would get it, we are cutting it in half and taking it away.

I don't want to be part of a country that says that to the men and women who volunteered to fight for us.

Let's send the right message to the rest of the world. Let's sign the National Defense Authorization Act. Let's not play politics with those who risked their lives. Let's remember we still are America, the greatest country on the face of this Earth. God has blessed us, but with that blessing comes responsibility. It means the President should act, act decisively, act now, and not veto the Defense Authorization Act.

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

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

FISCAL DEADLINES FACING AMERICA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, to paraphrase Ronald Reagan, ''Here we go again.''

Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has warned us that the Federal Government will bump up against the statutory debt ceiling on Tuesday, November 3. Shortly after that, on December 11, the fiscal year 2016 continuing resolution will expire, bringing the prospects of yet another government shutdown.

Absent a budget deal to suspend sequestration and lift the spending caps imposed under the Budget Control Act, we face draconian spending cuts that will harm both our economic recovery and our national security. Meanwhile, authority for the Export-Import Bank has expired already, and authority to spend surface transportation funding will expire at the end of this month.

This is no way to run a government. It is time to end this mindless fiscal brinkmanship and negotiate a comprehensive budget deal that resolves all of these issues. The American people demand and deserve no less. But first we must act on the debt ceiling.

With respect to the debt ceiling, Treasury Secretary Lew wrote to House Speaker JOHN BOEHNER on October 15 warning that extraordinary measures to forestall hitting the statutory debt ceiling will be exhausted as soon as November 3. At that point, the Federal Government will have a cash balance of about $30 billion but will be facing obligations totaling as much as $60 billion on certain days.

Secretary Lew wrote in his letter:

> Operating the United States government with no borrowing authority, with only the cash on hand on a given day, would be profoundly irresponsible. As I wrote previously, we anticipate that a remaining cash balance of less than $30 billion will be depleted quickly. In fact, we do not foresee any reasonable scenario in which it would last for an extended period of time. The government makes approximately 80 million payments a month, including Social Security and veteran benefits, military salaries, Medicare reimbursements, and many others. In the absence of congressional action, Treasury would be unable to satisfy all of these obligations for the first time in the history of the United States . . .
>
> The creditworthiness of the United States is an essential component of our strength as a nation. Protecting that strength is the sole responsibility of Congress, because only Congress can extend the nation's borrowing authority. Moreover, as you know, increasing the debt limit does not authorize any new spending. It simply allows Treasury to pay for expenditures Congress has approved, in full and on time.

I couldn't agree with Secretary Lew more. Raising the debt ceiling allows us to pay for what has already been appropriated by Congress for spending. This has nothing to do with how much we are going to spend as a nation; it has everything to do with whether we are going to honor our bills. The United States of America has to pay its bills. Just as when American families use a credit card, when a bill is due, it needs to be paid in a timely manner. At no time in our history has our country been unable or unwilling to pay its debts. Raising our debt ceiling has to be done—not so we can spend more, as Secretary Lew pointed out, but to pay the bills we already have. Default is not an option.

Some Republicans, particularly in the House, have suggested that the Federal Government can prioritize its payments to avoid a technical default. Some have dubbed this ''pay China first'' because, as my colleagues know, much of our public debt is held by the Chinese. It is disturbing that our Republican colleagues are considering such a proposal. It simply won't work. The Federal Government makes 80 million to 100 million payments monthly, including Social Security, veteran benefits, military salaries, and Medicare reimbursements. The Treasury Department doesn't have the manpower, the computer capability, or the guidelines to sort out who gets paid when.

The Bipartisan Policy Center has prepared a comprehensive analysis of what happens if we hit the so-called X-date without lifting the debt ceiling. As the Bipartisan Policy Center notes, ''The reality will be chaotic,'' with the Treasury Department being forced to pick ''winners'' and ''losers.'' We might have to shut down the entire Justice Department, the Federal courts, the

Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, and other agencies. These are critically important missions that people in this country depend upon. We might have to suspend tax refunds—refunds taxpayers desperately need. We might have to stop paying Federal workers, 30 percent of whom are veterans and contractors. As the Bipartisan Policy Center notes, ''On a day-to-day basis, handling all payments for important and popular programs, (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Defense, Military Active Duty Pay) will quickly become impossible.''

Delaying the decision to increase the debt limit jeopardizes our economy and our standing in the world. The mere suggestion that the Federal Government might miss a payment caused Standard & Poor's to downgrade our sovereign credit rating from AAA to AA-plus after the 2011 debt limit standoff.

A default is a default. We can't pick winners and losers. If we default on any of our debt, it will affect our creditworthiness and our bond ratings. If we don't transfer the payments to State and local governments—and a large part of our budget depends upon them receiving their Federal share of programs—it will cause State and local governments to default, affecting their bond ratings and increasing the cost of borrowing, a hidden tax—not a hidden tax—an additional tax to the taxpayers of this country.

During the last debt limit showdown in 2013, yields for targeted securities in secondary markets rose from 1 basis point in mid-September to over 50 basis points just prior to the resolution of the standoff in October. The Government Accounting Office estimates that the 2013 impasse cost the Federal Government between $38 million and $70 million in added interest payments to service the debt. This is what taxpayers had to pay because Congress did not in a timely way increase the debt limit. So it is not only the default, it is the time we take. We have to act now. We should have acted well before now. If we keep playing with fire, we are going to get burned and burned badly.

In addition to lifting the debt ceiling, which needs to be done first, we need to negotiate a comprehensive budget deal. Last week administration officials announced that the fiscal year 2015 deficit was $44 billion—$44 billion—less than the previous year. Last year's deficit was $439 billion. This is still too high, but let's put the number in context. It was the lowest share of our economy—at 2.5 percent—since 2007. As Treasury Secretary Lew pointed out, under the President's leadership, the deficit has been cut by roughly three-quarters as a share of the economy since 2009—the fastest sustained deficit reduction since just after World War II.

It is important to remember that the previous administration—the Bush administration—inherited the biggest surpluses in history and promptly squandered them on two ill-conceived tax cuts and a war in Iraq that was paid for on a credit card.

Then we had the biggest recession since the Great Depression. This was the situation the Obama administration inherited—from surpluses to deficits to recession. The Obama administration took effective, extraordinary measures to pull the economy back from the brink. Economists Alan Blinder and Mark Zandi, writing for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, estimated that without the measures taken in late 2008 and early 2009 the peak-to-trough decline in real gross domestic product, which was barely over 4 percent, would have been close to a stunning 14 percent; the economy would have contracted by more than 3 years, more than twice as long as it did; more than 17 million jobs would have been lost, about twice the actual number; the unemployment rates would have peaked at just under 16 percent, rather than the actual 10 percent; the budget deficit would have grown to more than 20 percent of GDP, about double the actual 10 percent, topping off at $2.8 trillion in fiscal year 2011.

My point is that the actions taken by the Obama administration pulled our economy out of recession and back to growth. It did it in a responsible manner. So we took emergency measures necessary to stop the economic free fall, and since then we have had the fastest deficit reduction since just after World War II.

We are now using a different policy, as we should. I mention that because our Republican colleagues want to cut domestic spending even more. That is not sustainable. As the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities noted last year, spending cuts have exceeded tax increases by a 3-to-1 margin already. Put another way, for every dollar of new revenue we have received, we have cut spending by $3.27. We have contracted, particularly on the discretionary domestic side.

We need to come together and negotiate a deal that keeps the Federal Government open, not shut. The 2013 shutdown, according to Moody's Analytics, cost the economy $20 billion and 120,000 jobs. Still, the so-called tea party Republicans and Presidential candidates want to shut down the government right before the holidays in a misguided notion that it will somehow prevent Planned Parenthood from providing health care services to low-income women and their families. Two years ago, the same individuals thought that shutting down the government would prevent the Affordable Care Act from being implemented. They were wrong then, and they are wrong now. The damage they did—and could do again—is to our economy and our standing in the world.

A realistic budget deal will need to protect Federal workers from further harm. Since 2011 Federal workers have contributed $159 billion to deficit reduction. Federal workers have contributed $159 billion to deficit reduction. They didn't cause the deficit. They have endured 3 years of pay freezes and two substandard pay increases since then for a total of $137 billion. They lost another billion dollars in pay because of sequestration-related furloughs. Federal employees hired in 2013 and since 2014 are paying an extra $21 billion for their pensions.

Each and every Federal worker is being asked to do more with less as agency budgets have been frozen or cut. This is happening to hardworking, patriotic public servants who are mostly middle class and struggling to get along as are so many other Americans. Enough is enough.

Since the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. population has increased by 76 percent and the private sector workforce has surged 133 percent, but the size of the Federal workforce has risen just 11 percent. Relative to the private sector, the Federal workforce is less than one-half the size it was back in the 1950s and 1960s. The picture that emerges is one of a Federal civilian workforce whose size has significantly shrunk compared to the U.S. population it serves, the private sector workforce, and the magnitude of its various missions and Federal expenditures.

Additionally, picking on Federal workers in a budget deal or shutting down the government hurts veterans. Over 30 percent of civilian Federal employees are veterans, compared to 7.8 percent of the non-Federal workforce. The Federal Government hires a lot more veterans—30 percent of our workforce—another reason we should be mindful of what we do to our Federal workforce. Do we really want to cut the pay and benefits for these individuals even more than we have already? Do we really want to force them to work during a shutdown but not pay them on time or force them to stay home involuntarily and have them worry about whether they will be paid at all? Is this how we want to honor the men and women who stood in harm's way to defend our Nation and who continue to serve us?

The missions that are carried out by our Federal workforce are great missions, and they perform more work in a smaller workforce. It is time to recognize what they do for our country. Preventing Federal workers from doing their jobs doesn't just harm them; it harms all Americans because Federal workers control our borders and make sure our air and water are clean and our food and drugs are safe. They support our men and women in uniform and care for our wounded warriors. They help our manufacturers compete abroad, discover cures for life-threatening diseases, and prosecute criminals and terrorists. They maintain and protect critical infrastructure, explore the universe, process passport applications, and make sure Social Security, Medicare, and other social safety net programs are functioning properly. When Federal workers do their jobs, they are

helping each and every American live a safer and more prosperous life.

Our tasks here in Congress should be straightforward. First, we need to raise the debt ceiling so we can continue to pay our bills and maintain the full faith and credit of the U.S. Government. Second, we need to keep the Federal Government open for business and keep the Federal workers on their jobs. Third, we need to negotiate a comprehensive budget deal that replaces sequestration—a budget that maintains critical Federal investments while spreading the burden of deficit reduction in a fair way and holding Federal workers and their families harmless after subjecting them to so much hardship over the past several months and years. Fourth, we need to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank, a bank that helps us with a level playing field on international commerce, particularly with small companies, and we must reauthorize our surface transportation program on a 6-year reauthorization. You can't do a major highway, bridge, or transit program with a Federal partner that gives only a couple months of commitment. We need to have a multi-year transportation reauthorization passed.

Heretofore, one of the greatest attributes of the American character has been pragmatism. We can acknowledge and respect our differences, but at the end of the day the American people have entrusted us with governing. That means being pragmatic, sitting down, listening to each other, compromising, and providing policies that will stand the test of time. Let us do our job on behalf of all Americans.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, morning business is closed.

CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION SHARING ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 754, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 754) to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Burr/Feinstein amendment No. 2716, in the nature of a substitute.

Burr (for Cotton) modified amendment No. 2581 (to amendment No. 2716), to exempt from the capability and process within the Department of Homeland Security communication between a private entity and the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the United States Secret Service regarding cybersecurity threats.

Feinstein (for Coons) modified amendment No. 2552 (to amendment No. 2716), to modify section 5 to require DHS to review all cyber threat indicators and countermeasures in order to remove certain personal information.

Burr (for Flake/Franken) amendment No. 2582 (to amendment No. 2716), to terminate the provisions of the Act after six years.

Feinstein (for Franken) modified amendment No. 2612 (to amendment No. 2716), to improve the definitions of cybersecurity threat and cyber threat indicator.

Burr (for Heller) modified amendment No. 2548 (to amendment No. 2716), to protect information that is reasonably believed to be personal information or information that identifies a specific person.

Feinstein (for Leahy) modified amendment No. 2587 (to amendment No. 2716), to strike the FOIA exemption.

Burr (for Paul) modified amendment No. 2564 (to amendment No. 2716), to prohibit liability immunity to applying to private entities that break user or privacy agreements with customers.

Feinstein (for Mikulski/Cardin) amendment No. 2557 (to amendment No. 2716), to provide amounts necessary for accelerated cybersecurity in response to data breaches.

Feinstein (for Whitehouse/Graham) modified amendment No. 2626 (to amendment No. 2716), to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect Americans from cybercrime.

Feinstein (for Wyden) modified amendment No. 2621 (to amendment No. 2716), to improve the requirements relating to removal of personal information from cyber threat indicators before sharing.

SENTENCING REFORM AND CORRECTIONS ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, it is easy for the public and the press to focus on the issues that divide us in Washington, DC, and around the country. In fact, in Washington, DC, that is a world-class sport—focusing on division, the things that separate us, the things where we clearly can't agree, on occasion—but today I am happy to highlight an area marked by broad consensus and true bipartisan spirit.

In my time in the Senate I have learned that neither political party can get what they want done if they try to do it alone. The only way things happen are when consensus is achieved, and that takes a lot of hard work, a lot of cooperation, and a lot of collaboration. If your goal is 100 percent of what you want or nothing, my experience is you get nothing here.

I know ''compromise'' sometimes is a dirty word in today's lexicon. I was just rereading a quote from Ronald Reagan, somebody conservatives look to as an example of the iconic conservative leader. He was pretty clear that if he could get 75 to 80 percent of what he wanted to achieve, he would say: I will take it, and I will fight about the rest of it another day.

But the good news is we have found a way, amidst a lot of the division and polarization here, to achieve a bipartisan coalition on some important criminal justice reforms. Last week I stood with a bipartisan group and introduced the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2015. This has literally been years in the making, and it was a proud and consequential moment for the Senate.

This week we have kept that momentum going. Senator GRASSLEY, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, held a hearing Monday to discuss the new bill with various stakeholders, and tomorrow the Judiciary Committee will vote on sending the bill to the full Senate for consideration.

This legislation is long overdue and a major step forward for the country. Similar to other successful efforts—and particularly those that inform my actions in the Senate—I look to experiences in the State and what has been tried, tested, and found to work and how it might apply to our job here at the national level.

Back in 2007, in Austin, legislators were confronting a big problem. They had a major budget shortfall, an overcrowded prison system, and high rates of recidivism—repeat criminals—or as one former inmate referred to himself in Houston the other day at a roundtable I held, he called himself a frequent flier in the criminal justice system. I think we all know what he meant. But instead of building more prisons and hoping that would somehow fix the problem, these leaders in Austin decided to try a different approach. They scrapped the blueprints for more prisons, and they went to work developing reforms to help low- and medium-risk offenders who were willing to take the opportunity to turn around their lives and become productive members of society.

I think we would have to be pretty naive to say that every criminal offender who ends up in prison is going to take advantage of these opportunities. They will not—not all of them will, but some of them will. Some of them will be remorseful. Some of them will see how they wasted their life, the damage they have done to their families, including their children, and they will actually look for an opportunity to turn around their lives after having made a major mistake and ending up in our prisons.

In my State, we have a pretty well-deserved reputation for being tough on crime. I don't think anybody questions that, but we also realize we need to be smart on crime, and we need to look at how we achieve the best outcomes for the taxpayers and for the lives which can be salvaged and made productive through their hard work and the opportunity we have provided to them. We also realized that even though incarceration does work—I don't think anybody can dispute the fact that when somebody is in prison, they are not committing crimes in our communities and across the country—but here is the rub: One day almost all of them will be released from prison. The question then is, Will they be prepared to live a

productive life or will they be that frequent flier who ends up back in prison through the turnstile of a criminal life?

So in Texas we improved and increased programs designed to help men and women to take responsibility for their crimes and to prepare them for reentry into society. The results were pretty startling. Between 2007 and 2012, our overall rate of incarceration fell by 9.4 percent—almost 10 percent—the crime rate dropped by 16 percent, and we saved more than $2 billion worth of taxpayer money and we were able to shutter three prison facilities in the process.

I wish to return briefly to the crime rate. Former Attorney General Mukasey, a longtime Federal judge in New York, made the point that it is not the incarceration rate that measures the success of our sentencing practices, it is actually the crime rate.

I know there are many people who feel we have overincarcerated, but I think we need to keep our eye on the ball; that is, on the crime rate. As a result of these reforms in Texas, our total crime rate dropped by 16 percent, something worth paying attention to, but even more impressive than these statistics are the stories I have heard from former inmates who have actually taken advantage of this opportunity to turn around their lives. They paint a powerful picture of how these reforms can be used and the potential impact of this legislation across the country.

Again, nobody is naive enough to think everybody is going to have a turnaround story and experience like this, but last week I had the chance to visit with a number of faith-based and nonprofit groups in Houston this time, as well as some of the former inmates they have supported—all of whom are helping inmates prepare to reenter society set up for success rather than failure.

I was particularly struck by the story of one young man by the name of Emilio Parker. By the time he was 33, Emilio had spent almost half of his life in prison, including several years in solitary confinement. He started using drugs at a very early age, and after he became addicted he found more and more opportunities for crime to feed his addiction. Spending so much time in prison leaves little chance to acquire skills to succeed once you are outside, but fortunately for Emilio he found the support needed in a group called SER-Jobs for Progress in Houston. SER stands for Service Employment Redevelopment. A strange acronym, SER, but it is a community group whose mission is to equip people such as Emilio for the workforce. Their organization has helped turn around many lives in astounding ways, and Emilio was no exception.

When he started the job readiness program SER offered, he didn't know how to turn on a computer, but with their help he graduated with the program, and it helped put him on a new direction in life—one that did not include prison.

His success represents the tremendous opportunity we have before us to enact similar reforms on the Federal level in order to offer rehabilitation to inmates, reduce crime, and save taxpayers' hard-earned money.

Part of this legislation is to focus on the people most likely to take advantage of these opportunities, low- and medium-risk inmates. Indeed, what we offer them is credit, if they participate in these programs, to lesser confinement; for example, a halfway house or the like. These are the folks we believe are most likely to have learned from their experience in prison and will take advantage of the opportunity and turn around their lives. High-risk criminals who have made a life of crime I think are the least likely to take advantage of these programs and will not be available under this legislation. If it is successful, we might want to reconsider that and see whether it can be expanded.

The Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act truly represents how the Senate was meant to function: in a bipartisan manner that can effect long-lasting change for the benefit of the American people.

I thank Chairman GRASSLEY for his leadership—this would not have happened without him—and his commitment to bring us together to develop a bill that provides needed reforms to our criminal justice system. This is an extraordinary moment, where we have people on differing ends of the political spectrum coming together and finding a place where we can reach consensus.

I am particularly pleased, as I have indicated, that the CORRECTIONS Act, authored by Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE and me, is such a key part of this package. Pretty much everyone agrees our prisons are dangerously overcrowded and that recidivism rates—when offenders land back in prison—are too high. The hard part is coming up with a solution that addresses these problems and yet breaks the cycle of reincarceration without jeopardizing public safety. And nothing we are doing will jeopardize public safety. That should be the litmus test of anything we do. I do believe this legislation strikes that balance by building on our experience in Texas and other States across the country and focusing on rehabilitation for low-level offenders and tough sentences for hardened criminals.

I know the Presiding Officer, who was attorney general of his State of Alaska, has had a lot of experience in this area. I remember in law school one of the things we learned is that one of the goals of our criminal justice system is to rehabilitate people—to help them turn around their lives—but over the years we have almost forgotten that. I think what we have demonstrated by the Texas experience—and other experience—is that through faith-based volunteers, through job training, through helping people deal with their drug and alcohol addiction—which oftentimes exacerbates their problems and puts them behind bars, like Emilio—we can literally offer a helping hand for those who will take advantage of it. For those who are truly nonviolent and low-level offenders, this bill does represent a second chance.

This bill also reforms and improves law enforcement tools, such as mandatory minimum sentences, without eliminating them or reducing them across the board. This was a tough negotiation because, in particular, some of our Senators were focused on sentence reduction, but I have to say I have been very aware that we can't handle this on an across-the-board basis. Sentences have to be appropriate for the individual behavior and misconduct of the defendant themselves, not just some across-the-board panacea. By targeting those who are most likely to reoffend and teaching them how to succeed in the real world, we can not only reduce the crime rate—as our experience has shown in Texas—but help people turn around their lives and save billions of dollars.

So at a time when the news likes to report the divisions and polarizations here in Washington—and there are plenty of important fights, and I am not opposed to fighting for principles, but there are a lot of areas like this where we can continue to work together productively. In fact, as I said earlier, the whole system of our Constitution was designed to force consensus before big decisions such as this are made. That is the way it should be because any time a minority or even one political party can force their will on the other party—as we have seen happen before—it doesn't end well. When our system works the way it should, by people of good faith coming together, seeing a problem, trying to come up with a solution, and working together on a bipartisan basis, our system works very well. I believe this is a good example.

I look forward to working with all of our colleagues once this bill is voted out of the Judiciary Committee—which I believe it will be on Thursday—as we anticipate action here on the floor. Perhaps other Senators have other ideas that will actually improve the legislation we have crafted so far, but I do believe the President is amenable to considering a bill in this area. He has said so publicly. Again, this is another of those rare opportunities we can have to work together with the President to try to solve a problem, help save money, and help people turn around their lives.

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. NELSON. 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. NELSON. Mr. President, I will vote for the cyber security bill. Obviously, this is a whole new era of attack on our country. On September 11, 2001, we certainly realized that the two big oceans on either side of our country that had protected us for centuries—the Atlantic and the Pacific—no longer provided that protection because we could see, in the case of 2001, an attack from within. Thus, that revised so much of our defense strategy.

Now we see the other kind of attack from within that is stealthy, insidious, and it is constant because the cyber attacks are coming to the U.S. Government as well as the U.S. industry, the business community, and U.S. citizens. The threat of cyber attack is vast and it is varied, from cyber criminals who steal personal information such as credit card and Social Security numbers, to foreign governments or state-sponsored groups that steal sensitive national security information, that steal our intellectual property, and that put at risk our economy and critical infrastructure.

I want to give one example of obtaining Social Security numbers through cyber attacks or through other means. What we found in Tampa, FL, is that street crime actually subsided because the criminals had figured that either by cyber attacks or by other means of getting Social Security numbers, they could file false income tax returns and request refunds. So with a laptop, they could do what they had done previously by breaking into and entering someone's home to steal money, and it was so much easier. And that is just one small example, but just the theft of security numbers, which they use on false income tax returns—we think that is an attack which is costing the U.S. Government, in income tax, at least $5 billion a year.

We have heard all about these attacks. Some of us in the Senate have been affected by these attacks. How many times have we heard that hackers have stolen our names, our addresses, our credit card numbers? Look what the hackers did to 40 million Target customers and 56 million Home Depot customers. They accessed checking and savings account information of 76 million J.P. Morgan Bank customers. They stole the personal information of 80 million customers of the health insurance company Anthem. Those are a few examples. Target, Home Depot, J.P. Morgan, Anthem—that is just a handful of examples. Also, remember that North Korea hacked Sony. Iran hacked the Sands Casino. China hacked the U.S. Government Office of Personnel Management. They have your information and they have my information because our information is with the Office of Personnel Management.

The attacks keep coming. We are hearing from homeland security, defense, intelligence, and private sector leaders that we have to take this threat seriously and do something about it.

I must say that it was one of the most frustrating things for this Senator, as a former member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, when we were trying to pass this very same bill 3 and 4 years ago and the business community, as represented by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, wanted nothing to do with it because they thought it was an invasion of their privacy. Times have changed, and the hacking continues.

We see that finally we are able to get through and put together a bill on which I think we can get broad support from many different groups that are concerned about privacy and about sharing of information in the business community. This bill provides the means for the government and the private sector to share cyber threat information while taking care to protect the personal information and privacy of our people. We all face the same threat, and our adversaries use similar malware and techniques. Sharing information is critical to our overall cyber security.

What this does is it directs the Director of National Intelligence, working with other agencies and building on the information sharing that is already taking place, to put cyber threat information in the hands of the private sector to help protect businesses and individuals. It authorizes private companies to monitor and defend their networks and share with each other and the government at all levels the cyber threats and attacks—all levels of government: State, local, tribal, and Federal. This is a point of contention because these activities are strictly voluntary. That is part of the problem we had 3 and 4 years ago in trying to enact this legislation. It is strictly voluntary, limited to cyber security purposes, and subject to reasonable restrictions and privacy protections.

The bill also creates the legal certainty and incentives needed to promote further sharing of information.

So what the legislation does is it sets up a hub or a portal inside the Department of Homeland Security where cyber threat information comes in, it is scrubbed of irrelevant personal information, and then it is shared inside and outside the government quickly and efficiently because, after all, if you have a cyber attack somewhere in America that suddenly has the opportunity to explode in its application, you have to have a central point at which you can coordinate that cyber attack. That is what this portal, this hub in the Department of Homeland Security is set up to do.

This Senator feels that this bill balances the urgent need to address the threat of continued cyber attacks with privacy concerns. As the vice chair of the Intelligence Committee said yesterday, this bill is just the first step.

I am delighted that Senator FEINSTEIN just walked onto the floor of the Senate. I am quoting what the Senator said yesterday: We can and we ought to do more to improve our Nation's cyber security.

I say through the Chair to the distinguished senior Senator from California that I have shared with the Senate my frustration over the last 4 years, as a former member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, that it was so hard to get people to come together. But now, finally, even though it is voluntary, we at least have a point at which, when a cyber attack comes somewhere in America, we can centralize that, it can be scrubbed of private information, and then it can be shared in our multiplicity of levels of government and the private sector to help defend against the cyber attacks.

These cyber attacks are coming every day. They are relentless. If we don't watch out, what is going to happen has already happened to someone and it is going to be happening to innumerable American businesses. I strongly urge the Senate to pass this legislation.

Since the senior Senator from California is on the floor, I wish to take this opportunity to thank her for her perspicacity, her patience, and her stick-to-itiveness. Finally, 4 years later, it is here, and we are going to pass it this week. I thank the Senator from California.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I would like to respond to what the distinguished Senator from Florida said.

Senator, you know what a pleasure it was to have you on the intelligence committee. I think you understand the time that we have spent to get this bill done, which is now about 6 years, and to take this first step, not because it is a perfect step but because it is a first step that is voluntary, with new authorities that people and companies can use if they want to, and if they don't want to, they don't have to. If they want to, it can be effective in enabling companies to share cyber security information and therefore protect themselves. I know you understand this. I am so grateful for that understanding and for your help.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I will.

Mr. NELSON. Will the Senator share her thoughts with the Senate about how the Nation's national security defense depends on us being able—we have the guns, the tanks, the airplanes, the missiles, and all of that, but there is a new type of threat against the very security of this Nation, and this legislation is a first step.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I can try to. I remember that in 2008 there were two significant cyber bank robberies: the Royal Bank of Scotland, I think for $8 million, and Citibank for $10 million. This was not public right away because nobody wanted it known. Then you see the more recent attacks of Aramco

being taken down, Sony, and it goes on and on. The information is not often shared publicly by companies who should be asking: This happened to our company; can you share anything that might help us handle this? That kind of thing doesn't happen because everybody is afraid of liability, and so it is very concerning.

I remember when Joe Lieberman was chairman of the homeland security committee, which had a bill. As the Senator will remember, we had the information sharing part of that bill, and we sat down with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, I believe on three occasions, to try to work out differences, and we couldn't. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is massive and all over the United States. It includes small businesses, medium-sized businesses, and some big businesses, and there was deep concern among its members. That took years to work out.

Finally, the Senate may be ready to take a first step, and this first step is to permit the voluntary sharing of cyber information, which, if it is stripped of private data, will be protected with liability immunity and protected because it goes through a single DHS portal and doesn't go directly to the intelligence community, which was a big concern to the private community. All of this has been worked out in order to try to come up with a basis for taking this first step.

I am sorry the Senator is no longer on our committee because my friend was really a great asset, and Florida is lucky to have my friend and colleague as their Senator.

This is just the beginning. All of the iterations on this cyber legislation have been bipartisan, so that has to say something to people. We have learned as we have done the drafting on this, and we have very good staff who are technically proficient. So they know what can work and what can't work.

I hope I have answered that question from the Senator from Florida. If I can, I will go on and make some remarks on the managers' amendment.

Yesterday Senator BURR and I spoke on this floor to describe the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act of 2015, which is now the pending business. Senator BURR filed a managers' package on behalf of both of us, and I will quickly run through that package.

This amendment is the product of bipartisan negotiations over the past several weeks within the Intelligence Committee and with sponsors of other amendments to the bill. The managers' amendment makes several key changes to the bill to clarify authorization language, improve privacy protections, and make technical changes. It also—and I think this is of note—includes the text of 14 separate amendments. Those amendments were offered by our colleagues and I am pleased that we are able to add them to this legislation.

In sum, this amendment has two main components. It makes important changes to the bill that we announced in August to address privacy concerns about the legislation. Second, it includes several amendments authored by our colleagues that had agreement on both sides of the aisle. I will run through these amendments that will be part of the managers' package, and I do so hopefully to reassure Members that these are positive amendments.

First, it eliminates a provision on government use of cyber information on noncyber crime. The managers' amendment eliminates a provision in the committee-passed bill that would have allowed the government to use cyber information to investigate and prosecute ''serious violent felonies.'' Eliminating this provision is a very significant privacy change. We made this change because it has been a top bipartisan concern and the provision had been used by privacy groups to claim that this is a surveillance bill. As the chairman made clear on the floor yesterday, it is not. One of the reasons it is not is because it prohibits the government from using information for crimes unrelated to cyber security.

Let me be clear. The chairman said it, and I will say it today. This is not a surveillance bill. We have eliminated this provision and helped, I believe, to eliminate these concerns. So, please, let us not speak of this bill as something that it isn't.

Second, it limits the authorization to share cyber threat information to cyber security purposes. The managers' amendment limits the authorization for sharing cyber threat information provided in the bill to sharing for cyber security purposes only. This is another significant privacy change, and it has been another top bipartisan and privacy group concern.

Third, it eliminates a new FOIA exemption. The managers' amendment eliminated the creation of a new exemption in the Freedom of Information Act specific to cyber information that was in the committee-passed bill. Cyber threat indicators and defensive measures shared in accordance with the bill's procedures would still be eligible for existing FOIA exemptions, but it doesn't add new ones.

Four, it ensures that defensive measures are properly limited. The bill allows a company to take measures to defend itself, as one might expect, and the managers' amendment clarifies that the authorization to employ defensive measures does not allow an entity to gain unauthorized access to a computer network.

Five, it includes the Secretary of Homeland Security as coauthor of the government-sharing guidelines. The managers' amendment directs both the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security, rather than solely just the Attorney General, to develop policies and procedures to govern how the government quickly and appropriately shares information about cyber threats. That should be a no-brainer.

Six, it clarifies exceptions to the Department of Homeland Security's so-called portal. The managers' amendment clarifies the types of cyber information sharing that are permitted to occur outside the DHS portal created by the bill. Specifically, the bill narrows communications outside of the Department of Homeland Security portal regarding previously shared cyber threat information.

Seven, it requires procedures for notifying U.S. persons whose personal information has been shared by a Federal entity in violation of the bill. The managers' amendment adds a modified version of Wyden amendment No. 2622, which requires the government to write procedures for notifying U.S. persons whose personal information is known or determined to have been shared by the Federal Government in a manner inconsistent with this act.

Eight, it clarifies the real-time automated process for sharing through the DHS portal. Here the managers' amendment adds a modified version of the Carper amendment No. 2615, which clarifies that there may be situations under which the automated real-time process of the DHS portal may result in very limited instances of delay, modification or other action due to the controls established for the process. The clarification requires that all appropriate Federal entities agree in advance to the filters, fields or other aspects of the automated sharing system before such delays, modifications or other actions are permitted.

Senator CARPER has played a very positive role on this issue. He is the ranking member on the homeland security committee. He sat down with both Senator BURR and me earlier this year. He has proposed some very good changes, and this is one of them, which is in the managers' package.

Also, the clarification ensures that such agreed-upon delays will apply across the board uniformly to all appropriate Federal entities, including the Department of Homeland Security.

This was an important change for both Senator CARPER and Senator COONS and for the Department of Homeland Security. I am pleased we were able to reach agreement on it. Essentially, it will allow a fast real-time filter—and I understand this can be done—that will do an additional scrub of information going through that portal before the cyber information goes to other departments to take out anything that might be related to personal information, such as a driver's license number, an account, a Social Security number or whatever it may be. DHS believes they can put together the technology to be able to do that scrub in as close to real time as possible.

This should be very meaningful to the privacy community, and I really hope it is meaningful because I want to believe that their actions are not just to try to defeat this bill, but that their actions really are to make the bill better. If I am right, this is a very important addition.

Again, I thank Senator CARPER and Senator COONS, and I also thank the chairman for agreeing to put this in.

Nine, it clarifies that private entities are not required to share information with the Federal Government or another private entity. This is clear now. This amendment adds the Flake amendment No. 2580, which reinforces this bill's core voluntary nature by clarifying that private entities are not required to share information with the Federal Government or another private entity.

In other words, if you don't like the bill, you don't have to do it. So it is hard for me to understand why companies are saying they can't support the bill at this time. There is no reason not to support it because they don't have to do anything. There are companies by the hundreds, if not thousands, that want to participate in this, and this we know.

Ten, it adds a Federal cyber security enhancement title. The managers' amendment adds a modified version of another Carper amendment, which is No. 2627, the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, as a new title II of the cyber bill. The amendment seeks to improve Federal network security and authorize and enhance an existing intrusion detection and prevention system for civilian Federal networks.

Eleventh, we add a study on mobile device security. The managers' amendment adds a modified version of the Coats amendment No. 2604, which requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to carry out a study and report to Congress on the cyber security threats to mobile devices of the Federal Government.

I wish to thank Senator COATS, who is a distinguished member of the Intelligence Committee and understands this bill well, for this amendment.

Twelfth, it adds a requirement for the Secretary of State to produce an international cyber space policy strategy. The managers' amendment adds Gardner/Cardin amendment No. 2631, which requires the Secretary of State to produce a comprehensive strategy focused on United States international policy with regard to cyber space.

It is about time we do something like this. I am personally grateful to both Senators Gardner and Cardin for this amendment.

Thirteenth, the managers' amendment adds a reporting provision concerning the apprehension and prosecution of international cyber criminals. The managers' amendment adds a modified version of Kirk-Gillibrand amendment No. 2603, which requires the Secretary of State to engage in consultations with the appropriate government officials of any country in which one or more cyber criminals are physically present and to submit an annual report to appropriate congressional committees on such cyber criminals.

It is about time that we get to the point where we can begin to make public more about cyber attacks from abroad because it is venal, it is startling, it is continuing, and in its continuation, it is growing into a real monster. Let there be no doubt about that.

Fourteenth, it improves the contents of the biennial report on implementation of the bill. The managers' amendment adds a modified version of the Tester amendment No. 2632, which requires detailed reporting on, No. 1, the number of cyber threat indicators received under the DHS portal process—good, let's know—and, No. 2, the number of times information shared under this bill is used to prosecute certain cyber criminals. If we can catch them, we should. We should know when prosecutions are made. Then, No. 3 is the number of notices that were issued, if any, for a failure to remove personal information in accordance with the requirements of this bill.

Mr. President, I am spending a great deal of time on these details because there are rumors beginning to circulate that the bill does this or does that, which are not correct. This managers' package is a major effort to encapsulate what Members on both sides had concerns about. And I think the numbers of Republican and Democratic amendments that are incorporated are about equal.

Fifteenth, this managers' amendment improves the periodic sharing of cyber security best practices with a focus on small businesses. The managers' amendment adds the Shaheen amendment No. 2597, which promotes the periodic sharing of cyber security best practices that are developed in order to assist small businesses as they improve their cyber security.

I think this is an excellent amendment and Senator SHAHEEN should be commended.

Sixteenth, the managers' amendment adds a Federal cyber security workforce assessment title. The managers' amendment adds Bennet-Portman amendment No. 2558, the Federal Cybersecurity Workforce Assessment Act, as a new title III to this bill. The title addresses the need to recruit a highly qualified cyber workforce across the Federal Government.

There are just a few more, but, again, I do this to show—and the chairman is here—that we have listened to the concerns from our colleagues and we have tried to address them, so nobody should feel we are ramming through a bill and that we haven't considered the views from others. The managers' amendment is, in fact, a major change to the bill that reflects this collegial—sometimes a little more exercised, but collegial—discussion. Does the chairman agree?

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to say that I totally agree. The vice chairman and I have worked aggressively for the entirety of the year where we had differences, and we found ways to bridge those differences, where we heard from Members, where we heard from associations, where we heard from businesses. We worked with them to try to accommodate their wishes, as long as it stayed within the spirit of what we were trying to accomplish, which is information sharing in a voluntary capacity.

The vice chair and I came to the floor yesterday and said if an amendment—if an initiative falls outside of that, then we will stand up and oppose it because we understand the role this legislation should play in the process.

The vice chairman said this is the first step. I don't want to scare Members, but there are some other steps. We are not sure what they are today or we would be on the floor suggesting those, but if we can't take the first step, then it is hard to figure out what the next and the next and the next are. So I am committed to continuing to work with the vice chairman and, more importantly, with all Members to incorporate their great suggestions as long as we all stay headed in the same direction, and I know the vice chairman and I are doing that.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I thank the chairman very much. If I may, through the Chair, I want the chairman to know how much I appreciate this tack he has taken to be flexible and willing throughout this process, which extends into this managers' package. So I believe—I truly believe—what we have come up with in this managers' package and what Members have contributed to it makes it a better cyber bill. I know the chairman feels the same way. We can just march on shoulder to shoulder and hopefully get this done.

I will finish up the few other items I have to discuss because I want people who have concerns to listen to what is being said because these changes have a major impact on the bill.

Next, No. 17 establishes a process by which data on cyber security risks or incidents involving emergency response information systems can be reported. The managers' amendment adds Heitkamp amendment No. 2555, which requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a process by which a statewide interoperability coordinator may report data on any cyber security risk or incident involving emergency response information systems or networks. This is a process for reporting, and certainly we need to know more.

Next, No. 18 requires a report on the preparedness of the health care industry to respond to cyber security threats, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a health care industry cyber security task force. The managers' amendment adds Alexander-Murray amendment No. 2719. This is a reporting requirement to improve the cyber security posture of the health care industry.

I don't think anyone wants to have their health care data hacked into. This is deeply personal material and it should be inviolate.

The provision requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit a report to Congress on the preparedness of the health care industry to respond to cyber security threats. If we really want to help protect health care information, we have to know what is going on, and that is what this amendment enables. It also requires the Secretary to establish a health care industry cyber security task force.

Next is No. 19, which requires new reports by inspectors general. The managers' amendment adds a modified version of the Hatch amendment No. 2712, which requires relevant agency inspectors general to file reports with appropriate committees on the logical access standards and controls within their agencies.

Let's know what standards and what controls they have. I think it is a very prudent request of the Senator from Utah, and I am glad we were able to include it.

Next is No. 20, which adds a requirement for the DHS Secretary to develop a strategy to protect critical infrastructure at the greatest risk of a cybersecurity attack. The managers' amendment adds the Collins amendment No. 2623, which requires DHS to identify critical infrastructure entities at the greatest risk of a catastrophic cyber security incident.

This is where we have had a number of concerns recently. The chairman's staff and my staff are working on this. Remember, this is a voluntary bill, and we do not want any language that might be interpreted to imply that this is not a voluntary bill. I know Senator COLLINS has a lot of knowledge of this area, and I believe we are going to be able to work this out.

This amendment does not convey any new authorities to the Secretary of Homeland Security to require that critical infrastructure owners and operators take action, nor does it mandate reporting to the Federal Government. Its intent, which I applaud, is for the government to have a better understanding of those critical infrastructure companies that, if hacked, could cause extremely significant damage to our Nation.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my colleagues for their thoughtful and helpful amendments. I am pleased that we have such a fulsome managers' package. I believe this managers' package strengthens our bill. It adds important clarifications, including meaningful privacy protections, it does not do operational harm, and it further improves the strong bill that the Intelligence Committee passed by a strong vote of 14 to 1 earlier this year.

I wanted to do this so that all Members know what is in the managers' package, and both the chairman and I believe that these additions are in the best interests of making a good bill even better.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge the remarks of the distinguished Senator from California and the Senator from North Carolina, and I thank them for their important work on the cyber bill. I know we are going to be discussing a lot of that, and why it is important to our national security.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

This afternoon I wish to talk about another important bill that is moving its way through the process of becoming law, and that is the National Defense Authorization Act, the NDAA.

As did many of my colleagues, I spent last week back home in my great State of Alaska. In Alaska, it is hard not to see the strength and pride in our military everywhere, every day, everywhere we go. I will provide a few examples.

We have what is called the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention, an annual convention that we have with a very important group of Alaskans. The theme this year was ''Heroes Among Us'' at the convention. It was about heroes among us because Alaskan Natives serve in the U.S. military at higher rates than any other ethnic group in the country—a real special kind of patriotism. I had the honor, really, to meet dozens of these great veterans from all kinds of wars. I met veterans from World War II, the Attu campaign. A lot of Americans don't realize that Alaska was actually invaded by the Japanese and we had to fight to eject them from the Aleutian Islands. I met veterans from the Philippines campaign under General MacArthur. I met veterans from the Korean war who served at the Chosin Reservoir. I had a great opportunity to meet an Honor Flight coming back from Washington, our veterans from World War II, Korea. Of course, just walking around Anchorage you see and hear military members training all the time. We have a great base, JBER, with F–22s ripping through the sky, our military members keeping us safe. That sound is what we call in Alaska the sound of freedom, when you hear those jets roaring. It is everywhere.

In Alaska, we love our veterans and our military. We honor them. We know that providing for the national defense of our great nation, taking care of our troops, and taking care of our veterans is certainly one of the most important things we do in the Senate. Of course, it is not just Alaska. I am sure when the Presiding Officer was home in the great State of Nebraska there was the same patriotic feeling of supporting our troops and the importance of our national defense.

For the most part, that feeling exists here in Washington. I have been honored to sit on two committees that focus on these issues a lot: on the Armed Services Committee and Veterans' Affairs Committee. These are very bipartisan committees and where support for our national defense, our troops, and our veterans is across the board on both sides of the aisle—no doubt about it. But I do say ''for the most part'' because, as the Presiding Officer knows, nothing is truly as it seems in Washington, DC.

I have spoken on the floor, as a number of Senators have, about what motivated a number of us last year to actually throw our hat in the ring and run for the U.S. Senate. Like the Presiding Officer, I know a lot of us were concerned about the country going in the wrong direction, about a dysfunction in Washington, about a government that has run up an $18 trillion debt, no economic growth, our credit rating being downgraded, no amendments being brought to the Senate floor, no budget for the Federal Government attempted, no appropriations bills attempted for years. The most deliberative body in the world was certainly a body that had been shut down, and a lot of us saw a need to change that.

So we are starting to change that. We are back to regular order. We are talking about debating bills. There have been dozens, if not hundreds, of amendments already this year—last year there were only 14 amendments—and we passed a budget. We passed 12 appropriations bills to fund the government—very bipartisan—and we are focusing on the issues, whether it is cyber security, defense or taking care of our veterans, something the vast majority of the American people want us to focus on.

For example, we brought to the floor two critical appropriations bills just a couple of months ago—the Defense appropriations bill and the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill. These passed out of the Appropriations Committee by huge bipartisan majorities, 27 to 3 on the Defense appropriations bill and 21 to 9 on the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill. This is what the American people want us to do—get back to regular order, fund the government, and put together a budget. So far, so good. That is what we are called to do.

Here is where the dysfunction of Washington, DC, began to rear its head again: These bills that are critical to our troops, our defense, and our veterans—all with strong bipartisan support in committee—were brought to the floor of the Senate and they were filibustered. They were filibustered. The bill to fund our military, that funds our national defense and takes care of our veterans was filibustered—blocked—stopped by our friends on the other side of the aisle. I am not sure why. I still don't know why. As a matter of fact, I haven't seen anyone who actually voted to filibuster these important bills come down to the Senate floor and say: Here is why we voted against funding our troops. Here is why we voted against funding our veterans.

I think the overwhelming majority of Americans, regardless of what State they live in, would say: No, no, no. You need to vote for these bills that are funding our military, veterans, and national defense. That is one of the most

important things we want you to do. The bottom line on those votes is that our troops, our veterans, and our national defense were shortchanged because they didn't get funded.

Let me move on to the Defense authorization bill, what I want to talk about today. This is an annual undertaking that sets the policies, programs, and defense strategy for our military. It also authorizes spending on national defense and our military. Again, it is certainly one of the most important tasks this body does, and I think most Senators on both sides of the aisle would agree with that.

Once again, as with the appropriations bill, we were working closely together on a bipartisan basis. I was on the Armed Services Committee and this moved through the committee and it was very bipartisan. It was voted out on a strong bipartisan vote to come to the floor. I commend Chairman MCCAIN, who did a great job on that as the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, and Ranking Member REED of Rhode Island did a fantastic job. I must admit that this Senator feared a little bit of a replay in terms of the scenario we saw with the appropriations bill—meaning strong bipartisan support out of the committee and then coming to the Senate floor and being filibustered. I feared this, in part, because at one point during the Defense authorization debate the minority leader came and stated that the Defense authorization bill was ''a waste of time.''

A waste of time? Tell that to the marines, the soldiers, the airmen, the sailors, and their families—those members of the military who are defending our country right now—that this bill was a waste of time. I guarantee they would not agree with that statement. Fortunately, neither did the Senate. To the contrary, the Senate has now voted on the Defense authorization bill twice, once as an original bill and once as part of a conference report with very strong bipartisan and veto-proof majorities, with 71 Senators the first time around and 73 when we voted on it a couple of weeks ago. I mention the phrase ''veto-proof majority'' because incredibly the President of the United States, the Commander in Chief, has said he is going to veto this bill when it comes to his desk. It was just sent to him yesterday.

I don't know how the Commander in Chief is going to explain that to the troops or to their families or to the American people or to the 73 Senators who voted for that bill. It is important to recognize that although we may think this is all inside Washington and no one is really following it, something like this impacts morale when the Commander in Chief is saying: Hey, troops, I am going to veto this.

This is a copy of the Marine Corps Times. I subscribe and read the Marine Corps Times. A lot of marines and members of the military read this all over the world. Guaranteed, our men and women deployed overseas read the Marine Corps Times. In this edition there is an article about how President Obama has vowed to veto the Defense authorization bill. We have marines fighting overseas who are reading this, and they are not getting it.

This week in the Marine Corps Times:

> The MOAA [Military Officers Association of America] and other military advocacy groups have argued against the presidential veto, calling the legislation a critical policy measure that cannot be delayed. The measure has been signed into law in each of the last 53 years, and includes a host of other specialty pay and bonus reauthorizations.

In a statement from MOAA officials in this article that thousands of our Active-Duty troops are reading:

> The fact is that we are still a nation at war, and this legislation is vital to fulfilling wartime requirements. There comes a time when this year's legislative business must be completed, and remaining disagreements left to be addressed next year.

To govern is to choose. To govern is to prioritize.

President Obama's administration has spent years negotiating the Iran deal and this body spent weeks debating the President's Iran deal. We put a lot of time into it, and the President's administration put an enormous amount of time into it.

On the Iran deal, part of the hope from Secretary Kerry, the President, and others was that once it got passed by the U.S. Congress—by the way, on a partisan minority vote—that Iran would somehow start to change its behavior and say: Look, America is someone we want to partner with.

Since the Senate passed the Iran deal, let's see what has happened. Iran has sent troops to Syria. Iran has backed Hamas, which is now engaging in knife-murdering attacks against Israelis. The Iranian leader has stated that Israel shouldn't exist within the next 25 years. Iran has violated the U.N. Security Council ballistic missile resolutions, and this Senator and many others think Iran has already violated the deal by firing ballistic missiles with a range of 1,000 miles. Iran has sentenced an American reporter for the Washington Post for spying. I don't think the behavior that a lot of the supporters for this deal anticipated is happening.

More broadly, I think it is important to put into context what is going on with our national security, the NDAA, the moving forward with the Iran deal, and the President's threat to veto the NDAA. The President's Iran deal, once implemented, will be giving tens of billions of dollars to Iran, the world's biggest state sponsor of terrorism—but the President threatens to veto the Defense bill that actually funds our military. The President's Iran deal will lift sanctions on Iranian leaders such as General Soleimani, who literally has the blood of American soldiers on his hands—but the President threatens to veto U.S. troop pay bonuses and improved military retirement benefits. The President's Iran deal gives Iran access to conventional weapons, ballistic missile technology, and advanced nuclear centrifuges—but the President threatens to veto funding for advanced weapons systems for our Armed Forces. Finally, the President's Iran deal certainly is going to allow more funding for terrorist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas—but the President is threatening to veto a bill that provides additional resources for our troops to fight terrorists such as ISIS.

To govern is to choose. To govern is to prioritize. Has it really come to the point where the White House is more focused on freeing up funds for Iranian terrorists than funding America's brave men and women in uniform? I certainly hope not.

I ask all of my fellow Senators who voted for this bill in a very strong bipartisan way and my fellow Alaskans and Americans to reach out to the White House. Let them know that you oppose the President's veto of this bill.

What we need is a strong military, particularly now. We need to support our troops and our veterans, and we need President Obama to sign—not veto—this bill which is critical to our national defense.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

43RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT AND EPA'S CLEAN WATER RULE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, this past Sunday was the 43rd anniversary of the enactment of the Clean Water Act. In 1972, the Clean Water Act amended the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, which was the first major U.S. law to address water pollution. This law was enacted with bipartisan support—I could really say on a nonpartisan issue—because the Congress in 1972 and the administration recognized that clean water was in our national interest. It was important to our public health, it was important to our environment, and it was important to our economy. This law established the basic structure for regulating pollutant discharges into the waters of the United States, and it has been the cornerstone of our efforts to protect our Nation's waterways.

Several times we have done cost analysis of the cost of regulation versus the benefit of clean water. It is overwhelmingly on the side of the benefit to our community, better health, better environment, and a better economy. On this occasion I would like to speak about the recent efforts to protect America's waterways, such as the EPA's final clean water rule, and why we should defend these efforts and allow nationwide implementation.

In May, the EPA released their final clean water rule, which completed another chapter in the Clean Water Act's

history. As the Clean Water Act worked to restore the health of our Nation's water resources, we saw the U.S. economy grow, demonstrating that America does not have to choose between the environment and a robust economy. A clean environment helped build a robust economy.

Two Supreme Court decisions, however, call on the EPA and the Army Corps to clarify the definitions of the waters of the United States. The EPA's final rule restores some long overdue regulatory certainty to the Clean Water Act. I might tell you, in reviewing this rule, it basically reestablishes the longstanding understanding of what were the waters of the United States and what was subject to regulation.

This rule allows the Clean Water Act to continue its important function of restoring the health of our Nation's waters. The rule became effective this August, but immediately following the implementation and on this anniversary, there have been unprecedented attacks on the final rule. As the rule came out, a Federal district court in North Dakota granted a preliminary injunction, blocking its implementation.

The EPA continued to implement the rule in all States but the 13 States that filed the suit that led to the injunction. However, in October, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit decided to stay the implementation of the rule for the entire country. This attempt to overturn the clean water rule is dangerous, shortsighted, and a step away from good governance, public health, and commonsense environmental protection.

Let me tell you what is at risk. What is at risk are our Nation's streams and 200 million acres of wetlands. Over half of our streams and over 200 million acres of wetland are now at risk of not being under regulation under the Clean Water Act.

These protections are needed for drinking supplies for one out of every three Americans. I am very concerned about the impact on all States, but let me just talk for a moment, if I might, about my own State of Maryland. Marylanders rely upon our water as part of our life. We live on the water. Seventy percent of Marylanders live in coastal areas. We depend upon clean water. We are particularly concerned about our drinking supply of water as well as the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

We are at risk with the waters of the United States confusion out there because of the Supreme Court decisions and now the stay of this rule by the court. The Clean Water Act and EPA's final rules are essential to the health of the Chesapeake Bay. Wetland protections are especially critical to the Chesapeake Bay because the wetlands soak up harmful nutrient pollution.

This past Monday, I was in Howard County at a NOAA announcement of the Chesapeake Bay B-WET grant. These are bay, watershed, education, and training funds. These are small dollars that go to institutions to help educate our children. In this case, the Howard County Conservancy received a grant because they bring all of the students from the Howard County public schools to an outdoor experience to rate and judge the streams in our community.

The streams, of course, flow into the Chesapeake Bay. They are giving us a report card. I must tell you, that report card is not going to be as good as it should be. Without the protections in the Clean Water Act, it is going to be more difficult to meet the goals we need to in order to protect the Chesapeake Bay and all of the watersheds in this country for future generations.

The health of the bay is closely linked to upstream water quality and the restoration and protection of headwaters. It should go without saying that these waters are located in States beyond Maryland's borders. Improvements to upstream water quality are positively correlated with the water quality of the bay. We need a national program. That is what the Clean Water Act is. It is a national commitment because we know that the watersheds go beyond State borders.

In Maryland, we set up the Chesapeake Bay Partnership. Yes, Virginia and Maryland are working together, but we also have the cooperation of Pennsylvania, of New York, of West Virginia, of Delaware. Why? Because these States contribute to the water supplies going into the Chesapeake Bay. We need to protect these waters.

Protecting of America's waters is critically important to public health. So what is at stake here? What is at stake if we derail the clean water rule? The public health of the people of Maryland and all States around this country. Public health and the environment in my State and the States of my colleagues have become seriously at risk from this decision that hinders this essential commonsense guidance.

I hope the court moves swiftly to affirm the rule in its final decision and restores the invaluable protections needed for the drinking supplies of one out of every three Americans. As we recognize the anniversary of the Clean Water Act, I want us to continue to defend this Nation's waters from pollution. This act ensures that every citizen receives the clean water they need and deserve.

The EPA's final clean water rule provides further regulatory clarity that we need to ensure the health of our water resources. I urge my colleagues to continue to defend and fight for clean water as we recognize the 43rd anniversary of the Clean Water Act. Every Congress should, as its legacy, add to the protections that we provide for clean water in this country. That should be the legacy of every Congress, but we certainly don't want to hinder that record. Therefore, we need to implement the EPA's clean water rule nationwide. I urge my colleagues to support such action.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

AMENDMENT NO. 2612, AS MODIFIED

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I call for the regular order with respect to the Franken amendment No. 2612.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is now pending.

AMENDMENT NO. 2612, AS FURTHER MODIFIED

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask that the amendment be further modified to correct the instruction line in the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so further modified.

The amendment, as further modified, is as follows:

Beginning on page 4, strike line 9 and all that follows through page 5, line 21, and insert the following:

system that is reasonably likely to result in an unauthorized effort to adversely impact the security, availability, confidentiality, or integrity of an information system or information that is stored on, processed by, or transiting an information system.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''cybersecurity threat'' does not include any action that solely involves a violation of a consumer term of service or a consumer licensing agreement.

(6) CYBER THREAT INDICATOR.—The term ''cyber threat indicator'' means information that is necessary to describe or identify—

(A) malicious reconnaissance, including anomalous patterns of communications that appear to be transmitted for the purpose of gathering technical information related to a cybersecurity threat or security vulnerability;

(B) a method of defeating a security control or exploitation of a security vulnerability;

(C) a security vulnerability, including anomalous activity that appears to indicate the existence of a security vulnerability;

(D) a method of causing a user with legitimate access to an information system or information that is stored on, processed by, or transiting an information system to unwittingly enable the defeat of a security control or exploitation of a security vulnerability;

(E) malicious cyber command and control;

(F) the harm caused by an incident, including a description of the information exfiltrated as a result of a particular cybersecurity threat;

(G) any other attribute of a cybersecurity threat, if disclosure of such information is not otherwise prohibited by law; or

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

AMENDMENT NO. 2581, AS MODIFIED

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I call for the regular order with respect to the Cotton amendment No. 2581.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is now pending.

The Senator from Louisiana.

MENTAL HEALTH REFORM ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, for 25 years I have worked in the Louisiana public hospital system. You cannot help but notice when you work in a public hospital system, but also in private hospitals, how often mental health issues are directly a part of a

patient who comes to see you. It does not just have to be a physician seeing patients in the emergency room. Each of our families, mine included, has a family member or a friend with serious mental illness. It is nonpartisan. It cuts across demographic lines.

If I go before a group anywhere in my State, indeed anywhere in the Nation, and bring up the need to address serious mental illness, all heads nod yes. It is true of my family. It is true of yours. It is true of almost everybody watching today. I am old enough to remember when people would not speak of cancer. There was a stigma associated with having cancer. That is long gone, much to our advantage, but for some reason, there continues to be a stigma, a shame, associated with mental illness. I will argue that stigma and sense of shame has retarded what we can do.

This is something that we have to address, we have to discuss, and we have to go forward. The discussion right now, frankly, is being driven by tragedy: Lafayette, Louisiana; Newtown; Charleston; Oregon; Tennessee. We have heard stories and they are beyond heartbreaking, but what is not spoken of are the broken families, the parents that know there is something wrong with their child but do not know where to go to receive help, ending up in an overcrowded emergency room or with their child in a jail or prison when a more appropriate setting would be elsewhere.

It is in the midst of these terrible tragedies that at least we can hope they can serve as a catalyst for society and Congress to begin to fix America's broken mental health system. Maybe something good can happen, even from tragedies as horrific as these.

The question is, If one of the roles of Congress is to respond to societal needs that justify Federal involvement, should we not ask ourselves why has there been such a failure to address the issue of serious mental illness? I am pleased to say that my colleague, Senator CHRIS MURPHY, and I wish to change that. We have introduced the bipartisan Mental Health Reform Act, which now has 10 cosponsors, both Republican and Democrat.

Our bill begins to fix our mental health system and attempts to address the root cause of mass violence, which is recognized but untreated mental illness. How does our bill begin to do so? First, patients too often cannot get the care they need and too often have a long delay between diagnosis and treatment. Access delayed is access denied. Access is hampered by a shortage of mental health providers and too few beds for those with serious mental illness who truly need to be hospitalized.

Related to this, right now people with major mental illness tend to die from physical illness as much as 20 years younger than someone who does not have serious mental illness. As a physician, I know if we treat the whole patient, if we integrate care, it is better. Medicaid, though, by policy, will not pay for a patient to see two physicians on the same day.

So imagine this: A family practitioner sees a patient who clearly has major mental illness and, because the patient is right there, would like him to walk down the hallway to see her friend the psychiatrist, to have both addressed immediately while the patient is there. Medicaid will not pay the psychiatrist. On the other hand, the patient might be seeing a psychiatrist and have seriously high blood pressure or evidence for diabetes out of control, but the psychiatrist cannot say: Wait a second. Let me walk you down the hallway to see my colleague, the family practitioner, because Medicaid will not pay for that. By the way, private health insurance will. This is a policy change we need for public health insurance. Our bill would allow patients to use both mental and physical health services the same day.

Secondly, most people have their first episode of serious mental illness between the ages of 15 and 25, starting down a path that ends with their life and their family's lives tragically altered. This bill attempts to identify those young folks, stopping that path from ever opening up, and preventing the first episode of serious mental illness or, if it does occur, leading them on a path of wholeness, a path towards wellness.

Another thing our bill does is it establishes a grant program focused on intensive early intervention for children who demonstrate those first signs that can evolve into serious mental illness that may only occur in adolescence or adulthood. A second grant program supports pediatricians who are consulting with mental health teams. This program has already been successful in States such as Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Third, without appropriate treatment options, prisons, jails, and emergency rooms have become the de facto mental health care providers. More than three times as many mentally ill are housed in prisons and jails than in hospitals, according to the National Sheriffs' Association. Overcrowded U.S. emergency rooms have become the treatment source of last resort for psychiatric patients. We incentivize States to create alternatives where patients may be seen, treated, and supervised in outpatient settings, as opposed to being incarcerated.

Our bill creates an Under Secretary for Mental Health within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This Under Secretary's responsibility would be to coordinate mental health services across the Federal system to help identify and implement effective and promising models of care.

It reauthorizes successful programs, such as the community mental health block grant and State-based data collection. The bill also increases funding for critical biomedical research on mental health. On top of this, it strengthens the transparency and enforcement of mental health parity by requiring the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Treasury to audit the implementation of the mental health parity movement to determine the parity between mental and physical health services.

Our bill does other things, but the most important thing it does is it helps prevent tragedies. It helps families, and it helps those broken individuals affected by mental illness become whole.

In 2006, William Bruce of Maine was a 24-year-old who needed help. He suffered with schizophrenia and had been hospitalized. Without contacting his parents, our broken health care system allowed William to be released—even though his doctors said he was ''very dangerous indeed for release to the community.'' Sadly, 2 months later he murdered his mother at home with a hatchet. This story is tragic and heartbreaking, and even worse, it could possibly have been prevented if we had worked then to fix our broken mental health system. We wish to fix it now so there is not another such episode in the future.

The time for mental health reform is now. If not now, when? If not us, who? If not now and not us, there will be more Lafayettes, Newtowns, Charlestons, Tennessees, Oregons, and more broken families.

This bill does not wave a magic wand, but it puts us on a path where we can say these things that once occurred perhaps no longer will.

Thank you.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I am on the floor today to join my good friend from Louisiana, Senator CASSIDY, as we formally introduce to the Chamber the Mental Health Reform Act of 2015. I thank him personally for all the time he has put into this not only as a Member of the Senate but previous to this as a Member of the House of Representatives.

This effort is patterned after a bill Senator CASSIDY and my namesake, Representative TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, worked on for years in the House of Representatives.

I wish to begin by sharing a story with you—that is the way Senator CASSIDY ended. I will talk about a woman from Bloomfield, CT, named Betsy. She has a 28-year-old son, John, who suffers from schizoaffective disorder. It is a serious mental illness whose signs began showing when John was 15 years old. He was hospitalized—think about this—15 different times between the ages of 15 years old and 18 years old, generally only for time-limited stays ranging from about 5 days to maybe 2 weeks. Despite the severity of the condition, he was told upon discharge there was really nowhere for him to go, no permanent solution for this young

man. He was just an adolescent, but his parents were told there was no place for him to be treated. What resulted was not only John getting to a breaking point but his parents as well.

As we know, serious mental illness doesn't affect just the individual person, it also affects family members who are trying to care for them.

Without needed supports and services, John became increasingly remote and psychotic until he was hospitalized again. Upon discharge this time, John went to a shelter—the only place he could go. Since he couldn't follow the shelter's rules, John, whom his mother said was ''young, fragile, vulnerable and mentally unstable,'' was kicked out to survive homeless on the streets.

John finally—finally—was able to get a bed at a place that was able to house him for longer than 2 weeks, Connecticut Valley Hospital. That ability to get John stabilized for a longer period of time, get him into a real treatment plan, allowed him to then transfer into a community bed in Middletown, CT. That is where John is today. John has been living successfully out in the community for 3 years. But we spent millions of dollars on John's care, which led to no better outcome for him. We wasted millions of dollars and potentially thousands of hours of time because he was shuttled in and out of hospitals without any long-term treatment and without any hope for him and his family.

What Senator CASSIDY and I are trying to say is that there is a better way. We are already spending billions of dollars on inadequate mental health care in this country. We need to do better, but a lot of this is just about spending money in a more effective way.

One of the programs our bill helps fund is an early-intervention program for individuals who show their first episode of psychosis. The program the National Institutes of Mental Health just evaluated—with findings released yesterday—was the RAISE Program. And in Connecticut we run a similar program called the STEP Program. What this study showed yesterday is that if you provide wraparound services to an individual who shows a first episode of psychosis—comprehensive, immediate services—you can get a dramatic decrease in the number of episodes they show later in life. In Connecticut, we found that the STEP Program reduced hospitalizations by nearly 50 percent after individuals were given those wraparound services immediately. When they did need hospitalizations later on, they were on average 6 days less than when you didn't provide those wraparound services.

These are the types of programs that could have helped Betsy's son John early so that he could have started his recovery as a teenager rather than in his twenties. They could have saved the U.S. Government and the State of Connecticut a lot of money as well.

The trendlines beyond the anecdotes are very disturbing. Mental illness has been on the rise for the past few decades. One out of five adults today is coping with mental illness. If you look at the time period from 1987 to 2007, the number of people with mental disorders who qualify for SSI has risen by 2½ times. From 1980 to 2000, we put up to 72,000 people in our jails who prior to deinstitutionalization would have been in psychiatric hospitals—people who are in jail primarily or only because of their psychiatric disorder.

Just in the last 2 years alone, the number of people that HRSA estimates to be living in a mental health shortage area has gone from 91 million—that is pretty bad to start with—up to 97 million. That is just 2 years of data. Since 2005, we have closed 14 percent of our inpatient beds in this country. So what is happening is a dramatic increase in the number of people who are suffering from mental illness and a rather dramatic decrease in both outpatient and inpatient capacity. We have to provide more resources to meet the demand, but we also have to spend money better.

Senator CASSIDY covered our piece of legislation accurately, so I won't go into detail, but I wish to talk about our process. What we decided to do at the beginning of this year was bring together all of the groups—the provider groups, the advocacy groups, the hospital groups—who have worked on this issue for years and then bring in those in the House of Representatives who have been working on this as well: Representative TIM MURPHY and EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON.

They have a bipartisan reform bill in the House. We decided not to start from scratch but to take their piece of legislation, knowing that it has a good chance of passage in the House, and try to build on it and improve it.

We spent 6 months meeting with all of these groups and coming up with our own consensus product that today has the support of a cross-section of behavioral advocacy groups all across the country, including the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the National Council for Behavioral Health, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, social workers, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and the list goes on. We also went out to our colleagues as well, knowing that nothing in the Senate can pass without not just bipartisan support but bipartisan support that reflects the diversity of both of our caucuses. We think we were able to build a good foundation of cosponsors for this bill: Senators FRANKEN, STABENOW, BLUMENTHAL, and SCHUMER on the Democratic side, and Senators MURKOWSKI, COLLINS, VITTER, and CAPITO on the Republican side. We hope that this coalition of groups on the outside, this alliance with a reform effort in the House that we believe has legislative legs, and a good one-for-one with some cosponsors in the Senate, will allow us to move this bill forward, and we have to. We have to.

So I will end where Senator CASSIDY began his remarks, which is why the Nation's attention has turned to this question of how we reform our mental health system. We lived through a tragic and gut-wrenching episode of mass destruction in Newtown, CT. Senator CASSIDY has had his own experience with mass tragedy. The reality is that the reasons why we see these episodes of mass shootings are complicated, but if you read the report on Adam Lanza's intersection with Connecticut's mental health system, you will see that it failed him. It failed him and it failed his family. I don't know that correcting the mental health system alone would have changed what happened in Newtown, but I know that if we fix our mental health system, we will have a downward pressure on the episodes of mass violence that happen in this country.

But, as Senator CASSIDY said, we should fix our mental health system because it is broken for everyone, regardless of whether an individual has a predisposition towards violence, because, of course, the reality is that people with mental illness are much more likely to be the victims of violence than they are to be the perpetrators of violence. So there is no inherent connection between mental illness and violence. But these mass shootings have drawn the Nation's attention to what Congress can agree on right now that will try to improve public safety across this Nation.

We are not going to get a background checks bill this year. I hoped we could, but we won't. What we can get is a mental health reform bill, and that will help everyone—the case in Maine, the individual in Bloomfield, and millions of others who have had a miserable experience with a mental health system that is broken today, in part because of lack of coordination and in part because of lack of funding.

I am so thankful to Senator CASSIDY for being with me on the floor today. I am grateful for his friendship and for his cooperation on bringing this truly bipartisan Mental Health Reform Act to the floor of the Senate. We recommend it to our colleagues. We look forward to the upcoming hearings in the HELP Committee that we both sit on, and we hope to be back on the floor of the Senate as soon as possible to move forward on its passage through this body.

I say thank you to my colleague in the Senate, Senator CASSIDY.

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. GRASSLEY. 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. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for the

bill before the Senate, S. 754, the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act, and I want to thank the bill's managers for their leadership in drafting this bill and putting a lot of hard work into the bill.

Cyber security challenges that threaten us are very real challenges. We receive almost daily reminders of the importance of effective cyber security to protect our private data and the safety and security of the entire Nation from cyber attacks. These attacks have compromised the personal information of so many Americans as well as sensitive national security information. That national security issue might even be the biggest of the ones we hope to deal with.

The legislation before us will encourage the government and the private sector to work together to address these cyber security challenges. This bill helps create a strong legal framework for information sharing that will help us respond to these threats. The bill authorizes private companies to voluntarily share cyber threat information with each other and with the government. In turn, the bill permits the government to share this type of information with private entities.

The bill reduces the uncertainty and, most importantly, the legal barriers that either limit or prohibit the sharing of cyber threat information today. At the same time, the bill includes very significant privacy protections to strike a balance between maintaining security and protecting our civil liberties. For example, it restricts the government from acquiring or using cyber threat information except for limited cyber security purposes.

So, as I did at the beginning, I want to salute the leadership of the chair and vice chair of the Select Committee on Intelligence, Senator BURR and Senator FEINSTEIN, for their efforts on this bill. I know from the last couple of Congresses that this type of legislation isn't easy to put together. In the 112th Congress, I cosponsored cyber security legislation along with several of my colleagues. This involved working across several committees of jurisdiction. Last Congress, as then-ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, I continued to work with the Select Committee on Intelligence and others on an earlier version of this bill. Unfortunately, Democratic leadership never gave the Senate an opportunity to debate and to vote on that bill in the last Congress.

Senators BURR and FEINSTEIN were undaunted, however, and this Congress they diligently worked and continued to seek input from relevant committees of jurisdiction, including the Judiciary Committee that I chair. They incorporated the views of a broad range of Senators and worked to address the concerns of stakeholders outside of the Congress. This has produced their managers' amendment.

This is a bill that enjoys broad bipartisan support. As with most pieces of legislation that come before the Senate, it is not a perfect piece of legislation from any individual Senator's point of view, but in finding common ground, it has turned out to be a good bill that addresses a very real problem.

It is time for us to do our job and to vote. This is how the Senate is supposed to work. Now is the time for action because the question isn't whether there will be another cyber attack, the question is when that attack will happen.

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. BURR. 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. BURR. Mr. President, I am here to briefly talk on S. 754, the cyber security bill. Yesterday Vice Chairman DIANNE FEINSTEIN and I came to the floor and encouraged our Members who had amendments or who had an interest in debating the bill to come to the floor. It was my hope that we could finish in a couple of days with the cooperation of Members. We have not gotten that level of cooperation. Therefore, this will take several more days to finish. But it doesn't lessen the importance for those Members who have amendments in the queue—meaning they are pending—to come to the floor and talk about their amendments if they would like to. At some point, we will culminate this process, and those amendments that have yet to be disposed of will have votes with a very limited amount of debate time included.

It is my hope that we will have a wholesome debate and that people will have an opportunity to know what is in this bill if they don't today. But more importantly, through that debate we are able to share with the American people why a cyber security bill is so important and, more importantly, why we have done it in a way that we think it will be embraced and endorsed by not just corporate America but by individuals throughout the country.

Let me announce today that this bill will be done either Monday evening or Tuesday morning based upon what the leadership on both sides can agree to as it relates to the debate. The Vice Chair and I also came to the floor and we made this statement: We have worked aggressively in a bipartisan way to incorporate in the managers' package, which is currently pending, 14 amendments, and 8 of those amendments were included in the unanimous consent agreement made earlier this year when we delayed consideration of the bill until the day when we moved forward. There were several amendments on which we weren't able to reach an agreement or that we believed changed the policy significantly enough that this was not just an information sharing bill that was voluntary for corporations throughout this country. In the absence of being able to keep this bill intact in a way that we thought we needed to, the Vice Chairman and I have agreed to lock arms and to be opposed to those additional amendments.

Having said that, the debate to date has focused on the fact that there are technology companies across this country that are opposed to this bill. Yesterday the Vice Chairman and I repeatedly reminded our colleagues and the American people that this is a voluntary bill. There is nothing mandatory in it. The reality is that if you don't like what is in this, if for some reason you don't want to participate in what I would refer to as a community watch program—it is real simple; it is voluntary—do not participate. Choose not to inform the Federal Government when hackers have penetrated your system and stolen personal data out of it. Just choose not to tell us. But do not ruin it for everybody else. In a minute I am going to go through again why I think the cyber security bill should become law, why I think this is the first step of how we protect the personal data of the American people, and why hundreds, if not thousands, of businesses support this information sharing bill. But I can't stress that enough for those who oppose this. Most of them are, in fact, companies that hold the most private data in the world. Let me say that again. Those who are expressing opposition to this bill hold the largest banks of personal data in the world.

The decision as to whether they are for the bill or against the bill is their decision. The decision whether they utilize this voluntary program to further protect the personal data that is in their system is between them and their customers. But I have to say that it defies reason as to why a company that holds that much personal data wouldn't at least like to have the option of being able to partner with the Federal Government in an effort to minimize data loss, whether it is at their company or whether it is in their industry sector or whether it is in the global economy as a whole.

The last time I checked, the health of U.S. businesses was reliant on the health of the U.S. economy, and the health of the U.S. economy is affected by the health of the global economy. I know the Presiding Officer understands that because he was in business like I was for 17 years.

It really does concern me that one could be opposed to something that insulates the U.S. economy from having an adverse impact by the cyber security act and believes that they are OK even though it might tank the U.S. economy.

At the end of the day, I want to try to put this in 101 terms, the simplest terms of what the information sharing bill does. I am going to break it into three baskets. It is about business to

business. This bill allows a company that has been hacked—where somebody has penetrated their computer system and has access to their data—to immediately pick up the phone and call their competitor and ask their competitor whether they have had a similar penetration of their system.

It is only reasonable to expect that the first person you would go to is a company that has a business that looks exactly like yours. In that particular case, this legislation provides that company with protection under the anti-trust laws. Anti-trust forbids companies from collaborating together. What we say is that if it has do with minimizing the loss of data, we want to allow the collaboration of competitors for the specific reason of discussing a cyber attack.

The Senate recognizes I have designed something in this that doesn't require a corporate lawyer to sit in the room when the decision is made. I have no personal dislike for lawyers other than the fact that they slow things down. To minimize the loss of data means you have to have a process that goes in real time from the bottom of the chain all the way to the decision-making and the communication back down, not only to that business, but to the entire economy. Having a lawyer that has to think whether we can legally do this defeats the purpose of trying to minimize data loss. So we give them a blanket exemption under the anti-trust laws so they know up front that they can pick up the phone and call their competitor, and there is no Justice Department that will come down on them as long as they confine it to the discussion of cyber attack.

At the same time we initiate what I call business to government, which means that when the IT department is talking to their competitor, the IT department can put out a notification through the Federal portal that they have been attacked, and that initiates the exchange of a limited amount of information that has been predetermined by everybody in the Federal Government who needs to do the forensics of who attacked, what tool they used, and what defensive mechanism could be put up in the way of software that would eliminate the breach.

In the statute we have said, one, you can't transmit personal data unless it is absolutely crucial to understanding the forensics of the attack. We have also said in statutory language to the government agencies: If for some reason personal data makes it through your filters, you cannot transmit that personal data anywhere else within the Federal Government or to the public.

We have gone to great lengths to make sure that personal data is not disclosed through the notification process of a hack. I understand that the personal data has already been accessed by the individual who committed the act, but we want to make sure that the government doesn't contribute to the distribution of that data.

In order to create an incentive in a voluntary program for a business to initiate that notification to the Federal Government, we provide liability protection. Anytime a company allows personal data or data on their business to get out, there could potentially be a shareholder's suit. What we do is provide a blanket liability protection to make sure that a company can't be sued for the government notification of a security breach where data has been removed and it is in the best interest of the government to know it, to react to it, and for the general population of businesses in America to understand it.

So we have business-to-business collaboration with your competitor, anti-trust protection, business-to-government liability protection, no personal data transmitted, and the last piece is government to business.

It is hard for me to believe that the government didn't have the statutory authority to convey to businesses across America when a cyber attack is in progress. The Federal Government has to be asked to come in and typically will be asked by the company that has been attacked, but how about their competitors? How about the industry sector? How about the whole U.S. economy? There is no authority to do that. This bill creates the authority in the Federal Government to receive that information from a company that has been penetrated, to process it, to understand who did it, to understand the attack tool they used, to determine the defensive mechanism of software that it can be put on, and then to notify American businesses that there is an attack happening now, and here is the attack tool and software you can buy off the shelf and put on your computer system to protect you. That is it. That is the entire information sharing bill, and it is voluntary.

I will touch on eight items very briefly. Why is there a need for cyber legislation? I don't want to state the obvious, but we have already seen that individuals and nation states penetrate the private sector and steal personal data, and the Federal Government can steal personal data. I thought it would hit home with my colleagues when the Office of Personnel Management was breached, and now we are up to 22 to 24 million individuals who were compromised. More importantly, the personal data at OPM extended to every individual who had ever applied for a security clearance, who had ever been granted security clearance, and who had security clearances and are now retired, but for some reason that application remained in the database. That application, which consists of 18 pages, has the most personal information one can find. It lists your parents and their Social Security numbers, your brothers, your sisters, where you lived since you graduated from college. It even has a page that asks you to share the most obvious way that someone might blackmail you. It has probably some of the most damaging personal information that one can have breached.

Cyber attacks have harmed multiple U.S. companies. If this weren't serious, would the President of China and the President of the United States, when they met several weeks ago, have come to an agreement about how they would intercede if one country or the other commits a cyber attack against each other? Probably not.

Our bill is completely voluntary, and I think it is safe to say that those who want to share data can, in fact, share data on this.

I mentioned the words ''real time.'' What we want to do is create a real-time system because we want a partnership. We want a partnership with other private companies and we want a partnership with the private and public sector, and you can't get a partnership by mandating it. All you can get is an adversarial relationship. We maintain that voluntary status in the hope that the sharing of that information is, in fact, real time. We can control—once you transmit to the Federal Government—how to define ''real time.'' I have no control over a private company's decision once they know they have been breached to the point that they actually make a notification to the Federal Government, but with the liability protection and anti-trust coverage, we are convinced that we are structured from the beginning to create an incentive for real time to take place.

We protect personal privacy. Many have come to the floor and have suggested that this is a surveillance bill. Let me say to my colleagues and to the American people: There is no capability for this to become a surveillance bill. The managers' amendment took those items that people were concerned with and eliminated it. We can be accused of a lot of things, but to accuse this of being a surveillance bill is either a sign of ignorance or a sign that one is being disingenuous. It is not a surveillance bill. Be critical of what we are attempting to do, be critical of what we do, but don't use the latitude to suggest that this is something that it is not.

We require private companies and the government to eliminate any irrelevant personal, identifiable information before sharing the cyber threat indicators or putting up defensive mechanisms.

This bill does not allow the government to monitor private networks or computers. It does not let government shut down Web sites or require companies to turn over personal information.

This bill does not permit the government to retain or use cyber threat information for anything other than cyber security purposes, identifying a cyber security threat, protecting individuals from death or serious bodily or economic harm, protecting minors, or investigating limited cyber crime offenses.

This bill provides rigorous oversight and requires a periodic interagency inspector general's report to assess

whether the government has violated any of the requirements in this bill. The report also will assess any impact this bill may have on privacy and civil liberties. In the report, we require the IG to report to us whether anybody does anything outside what the statute allows them to do, but we also ask the IG to make a gut call on whether we have protected privacy and civil liberties.

Finally, our managers' amendment has incorporated an additional provision to enhance privacy protections first. Our managers' amendment omitted the government's ability to use cyber information to investigate and prosecute serious and violent felonies. Let me raise my hand and say I am guilty. I felt very strongly that that should have been in the bill. If we find during an investigation that an individual has committed a felony that is not related to a cyber attack, I thought we should turn that information over to law enforcement but, no, we dropped it. I don't want there to be any question as to whether this is an effective cyber information sharing bill.

Our managers' amendment limited cyber threat information sharing authorities to those items that are shared for cyber security purposes. Both of these changes ensure that nothing in our bill reaches beyond the focus of cyber security threats that are intended to prevent and deter an attack, and nothing in this bill creates any potential for surveillance authorities.

Now, as I said, despite rumors to the contrary, this bill is voluntary. It is a voluntary threat indicator to share with authorities and does not provide in any way for the government to spy on or use library and book records, gun sales, tax records, educational records, or medical records. There is something in that for every member of every State.

I can honestly look at my librarians and say we haven't breached the public libraries' protection of personal data. I will say librarians are not fans of this legislation. I don't think they have read the managers' amendment that spells out the concerns we heard and then said: This can't go there. I am not sure we can statutorily state it any clearer than what we have done.

Given that cyber attackers have hacked into, stolen, and publicly disclosed so much private, personal information, it is astounding to me that privacy groups would oppose this bill. It has nothing to do with surveillance, and it seeks to protect private information from being stolen.

There are no offensive measures. This bill ensures that the government cannot install, employ or otherwise use cyber security systems on private sector networks. In other words, no one can hack back into another computer, even if the purpose is to protect against or squash a cyber attack. It can't be done. It is illegal.

The government cannot retain or use cyber threat information for anything other than cyber security purposes, including preventing, investigating, disrupting, and prosecuting limited cyber crimes, protecting minors, and protecting individuals from death or serious bodily harm, or economic harm.

The government cannot use cyber threat information in regulatory proceedings. Let me state that again. The government cannot use cyber threat information in regulatory proceedings. If somebody believes this is not voluntary and that there is some attempt to try to get a mandatory hook in here where regulators can turn around and bypass the legislative responsibility of the Congress of the United States, let me just say, we are explicit. It cannot be done. But we are also explicit that the government cannot retain this information for anything other than the list of items I discussed. This provides focused liability protection to private companies that monitor their own systems and share cyber threat indicators and defensive mechanisms in accordance with the act, but the liability protection is not open-ended. This doesn't provide liability protection for a company that engages in gross negligence or willful misconduct. I am not a lawyer, but I have been told that ties it up pretty tightly; that it makes a very small, narrow lane that companies can achieve liability protection, and that lane means they are transferring that information to the Federal Government.

Last, independent oversight. This bill provides rigorous oversight. It requires a periodic interagency inspector general's report to assess whether the government has violated any of the requirements of this act. The report also will assess any impact that this bill may have on privacy and civil liberties as well as an assessment of what the government has done to reduce any impact.

This bill further requires an independent privacy and civil liberties oversight board to assess any impact this bill may have on privacy and civil liberties and is, in fact, reviewed internally by an inspector general. The inspector general checks to make sure they live by the letter of the law. The inspector general makes an assessment on the privacy and civil liberties, and we set up an independent board to look at whether, in fact, privacy and civil liberties have been protected.

I say to my colleagues, if there is more that they need in here, tell us what it is. The amendment process is open.

Here is where we are. Privacy folks don't want a bill, period. Some Members don't want a bill, period. I get it. I am willing to adapt to that. I only need 60 votes for this to pass, and then I have to conference it with the House that has two different versions. Then I have to go to the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, and I have to convince the President and his whole administration to support this bill. Let me quote the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. They support this bill. The National Security Council tomorrow is going to come out in support of this bill. Why? Because most people recognize the fact that we need this, that this is the responsible thing to do. This is why Congress was created.

If, in fact, there are those who object, don't participate. I say to those businesses around the country, I am not going to get into your decisionmaking, although I think it is flawed. You hold most of the personal data of any companies out there. Yet you don't want to see any coordinated effort to minimize data loss in the U.S. economy. I think that is extremely shortsighted. I think your customers would disagree with you, but the legislation was written in a way that allows you to opt out and to say: I don't want to play in this sandbox.

I say to my colleagues and to the American people: Is that a reason for us not to allow the thousands of companies that want to do it, representing hundreds of thousands and millions of customers who want to protect their credit card number, their health records, all the personal data that is out there on them—if they want to see that protected, should they not have that done because some companies say they don't want to play? No. We make it voluntary, and we allow them to opt out. They can explain to their customers why. If I am with another tech company and they are participating in this, they must be more interested in protecting my data. I think it is a tough sell myself as a guy in business for 17 years.

I know what is up here. Some are looking at this as a marketing tool. They are going to go out and say: We don't participate in transferring data to the Federal Government. Oh, really. Wait until the day you get penetrated. Wait until the day they download all of that personal information on all of your customers. You are going to be begging for a partnership with the Federal Government. Then we are going to extend it to you, whether you liked it or not, whether you voted for the bill or supported the bill or spoke in favor of the bill or ever participated in it. If we pass this bill, which I think we will, they will have an opportunity to partner with the Federal Government and to do it in an effective way. In the meantime, I think there will be just as many businesses using a marketing tool that says: We like the cyber information sharing bill, and if we ever need to use it, we are looking forward to partnering with the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and the National Security Agency because we want to minimize the exposure of the loss of data our customers could have.

Mark my words. There is a real battle getting ready to brew here. Again, putting on my business hat, I like the idea of being able to go out and sell the fact that I am going to partner if something happens much better than selling

the pitch that I am going to do this alone. Think about it. A high school student last week hacked the personal email account of the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and the Director of the CIA. This is almost ''Star Trek.'' ''Beam me up, Scotty.''

There are people who believe that this is just going to go away. It is not going away. Every day there is an attempt to try to penetrate a U.S. company, an agency of the Federal Government for one reason: to access personal data. The intent is there from individuals and from nation states. For companies that think this is going to go away or think they are smart enough that it is not going to happen to them, I have seen some of the best and they are one click away from somebody downloading and entering their system and that click may not be protected by technology. It may be the lack of ability of an employee to make the right decision on whether they open an email, and, boom, they have just exposed everybody in their system.

So I will wrap up because I see my good friend and colleague Senator WYDEN is here. We will have several days, based upon the process we have in front of us, to talk about the good, and some will talk about the bad, which I don't think exists, but let me assure my colleagues that the ugly part of this—the ugly part of this—is that cyber theft is real. It doesn't discriminate. It goes to where the richest pool of data is. In the case of the few companies that are not supportive of this bill, they are the richest depositories of personal data in the world. I hope they wake up and smell the roses.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to inform my colleague, the distinguished chairman of our Intelligence Committee, I am always thinking about the history of the committee. I believe Chairman BURR, the ranking minority member Senator FEINSTEIN, and I have been on the Intelligence Committee almost as long as anybody in history.

I always like to work with my colleague. This is an area where we have a difference of opinion. I am going to try to outline what that is and still try to describe how we might be able to work it out.

Mr. BURR. May I thank my colleague?

Mr. WYDEN. Of course.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I thank my colleague. I think he diplomatically referred to me as old, but I know that wasn't the case. He is exactly right. We have served together for a long time. We agree on most issues. This is one that we disagree on, but we do it in a genuine and diplomatic way. Contrary to maybe the image that some portray to the American people, we fight during the day and we can have a drink or go to dinner at night, and we are just as likely to work on a piece of legislation together next week. So that is what this institution is and it is why it is so great.

Mr. WYDEN. Well said. There is nothing better than having Carolina barbecue unless it is Oregon salmon. Yes, we old jocks, former football players and basketball players, we have tough debates and then we go out and enjoy a meal.

Here is how I would like to start this afternoon. The distinguished chairman of the committee is absolutely correct in saying that cyber security is a very substantial problem. My constituents know a lot about that because one of our prominent employers, SolarWorld, a major manufacturer in renewable energy, was hacked by the Chinese simply because this employer was trying to protect its rights under trade law. In fact, our government indicted the People's Liberation Army for their hacking into this major Oregon employer. So no question that cyber security is a major problem.

Second, there is no question in my mind that information sharing can be very valuable in a number of instances. If we know, for example, someone is associated with hackers, malware, this sort of thing, of course it is important to promote that kind of sharing. The difference of opinion is that I believe this bill is badly flawed because it doesn't pass the test of showing that when we share information, we have to have robust privacy standards or else millions of Americans are going to look up and they are going to say that is really not cyber security. They are going to say it is a surveillance bill. So that is what the difference of opinion is.

AMENDMENT NO. 2621, AS MODIFIED

Let me turn to how I have been trying to improve the legislation. I am going to speak for a few minutes on my amendment No. 2621 to the bill that we have been discussing and that is now pending in the Senate. Obviously, anybody who has been watching the debate on this cyber security bill has seen what we would have to call a spirited exchange of views. Senators are debating the substance of the legislation and, as I just indicated to Chairman BURR and I have indicated to ranking minority member Senator FEINSTEIN, there is agreement on a wide variety of points and issues.

Both supporters and opponents of the bill agree that sharing information about cyber security threats, samples of malware, information about malicious hackers, and all of this makes sense and one ought to try to promote more of it. Both supporters and opponents now agree that giving corporations immunity from customer lawsuits isn't going to stop sophisticated attacks such as the OPM personnel records breach.

I am very glad that there has been agreement on that point recently, because proponents of the bill sometimes said that their legislation would stop hacks such as the one that took place at OPM. When technologists reviewed it, that was clearly not the case, and the claim has been withdrawn that somehow this bill would prevent hacks like we saw at OPM.

The differences of opinion between supporters and opponents of the bill—who do agree on a variety of these issues—surround the likely privacy impact of the bill. Supporters have essentially argued that the benefits of this bill, perhaps, are limited—particularly now that they have withdrawn the claim that this would help against an OPM attack—but that every little bit helps. But there is no downside to them to just pass the bill. It makes sense. Pass the bill. There is no downside.

Opponents of the bill, who grow in number virtually every day, have been arguing that the bill is likely to have a significant negative impact on the personal privacy of a large number of Americans and that this greatly outweighs the limited security benefits. If an information sharing bill doesn't include adequate privacy protections, I am telling you, colleagues, I think those proponents are going to have people wake up and say: I really don't see this as a cyber security bill, but it really looks to me like a surveillance bill by another name.

(Mr. TOOMEY assumed the Chair.)

Colleagues who are following this and looking at the bill may be trying to sort through this discussion between proponents and opponents. To help clarify the debate, I would like to get into the text of the bill for just a minute.

If colleagues look at page 17 of the Burr-Feinstein substitute amendment, which is the latest version with respect to this bill, Senators are going to see a key section of the bill. This is the section that discusses the removal of personal information when data is shared with the government. The section says very clearly that in order to get immunity from a lawsuit a private company has to review the data they would provide and remove any information the company knows is personal information unrelated to a cyber security threat. This language, in my view, clearly creates an incentive for companies to dump large quantities of data over to the government with only a cursory review. As long as that company isn't certain that they are providing unrelated personal information, that company gets immunity from lawsuits. Some companies may choose to be more careful than that, but this legislation and the latest version—the Burr-Feinstein substitute amendment—would not require it. This bill says with respect to personal data: When in doubt, you can hand it over.

My amendment No. 2621 is an alternative. It is very simple. It is less than a page long. It would amend this section that I have just described to say that when companies review the data they provide, they ought to ''remove, to the extent feasible, any personal information of or identifying a specific

individual that is not necessary to describe or identify a cybersecurity threat.'' The alternative that I am offering gives companies a real responsibility to filter out unrelated personal information before that company hands over large volumes of personal data about customers or people to the government.

The sponsors of the bill have said that they believe that companies should only give the government information that is necessary for cyber security and should remove unrelated personal information. I agree with them, but for reasons that I have just described, I would say respectfully that the current version of this legislation does not accomplish that goal, and that is why I believe the amendment I have offered is so important.

For an example of how this might work in practice, imagine that a health insurance company finds out that millions of its customers' records have been stolen. If that company has any evidence about who the hackers were or how they stole this information, of course it makes sense to share that information with the government. But that company shouldn't simply say here you go, and hand millions of its customers' medical records over for distribution to a broad array of government agencies.

The records of the victims of a hack should not be treated the same way that information about the hacker is treated. Companies should be required to make a reasonable effort to remove personal information that is not needed for cyber security before they hand information over to the government. That is what my amendment seeks to achieve. That is not what is in the substitute amendment.

Furthermore, if colleagues hear the sponsors of the substitute saying this bill's privacy protections are strong and you have heard me making the case that they really don't have any meaningful teeth and they are too weak, don't just take my word for it. Listen to all of the leading technology companies that have come out against the current version of this legislation.

These companies know about the importance of protecting both cyber security and individual privacy. The reason they know—and this is the case in Pennsylvania, Oregon, and everywhere else—is that these companies have to manage the challenge every single day. Companies in Pennsylvania and Oregon have to ensure they are protecting both cyber security and individual privacy. Those companies know that customer confidence is their lifeblood and that the only way to ensure customer confidence is to convince customers that if their product is going to be used, their information will be protected, both from malicious hackers and from unnecessary collections by their government.

I would note that there is another reason why it is important to get the privacy protections I am offering in my amendment at this time. The companies that I just described are competing on a global playing field. These companies have to deal with the impression that U.S. laws do not adequately protect their customers' information. Right now these companies—companies that are located in Pennsylvania and Oregon—are dealing with the fallout of a decision by a European court to strike down the safe harbor data agreement between the United States and the European Union. The court's ruling was based on the argument that U.S. laws in their present form do not adequately protect customer data. Now, I strongly disagree with this ruling. At the same time, I would say to my colleagues and to the Presiding Officer—he and I have worked closely on international trade as members of the Finance Committee—and I would say to colleagues who are following this international trade question and the question of the European Union striking down the safe harbor for our privacy laws, in my view this bill is likely to make things even more difficult for American companies that are trying to get access to those customers in Europe.

To give just a sampling of the leading companies that have come out against the CISA legislation, let me briefly call the roll. There is the Apple company. They have millions of customers. They know a great deal about what we have to do to deal with malicious hackers and to protect privacy. There is also Dropbox, Twitter, Salesforce, Yelp, Reddit, and the Wikimedia Foundation. I point to the strong statement by the Computer & Communications Industry Association. Their members include Google, Amazon, Facebook, Microsoft, Yahoo, Netflix, eBay, and PayPal. Those individual companies I have mentioned have millions of customers. The organization that speaks for them says: ''CISA's prescribed mechanism for sharing of Cyber threat information does not sufficiently protect users' privacy.''

On top of this, there has been widespread opposition from a larger spectrum of privacy advocacy organizations. Here the groups range from the Open Technology Institute to the American Library Association.

I was particularly struck by the American Library Association's comments in opposition to this bill. I think the leadership said—paraphrasing—something to the effect of when the American Library Association opposes legislation that authors say will promote information sharing, they indicate there was a little something more to it than what the sponsors are claiming.

Wrapping up, I want to make clear, as I said yesterday, that I appreciate that the bipartisan leadership of our committee has tried to respond to these concerns. They know that these large companies with expertise in collecting data and promoting cyber security have all come out against the bill. I heard talk about privacy protections. I don't know of a single organization that is looked to by either side of the aisle, Democrats and Republicans, for expertise and privacy that has come out in favor of the bill.

So the sponsors of this legislation and the authors of the substitute amendment, which I have tried to describe at length here this afternoon, are correct in saying that they have made some changes, but those changes do not go to the core of the bill.

For example, the amendment I have described would really, in my view, fix this bill by ensuring that there was a significant effort to filter out unrelated personal and private information that was sent to the government under the bill.

So I hope Senators will listen to what groups and the companies that have expertise in this field have said. I hope Senators on both sides of the aisle will support the amendments I and others have offered. The Senate needs to do better than to produce a bill with minimal effects on the security of Americans and significant downside for their privacy and their liberty.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

AMENDMENT NO. 2626, AS MODIFIED

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I would like to speak for 5 or 6 minutes on the cyber bill.

Unfortunately, I am here to express my distaste for the manner in which this bill has proceeded. I have an amendment that is not going to be voted on. Let me describe some of the characteristics of that amendment.

First of all, it is bipartisan. It is Senator GRAHAM's and my amendment.

Second, it has had a hearing. We have had a hearing on it in the Judiciary Committee. Considerable work has gone into it.

Third, it has the support of the Department of Justice. It repairs holes in our criminal law for protecting cyber security that we worked on very carefully with the Department of Justice and which we have had testimony in support of from our Department of Justice prosecutors.

Last, it was in the queue. It was in the list of amendments that were agreed to when we agreed to go to the floor with this bill.

So I don't know how I am going to vote on this bill now. But if you have a bipartisan amendment that has had a hearing, that was in the queue, and that has the support of the Department of Justice and you cannot even get a vote on it, then something has gone wrong in the process.

I remember Senator SESSIONS coming to the floor and wondering how it is that certain Senators appoint themselves masters of the universe and go off in a quiet room someplace and decide that certain amendments will and will not be heard. I am very sympathetic to Senator SESSIONS' concerns right now.

Let me tell you what the substance of our amendment would do.

First, there are people out there around the world in this cyber universe of fraud and crime who are trafficking in Americans' financial information for purposes of fraud and theft. If they don't travel to America or if they don't have a technical connection to America, we cannot go after them. There is an American victim, but we cannot go after them. That is a loophole that harms Americans that this bill would close.

I cannot believe there is one Member of this institution who would oppose closing a loophole that allows foreign criminals access to Americans' financial information for fraudulent purposes but puts them beyond the reach of our criminal law. That is one part of what our bill does.

Second, it raises penalties for people who intrude on critical infrastructure. You can go all around this country, you can go to military installations that have way less security concerns than our critical infrastructure, like our electric grid, and you will see chain-link fences that say department of whatever, U.S. Government, stay out. You cannot go in there to picnic, you cannot go in there because you are curious, you cannot go in there for a hike, and the reason is because there is a national security component to what is going on in there.

Well, there is a huge national security component to our critical infrastructure, like our electric grid. All this would do is raise the penalties. You could still go in, but if you get caught doing something illegal there, then it is a little different if you are attacking America's critical infrastructure than if you are just prowling around in some other portion of the Web that does not have that.

Again, I think if that came to a vote, we would probably get 90 percent of this body in favor. Who is in support of allowing people to mess around in our critical infrastructure?

The third is botnet brokers. Botnets are out there all over the Internet. They are a plague on the Internet. There is no such thing as a good botnet. Everyone would be better off if they were removed. They are like weeds on the Internet. There are people who are brokers who allow access to botnets, and because our laws are so out of date, if you are just brokering access to a botnet for criminal purposes, there is no offense. Why would we not want to empower our Department of Justice to be able to go after people who are criminal brokers allowing access for criminals to botnets to use for criminal purposes against Americans? I don't understand that.

Lastly, botnet takedowns. A botnet is a weed. We wait until somebody actually encounters that weed and is harmed by it before we allow our Department of Justice to act. We should be out there taking down botnets on a hygiene basis all the time. We are limited because of this artificiality. That is the fourth piece of the bill. It empowers botnet takedowns like the Bugat takedown we just did. We should be doing a lot more of that. Again, unless somebody here is in the botnet caucus and is in favor of more botnets out there, this is something which would probably pass unanimously. Yet I cannot get a vote.

It is bipartisan, has had a hearing, is in the queue, is supported by the Department of Justice, and those are the four sub-elements of it. For some reason, the masters of the universe have gone off and had a meeting in which they decided this is not going to be in the queue. I object to that procedure.

I am sorry we are at this stage at this point because I think that on the merits this would win. This is a bipartisan, good, Department of Justice-supported, law enforcement exercise to protect people against cyber criminals. I don't know what the sense is that there is some hidden pro-botnet, pro-foreign cyber criminal caucus here that won't let an amendment like mine get a vote.

I will yield the floor. I see Senator CARPER here, and he has done great work to try to be more productive than my amendment reflects. I hope we can sort this out to a point where an amendment like mine, which was in the queue in the original deal that got us to this bill, can now get back in some kind of a queue so that we can get this done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. I appreciate the yielding by Senator WHITEHOUSE. Let me just say that if your provision, Senator WHITEHOUSE, does not end up in this bill and we actually do pass it, I am sure we will conference with the House. There will be an opportunity to revisit this issue. So I hope you will stay in touch with those of us who might be fortunate enough to be a conferee.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I appreciate that very much, more than the Senator can know.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the cyber security information bill introduced by my colleagues, Senators BURR and FEINSTEIN. I want to commend my colleagues and their staff for their leadership and for their tireless efforts on this extremely important piece of legislation.

As ranking member and former chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, I have been following cyber security and this information sharing proposal in particular literally for years. In fact, when Senator FEINSTEIN first introduced an information sharing bill in 2012—that was like two or three Congress's ago—it was referred to Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, on which I served. That bill was ultimately folded into a comprehensive cyber security bill that I had the honor of cosponsoring with Senators Joe Lieberman, SUSAN COLLINS, Jay Rockefeller, and Senator FEINSTEIN. We were not able to pass that bill, but I think it has paved the way for other cyber legislation, including the bill that is before us today and a number of the amendments that are going to be offered to that bill in the managers' amendment, especially.

Last Congress, I worked with our ranking member on homeland security, Dr. Tom Coburn, and our House counterparts to get not one, not two, not three, but four cyber security bills enacted into law, signed by the President. I believe these four bills laid a very strong foundation for some significant improvements on how the Department of Homeland Security carries out its cyber security mission and really for this bill before us too.

What the legislation Dr. Coburn and I worked on during the last Congress did, in essence, was to better equip the Department of Homeland Security to operate at the center of the kind of robust information sharing program that the Burr-Feinstein bill would set up. How do they do that? One, make sure the Department of Homeland Security would have the ability to attract and retain top-flight talent, much like the National Security Agency already has.

The legislation actually takes something called the cyber ops center, NCCIC, within the Department of Homeland Security and makes it real and functional and an entity that people would use and listen to.

Finally, we took an old law called FISMA, the Federal Information Sharing Management Act—we took something that was just a paperwork operation, this FISMA legislation—like a once-in-a-year check to see how good a cyber security agency might be—and turned it into not a paperwork operation, not a once-every-365-days operation, but a 24/7 surveillance operation on the lookout for intrusions within and across the Federal Government broadly.

That legislation, affectionally known as FISMA, was also designed to make clear what the division of labor was between the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, and the Department of Homeland Security on protecting the dot.gov domain. We made it clear that the job of OMB is to, if you will, steer the ship. The job of the Department of Homeland Security is to row the ship, to row the boat. That is a good division of labor given that OMB only has six employees who work on this stuff and the Department of Homeland Security has hundreds. So I think we figured out the sharing of labor, the division of labor, and also made sure the Department of Homeland Security has the resources—the horses, the resources—and the technology they need.

Sharing more cyber security threat information among and between the private sector and the Federal Government players who are on the frontline in cyber security is critical for national security. Over the last couple of

years, we have witnessed many troubling cyber attacks against our banks, but not just our banks, against retailers, health providers, government agencies, and God knows how many others.

Some of those launching these attacks were just criminals. Some of them were just criminals. They want to steal information. They want to make money off of our personal information, off our intellectual property, like our intellectual seed corn, if you will, for companies large and small and for universities as well. Others just want to be disruptive or they want to make political points. Some actors, however, are capable or would like to develop the capability to use a cyber attack to harm people and cause physical damage.

It is long past time for this body to take action to more effectively combat these threats we now face in cyber space. That is why earlier this year I introduced a similar information sharing bill. This bill largely mirrored the administration's original proposal.

The administration asked me to introduce their information sharing bill. Before I did that, we actually had a hearing in the committee on homeland security. Part of the centerpiece of the hearing was the administration's proposal. We got some good ideas on how to make it better. We made it better and introduced that bill to use, if you will, as a point-counter point in a constructive, positive way with the legislation that worked its way through the Intelligence Committee. But we did not stop there. We took information from a lot of experts and stakeholders.

The measure we are discussing today shares the same goals as my original bill—largely the administration's original bill—to increase the sharing of cyber threat information between the Federal Government and the private sector and between different entities within the private sector. I am pleased that we are finally discussing these critical issues on the Senate floor.

The substitute amendment we are debating today makes a number of improvements to the bill that was first made public after the Intelligence Committee reported it out. It also includes several changes that I, as well as several of my colleagues, have been calling for—including the chairman of our committee.

I would like to thank Senators BURR and FEINSTEIN. I thank their staff for working closely with our staff and others to produce what I believe is a significantly smarter and stronger bill. Is it perfect? No, not yet. But I can say there is always room for improvement. That is why we still have a debate on a number of amendments and those like the one mentioned by Senator WHITEHOUSE that may be germane in a different kind of way in conference.

While there may not be agreement on everything in this bill, I believe most of our colleagues would come to the conclusion that it really will help to improve our Nation's cyber security and, by extension, our national security and, by extension, our economic security.

First, the bill would ensure that the government—our government—is providing actionable intelligence to private sector entities that are seeking to better protect themselves in cyber space. Businesses around our country are hungry for information they can use to fend off attacks and better protect their systems and their customers. This bill would make the Federal Government a much stronger partner for them.

Many companies that I have talked to of late also want to share more information with the Federal Government about what they are seeing online every day, but they are unsure of the rules of the road. In other words, companies want more predictability and they want more certainty when it comes to working with our government. This bill would give them that by clarifying that they won't be putting themselves in legal jeopardy if they choose to share cyber threat information with our Federal Government.

If companies do want to avail themselves of the legal protections the bill offers, they would have to, with two narrow exceptions, use the information sharing portal at the Department of Homeland Security. This puts the Department of Homeland Security, a civilian entity, at the center of the information sharing process. I think this is smart and the right thing to do. In fact, many experts and companies that I have talked to across the country as recently as last week out in Silicone Valley and out on the west coast—they agree with what I have just said.

I know many Americans are uneasy with companies they do business with directly handing over data to an intelligence or law enforcement agency. The Department of Homeland Security will carry out its responsibilities under this bill through the cyber ops center I mentioned earlier called the National Cyber Security and Communications Integration Center—that is a mouthful. We affectionately call it N-Kick. It is the cyber ops center. It includes folks from DHS and other Federal agencies. It includes a number of representatives of financial services, the utility industry, our retail industry, and so forth, all together under one roof, talking together and working together to help us support one another and make it strong and more secure.

One of the bills I worked on with Dr. Coburn last Congress formally, as I said earlier, authorized this center. We are pleased to see that this bill would make the most out of the resources we have already invested in this cyber ops center, NCCIC.

Earlier this month, Secretary Jeh Johnson of the Department of Homeland Security told our Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee that beginning in November, the cyber ops center, NCCIC, will have the capability to automate the distribution and receipt of cyber threat indicators. I will say that again—to automate the distribution and the receipt of cyber threat indicators that they receive from others, including those in the private sector. In other words, the Department of Homeland Security will have the ability to share information with other agencies in real time—not next month, not next week, not tomorrow, not in an hour, but in real time, which is really what this little bill before us today requires.

I know that the real-time sharing is incredibly important to the bill's sponsors, and it is important to me and probably to many of our colleagues and stakeholders. Equally important, however, is the ability of the Department of Homeland Security to apply what I call a privacy scrub to the information it receives from industry, the threat indicators that come from industry—see something, say something—stuff that they send to the Department of Homeland Security.

In the bill that I authored with others in my committee, including our chairman, we allow the Department of Homeland Security to, if you will, receive information through its portal from various entities that witness threat indicators, to see it and to put it through the portal, to bring it through the portal to do a privacy scrub. That is one of the things the Department of Homeland Security has expertise in doing.

I used an example at lunch earlier today. I talked about baseball. I know the Presiding Officer has some interest in baseball. There are teams called the Phillies in Philadelphia and the Pirates in Pittsburgh. I would just say to him, thinking about baseball for a minute, let's say you are in the playoffs. Let's say you have a team in the playoffs. You are in the ninth inning, and you need to get somebody out of the bullpen to close. You have a one-run lead. You look to the bullpen. He is now retired, but Mariano Rivera was the best closer in baseball history. You have Mariano Rivera in the bullpen to come in and close the game, and you have three other guys you just called up from the Minor League, so maybe from AAA.

You say: Well, whom do I put in to close the game? Do I put in the best closer we have ever had in baseball history or do I bring in three rookies, three Minor League guys?

Well, you bring in Mariano Rivera.

When it comes to being able to do privacy scrubs, the Department of Homeland Security—that is what they do. That is what they do. Now they have the horses, the ability, and the technology to do it even better.

I know some of my colleagues are concerned that a privacy scrub will slow down the information sharing process. I share those concerns, but I have been assured by the Department—the bright, smart people at the Department of Homeland Security—that less

than 1 percent of the information it receives would actually ever need to be reviewed by a human, by a person. The rest—roughly 95 percent to 99 percent—would be shared with other agencies at machine speed. Bingo.

I am very pleased that DHS has come to an agreement on this process with its agency partners. We will be up and running with a portal in the way I have described in the next couple weeks.

One of the amendments I filed speaks to this privacy scrub process. It would make clear that the Department of Homeland Security could carry out an automated privacy scrub in real time and without delay. In fact, my amendment would add just one word to the bill so that DHS could continue to automatically remove irrelevant or erroneous data from cyber threat information.

I am very pleased that Senators BURR and FEINSTEIN have taken this amendment into consideration and have now modified their substitute amendment to make sure the Department of Homeland Security can do what it does best, and that is to apply a privacy scrub—pulling out personally identifiable information that actually shouldn't be passed on to other Federal agencies. The substitute amendment now calls on DHS to work with its agency partners to agree on a process to share information while protecting privacy. This is a process DHS is already undertaking.

I thank Senators BURR and FEINSTEIN, as well as our friends at the Department of Homeland Security and other agencies, for working so hard to find agreement on this language and for working with my staff and me on this important matter.

Another amendment I put forward with our committee chairman, Senator JOHNSON, aims to improve what we call cyber hygiene across the Federal Government and to prevent attacks against Federal agencies. This language is based on a bill that Senator JOHNSON and I introduced and had reported out of our homeland security committee by a unanimous vote. The amendment does three main things.

First, it would require all Federal agencies to implement specific best practices and state-of-the-art technologies to defend against cyber attacks. For example, we had experts testify about the importance of strong authentication and data encryption. This amendment would make sure that agencies are taking these commonsense steps to bolster their cyber security defenses.

Second, the amendment would accelerate the deployment and adoption of the Department of Homeland Security's cyber intrusion and detection program, known as EINSTEIN, as in Albert Einstein, but you don't have the ''Albert'' in the name of this technology; it is called EINSTEIN.

For my colleagues who may not be familiar with EINSTEIN, with respect to homeland security and cyber security, let me take a couple of minutes to describe its main features.

We had EINSTEIN 1 present at the beginning, EINSTEIN 2 was follow-on technology, and then there is EINSTEIN 3. EINSTEIN basically analyzes Internet traffic entering and leaving Federal civilian agencies to identify cyber threats and to try to stop attacks.

This system has been rolled out in phases over the last several years. EINSTEIN 1 is the first step. It sees and actually records Internet traffic, much like a guard at a checkpoint watches cars go by and maybe writes down and records the license plates. EINSTEIN 2 detects anything out of the ordinary and sets off alarms if a piece of malware is trying to enter a Federal network. For example, a car comes through and it is not supposed to come through. That would set off an alarm and enable EINSTEIN 2 to actually detect a cyber intrusion. It doesn't do anything about blocking. It doesn't block the car, in this example. It doesn't block anything. EINSTEIN 3A, the latest version, uses unclassified and classified information to actually block the cyber attack.

So initially EINSTEIN 1 records basically what is being detected, EINSTEIN 2 actually detects bad stuff coming through in terms of an intrusion, and EINSTEIN 3A blocks it. The problem is that less than half of our Federal civilian agencies actually have EINSTEIN 3A in place. They have the ability to record an intrusion, the ability to detect an intrusion, but not the ability to block an intrusion. They need the ability to block. What our legislation would do would be to make sure that agencies have EINSTEIN in place, including the ability to block intrusions, within 1 year.

Finally, our amendment incorporates the language originally drafted by Senator SUSAN COLLINS, the former chair of the homeland security committee and a great colleague of ours for many years, Senator MARK WARNER, Senator KELLY AYOTTE, Senator CLAIRE MCCASKILL, Senator DAN COATS, and Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI. They are all cosponsors of the amendment Senator COLLINS offered. These provisions would strengthen the ability of the Department of Homeland Security to shore up cyber defenses at civilian agencies and to address cyber emergencies across the Federal Government.

Again, I am incredibly grateful that Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator BURR agreed to include our language in the substitute amendment language that worked its way through our committee. We had hearings and had the opportunity to mark up the legislation. It worked the way it is supposed to work. And I think that without exception it had bipartisan support coming through our committee. It is the perfect complement to the information sharing bill we are discussing this week. I think it makes a good bill that much better.

I thank the Senators for working with me and Senator JOHNSON on it.

Just one more thing before I close. I know the Presiding Officer thinks a lot about root causes, and rather than just address the symptoms of a problem, let's think about what is the root cause of the problem. The Senator who is waiting to follow me on the floor, the former Governor of Maine, thinks similarly. I do too. It is not enough to just address the symptoms of these problems. A part of what we need to be thinking about is, How do we get to the root cause?

Until fairly recently, a lot of our financial services institutions in this country were under constant attack by somebody who was trying to overload their Web sites and essentially trying to shut them down. It is sort of like when we were first standing up the Affordable Care Act, they had so much traffic on their Web site that it would kind of break down.

There are so many cyber threats from around the world. We think Iran is behind it. They are trying to do that, to bring down our financial services business—and sometimes with some success.

About a year ago, when we got very serious about negotiating with the Iranians and our partners—the French, the Brits, the Germans, the Russians, and the Chinese—some kind of an agreement where the Iranians would give up any hope they had of having a nuclear weapon and the terms for our lifting our economic sanctions—when it became clear that those were serious negotiations, that something might actually happen from those negotiations, guess what happened to those attacks. We call them DDoS. What do you suppose happened? Well, guess what, they started letting up little by little until the time we actually voted here to let that agreement be enacted and hopefully be administered and implemented. That was a root cause being addressed.

Another root cause we had over in China—for years the Chinese have sought to use cyber attacks to get into our most successful businesses, some of our research and development operations in those businesses, and work being done within Federal agencies on research and development—actually, the intellectual seed corn for creating jobs and opportunity in this country. The cyber attacks were—we believe it was China trying to steal information from our universities. They were doing a lot of research that could lead to economic activity and job creation. We didn't like it. We don't do that. We don't do that to them, and we don't want them to do that to us. We complained about it and complained about it and called out some of the folks whom we thought were behind this in China.

President Xi visited us in this city about 3 week ago. He and our President had some tough, direct, and probably not entirely comfortable conversations. One of them dealt with this

issue, what we believe is the intrusion by Chinese actors in order to steal our intellectual seed corn, in order to maybe have a short step, a shortcut to economic development, economic activity. They would not have to spend the money, the time, and the energy to do all the research that would lead to this innovation and job-creation activity. The agreement that came out of that was the Chinese and our country have agreed that neither side will knowingly steal this kind of information from the other. ''Knowingly'' is a very broad term, and so we have to make sure that ''knowingly'' actually means something. Secretary Jeh Johnson, the head of the Homeland Security Department, and Attorney General Loretta Lynch have been assigned to build on this initial agreement and see what we can make of it.

I will close with this. A lot of people in our country don't understand what all this cyber security stuff is—intrusion, EINSTEIN, and all the items we are talking about that are in the legislation which is before us this week. They do know this: It is not good when people can steal the kind of information that needs to be protected. Whether it is part of the government domain, military or intelligence secrets; whether it is economic secrets or developments that lead to economic gain; whether it is personally identifiable information that can be used for blackmail purposes or to monetize and to somehow make money off of that information, we know it is not good. There is no one silver bullet to actually stop this kind of activity, but there are a lot of silver BBs, and some of them are pretty big.

The legislation that is before us today, bolstered by similar legislation that has come out of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, is a pretty good-sized BB. They are not going to enable us to win this war by themselves, but they will enable us to make real progress. It will make us feel a good bit more secure than we have, knowing that this is an enemy across the globe and that a number of enemies wish us harm. They are not going to give up. There is a lot of money involved. They will be back at us, and we have to bring our ''A'' game to work every day in the Department of Homeland Security and other Federal agencies working in tandem with the private sector.

Hopefully, with this information, the folks in the private sector—if they want to get the liability protection and share information with the Federal Government, we want them to use the portal through the Department of Homeland Security. The Department of Homeland Security, to the extent that privacy scrub is needed—it does not happen often. It happens less than 1 percent of the time with the information that comes through the portal. The legislation before us, with the amendments that are offered, will enable us to have that kind of security about our private information and at the same time to do a very good job—a much better job—in protecting what is valuable to us.

Mr. President, I think that is about it for me. I appreciate very much the opportunity to speak. I appreciate the patience of Senator KING, and I will yield the floor to him.

I will just say in closing—no, Senator BLUNT, I will yield to you next. It is good to be with both of you. I look forward to working with you on these and, with respect to the Senator gentleman from Missouri, very closely on related matters.

Thank you so very much.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Delaware. He and I have worked on legislation together to protect data security, to have one standard for notifying people whose information has been accessed by people who shouldn't have it, and we are going to continue to work on that and look for opportunities, whether it is this bill or some other bill, to add that important element to what we are doing here.

I come to the floor today, as I am sure many others have, to express support for this bill—for the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act—a bill that gives us tools we don't currently have, and to break down barriers that we do currently have. This is a bill that would allow individuals who see the information they are responsible for being attacked to call others in their same business and say: Here is what is happening to us right now. If you are not seeing it already, you should be looking for it. When they do that, it doesn't violate any competitive sharing of information. What it does is bring everybody into the loop of defense as quickly as possible and allow them to look for help from the government as well.

So I express support for this bill. We know that day after day Americans who read, watch, or listen to the news learn of another cyber attack. Some involve attacks of government systems, while others involve the private sector.

In 2012 and 2013, hacker groups linked to Iran targeted American bank Web sites and sustained an attack on those Web sites in a way that was designed to disrupt people trying to do business—trying to pay their own personal bills, trying to do things people should expect to be able to easily do.

Early in 2014, we learned that cyber criminals had stolen 40 million credit card numbers from a major retailer and had probably compromised an additional 70 million accounts. We also have learned that a lot of times when we hear about these, they seem bad enough at first, but they seem a whole lot worse later when we find out what really happened, when we see how deep these criminals were able to go, how deep these terrorists were able to go, how deep these government-sponsored entities were able to go to get at information they shouldn't have.

In September of that same year, September 2014, we learned another major retailer had suffered a data breach. In that case there were 56 million credit card holders.

In February of this year, we learned a health insurance provider's system had been hacked, and 80 million customers were affected. This was a data breach that particularly impacted my State—particularly impacted Missourians—and we saw a huge change in the IRS fraud that occurred this year because, we believe at least, because criminals suddenly had all this sensitive personally identifiable information they had stolen. Suddenly somebody besides you was filing your tax return. Only later did the people who really had the income tax return to file find out that somebody had filed it for them.

In June of this year—maybe the most surprising to all of us who have heard over and over again that the private sector is struggling, we suddenly found out the U.S. Office of Personnel Management increased a previous estimate of how many people were affected by its own data breach. The files of Federal employees and people related to those files was revised upward to 21.5 million people. Then we found out that also included roughly 5.5 million sets of fingerprints.

I am not exactly sure what you could do with somebody's fingerprints on the Internet today. I can only imagine what you might be able to figure out to do with those fingerprints. Remember, your fingerprints don't change, and probably the government entity responsible for that hacking that has those fingerprints is always going to have those fingerprints as they think of new and malicious ways to use them. So we are talking about well over 100 million Americans who already have their personal information in the hands of people it shouldn't be in.

The challenge before us is as clear as it is urgent. Virtually every aspect of our society and our economy rely on information technology. It has enabled tremendous economic growth, it has enabled tremendous efficiencies in every sector, but it has put all kinds of information out there in ways that, looking back, we are going to wonder why we made that information so available in so many places and left so unprotected.

Federal, State, and local governments rely on that information technology as well. As the technology advances, its widespread adoption has also opened us to new dangers. Modern cyber security threats are sophisticated, they are massive, and they are persistent. This doesn't just happen every day, it happens all the time every day.

The culprits of these attacks and intrusions range in terms of their motives and their abilities. We just heard of a teenager who figured out how to

get into the personal account of the CIA director—at least that is the public media report—and the homeland security director. This is not a particularly sophisticated individual, but obviously a pretty capable person who gets to two individuals that one would think would be the most cautious.

Some of these people are bent on sheer vandalism—just the thrill of cyber vandalism—while others are determined to steal intellectual properties from American companies. The motive there is clear. It is easier to steal intellectual property than it is to go through the hard work of creating it. Suddenly that information is out there, and the people who created it have been robbed.

I hear this all the time when I visit companies in my State. We have seen cyber intrusions used for espionage. We have seen one major company attacked for no reason other than to embarrass the company because a foreign government didn't like something the company had done. It is quite a way to have a movie review, that we are just going to destroy as much of your technology as we can by a cyber invasion.

A great many more of these people are motivated by greed—pilfering other people's identities, getting access to other people's account information, and selling that information on the black-market. This becomes a real opportunity for them. The more you remove it from the person who initially got it, the harder it is to find out who initially got it and what they did with it.

Underneath all this is the implication of more serious attacks that can cause physical harm and can cause mass disruption of critical infrastructure of the country that is very dependent on cyber security. This really begs the question: What are we doing to protect our country and our citizens from these cyber adversaries? I have been in Senate for 5 years. I have had the great opportunity to represent the people of Missouri here for 5 years. And during every one of those 5 years, we have been talking about how important it is that we do something about cyber security. This is the only approach I have seen in those 5 years that has bipartisan support. It has a bicameral consensus. This is something that can happen.

This is a problem that it is time to stop talking about. Do we want some other government to have everybody's fingerprints before we do something about it? This is the time to do something about it. As a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, I am certainly here to support the chairman of that committee and the vice chairman of that committee to finally pass this bill, a bill to enhance the public-private partnerships that can provide the kind of cyber defense we need.

We need to do that and we need to encourage lots of sharing. We need to encourage sharing of attacks. We need to encourage early on, as I said, the ability to call somebody else in your same business and to contact them and say: This is happening right now. That is the best time to say it. The other option is to say: This happened to us late last night or happened yesterday, but this is happening to us. Is it happening to you?

There is lots of misunderstanding about this concept. Without getting too technical, cyber threats are the malicious codes and algorithms used to infect computer systems and attack networks. They are techniques that use bits and bytes. They are the ones and zeros of the digital age that allow hackers to intrude upon private systems, steal information, perpetrate fraud, or disrupt activities over the Internet.

In very dangerous circumstances, these techniques can be used to remotely control critical infrastructure management systems, such as supervisory control and data acquisition systems. I saw something on the news the other day where some hackers, for no intent other than maybe just to see if they could do it, had figured out how to take over one of the cars that was driving itself. Suddenly the car wasn't driving itself; the hacker was driving the car.

When a particular company finds itself subjected to some novel new approach, the quicker they can share that, the better. When the government discovers a new method being used to infiltrate information technology systems abroad or here, they need to be able to share that with American companies quickly so they can protect themselves. There are things the private sector sees that the government does not, and there are things the government sees that the private sector does not. This legislation gives the obligation and opportunity to both of them to join together in this important fight. Modern communications networks move at an incredibly rapid pace. We need to be fighting back at that same kind of rapid pace.

This bill establishes a strictly voluntary program. Unlike some of the other programs we have talked about to secure ourselves in a post-9/11 world, this is a strictly voluntary program that leverages American ingenuity to unleash the arsenal of democracy against cyber adversaries.

When it comes to the cyber threat, we have to act for a common purpose. Throughout this debate there has been a great deal of discussion about the need to protect liberty in the information age. I truly think liberty and security are not at odds with one another in this legislation. When it comes to this bill, it comes the closest to having the balance we all would like to see. It takes into consideration the importance of liberty, but it also takes into consideration what happens as we protect our security.

I would close by saying of all the attacks we have had, and as bad as they have been, none of them have been the sort of catastrophic infrastructure attack that we may see that would impact the grid, that impacts our ability to communicate, impacts our ability to make the water system work, or impacts our ability to make the electrical system work. If that happens, the Congress will not only act, the Congress will overreact.

This is the right time to have this debate. Let's put this legislation on the books right now. Let's give the people a law that makes sense at a time when we have the time to debate it, instead of waiting to see the direction we will turn to when we should have debated this and moved in this direction right now. I encourage my colleagues to vote for this bipartisan bill that I think will wind up on the President's desk and become law.

Mr. President, I yield to my patient friend from Maine, who has been waiting. He and I serve on the Select Committee on Intelligence together, and I look forward to his comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT). The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, the United States is under attack. We are under attack—not a week ago, a month ago, September 11 or yesterday, but right at this moment. We are under attack from state actors, from terrorist nonstate actors, and from garden-variety criminals. This cyber issue is one of the most serious that we face.

When I first got here, I was appointed to the Armed Services and Intelligence Committees. On those two committees over the past 3 years, at least half of our hearings have touched upon this issue and the threat that it presents to this country. The leaders of our intelligence community and our military community, in open session and in closed session, have sounded the alarm over and over and over. The most dramatic—I don't remember what the hearing was—was when one of our witnesses said: ''The next Pearl Harbor will be cyber.''

As the Senator from Missouri just pointed out, we are fortunate that we have had a number of warning shots but none have been devastating. But we have had warning shots—at Sony, at Target, at Anthem, at the Office of Personnel Management of the U.S. Government, and at the home email of the Director of the CIA. We have had large and small intrusions and cyber attacks that have been more than annoying, but, so far, they haven't been catastrophic. That is just a matter of time. That is why we have to move this bill.

This bill isn't a comprehensive answer to this question, but it is at least a piece of it. It is a beginning. We are going to have to talk about other aspects of our cyber strategy, but at least we can pass this bill, which came out of the committee 14 to 1. It is bipartisan, and it has support in the House. Let's do something.

I do not want to go home to Maine and try to explain to my constituents,

when the natural gas system or the electric system is brought down, that we couldn't quite get around to it because of the difference of committee jurisdictions or because we had other priorities or because we were tied up on the budget. This is a priority. It is something we should be doing immediately, and I am delighted that we have moved to it.

Now, as I have sat in the Intelligence Committee every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon for the past 3 years, it occurred to me several months into those debates and the discussions of this and other issues that really we in the Intelligence Committee and also we in this body really are working with and weighing and balancing two constitutional provisions.

The first is the preamble of the Constitution. The most basic responsibility of any government, anywhere, anytime, is to provide for the common defense. That is why governments are formed, to provide the security, and also to insure domestic tranquility. Those two together are the basic functions of why we are here—to protect our people from harm. And that is clearly what this bill is talking about.

But the other constitutional provision in the picture that we also have to weigh is the Fourth Amendment: ''The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated. . . . '' That is a fundamental premise of who we are as a people.

These two provisions of the Constitution are intentioned—neither one dominates, neither one controls the other—and it is our job in this body to continuously weigh and calibrate these two provisions and their balance in light of threats and evolving technologies.

When the Fourth Amendment was written, nobody had ever heard of telephones. They certainly had never heard of the Internet. They never thought about any of these things. But they said: The rights ''shall not be violated.'' It is interesting—''unreasonable searches and seizures.'' They didn't know the threats we would be facing when they said it was a fundamental premise of the U.S. Constitution that we should protect against both foreign and domestic enemies. That is what we have to do, and that is what this bill does.

This bill is very carefully worked up, with a lot of discussion and negotiation, to be effective in protecting the public, while, at the same time, to be effective in protecting the public's privacy rights in respecting these two principles. We have had warning after warning after warning, and now it is time for us to act.

The good news about the United States is that we are the most wired nation in the world. Technology has been a huge boon to our economy and to our people, and we are way ahead of a lot of the rest of the world in our interrelationship with technology and how we have used it to enhance our lives. That is the good news. The bad news is that we are the most wired country in the world, because that means we are the most vulnerable—asymmetric vulnerability. We are more vulnerable because we are more connected. That means we have to take great care in this country to be sure that we don't allow that vulnerability to result in a catastrophic loss for our people.

Not only are we talking about national security issues, but we are talking about individual people's lives. If the electric grid went down, people's lives would and could be lost—in hospitals, at traffic intersections, across the country. If the natural gas system—the vast pipeline system that links our country in terms of energy—somehow went awry because of a cyber intrusion into the operating system, that would have devastating consequences for human lives and also, of course, for the economy of our country. Somebody could get into the routing system of a railroad, and a train carrying hazardous material would be caused to derail. These are the kinds of things that can happen and will likely happen unless we take steps to protect ourselves.

Some of these attacks and intrusions are sponsored by nation-states. We know that. Some of them are sponsored by just garden-variety criminals who are trying to steal our money. Or some of them are large international criminal organizations that are trying to steal our commercial intelligence and how we build our products and how we compete. Some of them are terrorist organizations that see this as a cheap way to attack America. Why go to all the trouble to build a bomb and smuggle it into the country and all the risk that entails, when you can disrupt the country in just as great a way with a few strokes on a laptop?

It is economic security, national security, economics. It has been estimated worldwide that cyber crime costs our country $445 billion a year. That is to the global economy—a half trillion dollars a year. Some 200,000 jobs in the United States could be and are being affected, and 800 million personnel records were stolen, and 40 million were Americans.

The cost of cyber crime is estimated to be between 15 and 20 percent of the value created by the Internet. We always talk that we don't want any taxes on the Internet. This is a tax. This is a tax we are all paying. The users of the Internet are paying to ward off this epidemic of cyber crime.

It is not only the government. Of course, it is companies, such as Sony, Target, Anthem, the industrial base, JP Morgan, Home Depot. The list goes on and on. Most importantly, it is not just the big guys. Sometimes we feel that OK, this is the large banks, the large insurance companies that have to worry about this. In the State of Maine, we have to worry about it.

My staff and I in Maine have reached out to businesses large and small across the State. Every single one, with one exception, listed cyber intrusion as one of their greatest issues.

The Maine Credit Union League, with $2.5 million a year, and local credit unions are having to deal with cyber intrusion.

One of our Maine health care providers has experienced thousands of attempts to steal confidential data every year. Keeping the data safe is costing them more than $1 million. This is costing us real money.

At one of our Maine financial institutions, 60 to 70 percent of the emails they get in the bank are phishing emails trying to compromise their secured data.

One of our utilities spent over $1 million a year just on preventative costs to defend against cyber crime. This is in a State of 1.3 million people. This is real. This is real in our State.

I had a forum over the August break with businesses throughout Maine—mostly small businesses and homeland security. We had 100 businesses come just to visit and sit for a day to talk about this issue. These were small businesses, and all of them were seeing these kinds of problems.

One was a small business with 35 employees that did a deal overseas, and a cyber criminal in effect stole their payment. They sent a fake invoice to the customer overseas, the customer paid it, and the money went to the crook, not to my company in Maine. That is the kind of thing that is happening, and that is one of the reasons we have to take action today.

No business is immune. No individual is immune. And, of course, this country is not immune.

The price of inaction is just too high. This is something we must attend to. As I mentioned, this bill is not the whole answer, but it is a part of the answer.

Some people say: Well, it is not broad enough. My answer is this: OK, I understand that, but let's do what we can do and then take it one step at a time.

Some people say it compromises privacy. I don't believe that it does. Extraordinary measures were imported into this bill in order to protect the privacy of individuals. This is not about individual data. This is about a company voluntarily telling the government and perhaps some other companies: Here is what I am seeing as an attack. How can we collectively defend ourselves against it?

That is what this bill is really all about. We have to take action, and now is the time.

I thank the chair and the vice chair of the Intelligence Committee, the members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, the members of the Judiciary Committee, and all of those who have contributed to the finalization of this important piece of legislation.

There is an attitude out there that we can't get anything done around

here. I think this gives us an opportunity to prove that idea wrong. We can get things done. We should get things done. This is a chance for us to protect our people, to provide for the common defense—which is our most solemn constitutional responsibility—in a way that also protects the interests of the Fourth Amendment and individual privacy rights.

I hope we can move swiftly, complete the consideration of this bill this week, work out our differences with the House, and get this matter to the President. We have no place to hide if we don't get this done. This is what we are here for.

Again, I thank my colleagues who worked so hard to bring us to this point.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, before the Senator leaves the floor, I wish to thank him on a well-planned, well-thought-out, and very convincing presentation, and an argument that, frankly, I can add very little to. So I will make my remarks very brief.

I thank the Senator from Maine for highlighting the absolute importance of the passage of this legislation. And, I might add, he is one of the most serious and hard-working members of the Senate Armed Services Committee as well. I won't go any further.

Mr. President, I rise in strong support of S. 754. I thank my colleagues, Chairman BURR and Vice Chairman FEINSTEIN, for their ongoing leadership.

In the short 2 months since this bill was last on the Senate floor, the need for action on information sharing has only increased. It is not for a lack of trying. We have continuously failed to make progress on this bill. As the Senator from Maine just made clear, that must change. Enacting legislation to confront the accumulating dangers of cyber threats must be among the highest national security priorities of the Congress.

The need for congressional action, in my view, is also enhanced by the administration's inability to develop the policies and framework necessary to deter our adversaries in cyberspace.

Earlier this week we learned just how ineffective the administration has been in addressing our cyber challenges. Within days of reaching an agreement to curb the stealing of information for economic gain, China—China—repeatedly, reportedly, continues its well-coordinated efforts to steal designs of our critical weapons systems and to wage economic espionage against U.S. companies. It is not a surprise, but it serves as yet another sad chapter in this administration's inability to address the cyber threats.

I guess in the last couple of days it has been made known that some hacker hacked into the information of both the Director of the CIA and the chairman of the homeland security committee. That is interesting. As the President's failed China agreement clearly demonstrates, our response to cyber attacks has been tepid at best and nonexistent at worst. Unless and until the President uses the authority he has to defer, deter, defend, and respond to the growing number in severity of cyber threats, we will risk not just more of the same but embolden adversaries in terrorist organizations that will continuously pursue more severe and destructive attacks.

Addressing our cyber vulnerabilities must be a national security priority. Just this week, Admiral Rogers, the head of Cyber Command, reiterated, ''It's only a matter of time before someone uses cyber as a tool to do damage to critical infrastructure.''

My colleagues don't have to agree with the Senator from Maine or me or anybody else, but shouldn't we listen to Admiral Rogers, the head of Cyber Command, probably the most knowledgeable person or one of the most knowledgeable who said, ''It is only a matter of time before someone uses cyber as a tool to do damage to critical infrastructure.''

According to the recently retired Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, our military enjoys ''a significant military advantage'' in every domain except for one—cyber space. As General Dempsey said, cyber ''is a level playing field. And that makes this chairman very uncomfortable.''

I will tell you, it makes this chairman very uncomfortable as well.

Efforts are under way to begin addressing some of our strategic shortfalls in cyber space, including the training of a 6,200-person cyber force. However, these efforts will be meaningless unless we make the tough policy decisions to establish meaningful cyber deterrence. The President must take steps now to demonstrate to our adversaries that the United States takes cyber attacks seriously and is prepared to respond.

This legislation is one piece of that overall deterrence strategy, and it is long past time that Congress move forward on information sharing legislation. We have been debating similar cyber legislation since at least 2012. I am glad this body has come a long way since that time in recognizing that government mandates on the private sector, which operates the majority of our country's critical infrastructure, will do more harm than good in cyber space. The voluntary framework in this legislation properly defines the role of the private sector and the role of the government in sharing threat information, defending networks, and deterring cyber attacks.

At the same time, it is unfortunate that it has taken over 3 years to advance this commonsense legislation. The threats we face in cyber space are real and imminent, as well as quickly evolving. All aspects of the Federal Government, including this body, must commit to more quickly identifying, enacting, and executing solutions to counter cyber threats. If we do not, we will lose in cyber space.

As chairman of the Armed Services Committee, I consider cyber security one of the committee's top priorities. That is why the National Defense Authorization Act provides a number of critical authorities to ensure that the Department of Defense can develop the capabilities it needs to deter aggression, defend our national security interests, and when called upon, defeat our adversaries in cyber space. I find it unacceptable that the President has signaled his intent to veto this legislation that, among other key Department of Defense priorities, authorizes military cyber operations and dramatically reforms the broken acquisition system that has inhibited the development and delivery of key cyber capabilities.

More specifically, the National Defense Authorization Act extends liability protections to Department of Defense contractors who report on cyber incidents or penetrations, and it authorizes the Secretary of Defense to develop, prepare, coordinate and, when authorized by the President, conduct a military cyber operation in response to malicious cyber activity carried out against the United States or a U.S. person by a foreign power. The NDAA authorizes $200 million for the Secretary of Defense to assess the cyber vulnerabilities of every major DOD weapons system. Finally, Congress required the President to submit an integrated policy to deter adversaries in cyber space in the fiscal year 2014 National Defense Authorization Act. I tell my colleagues that we are still waiting on that policy. This year's NDAA includes funding restrictions that will remain in place until it is delivered.

As we dither, our Nation grows more vulnerable, our privacy and security are at greater risk, and our adversaries are further emboldened. The stakes are high, and it is essential that we pass the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act without further delay.

Let me also mention in closing that probably the most disturbing comment I have heard in a long time on this issue in this challenge is when Admiral Rogers said that our biggest challenge is we don't know what we don't know. We don't know what the penetrations have been, what the attacks have been, whether they have succeeded or not, where they are in this whole realm of cyber and information at all levels. When the person we placed in charge of cyber security says we don't know what we don't know, my friends, that is a very serious situation.

I want to congratulate again both the managers of the bill in their coordination and their cooperation in this bipartisan effort.

I yield the floor.

Mr. KING. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MCCAIN. I will be pleased to yield.

Mr. KING. I ask the Senator, would you agree that this bill represents an important part of our cyber defense but that in order to deter attacks in the long term, we must have a cyber policy that goes beyond simple defensive measures?

Mr. MCCAIN. I would certainly agree, I would say to my friend from Maine, because if the adversaries that want to commit cyber attacks against the United States of America and our allies believe that there is no price to pay for those attacks, then where is the demotivating factor in all of this which would, if they failed, then keep them from doing what they are doing? It seems to me that this is an act of war, and I don't use that term lightly but I am trying to use it carefully. If you damage intentionally another nation's military or its economy or its ability to function as a government—I would ask my friend from Maine—wouldn't that fit into at least a narrow interpretation of an act of war? If so, then should we only have defenses? Have we ever been in a conflict where we only have defenses and not the capability to go out and deter further aggression?

Mr. KING. I would suggest to the Senator that if you are in a fight and all you can do is defend and never punch, you are going to eventually lose that fight. I think this is an important area. The theory of deterrence, as distasteful as it might have been, the mutually assured destruction during the nuclear era did in fact prevent the use of nuclear arms for some 70 years. I think we need to be thinking about a deterrence that goes beyond simply defensive measures. I commend the chairman for raising this issue and appreciate your thoughtful consideration.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, it seems as though every week, the American people learn of yet another data breach in which Americans' sensitive, private information has been stolen by cyber criminals or foreign governments. This is a critical national security problem that deserves action by Congress. But our actions must be thoughtful and responsible, and we must recognize that strengthening our Nation's cyber security is a complex endeavor with no single solution.

According to security researchers and technologists, the most effective action Congress can take to improve our cyber security is to require better and more comprehensive data security practices. That is why earlier this year, I introduced the Consumer Privacy Protection Act. That bill requires companies to utilize strong data security measures to protect our personal information and to help prevent breaches in the first place. Companies that benefit financially from gathering and analyzing our personal information should be obligated to take meaningful steps to keep it safe.

But rather than taking a comprehensive approach that addresses the multiple facets of cyber security, the Republican majority appears to be focused entirely on passing the Senate Intelligence Committee's cyber security information sharing bill. While legislation to promote the sharing of cyber threat information could, if done right, be useful in improving our cyber security, it is a serious mistake to believe that information sharing alone is the solution. Information sharing alone would not, for example, have prevented the breach at the Office of Personnel Management, nor would it have prevented other major breaches, such as those at Target, Home Depot, Anthem, or Sony.

Instead of ensuring that companies better safeguard Americans' data, this bill goes in the opposite direction, giving large corporations more liability protection and even more leeway on how to use and share our personal information with the government—without adequate privacy protections.

Also troubling is the fact that the Republican majority has been intent on jamming this bill through the Senate without any regard for regular process or opportunity for meaningful public debate. Only last year, the Republican leader declared his commitment to ''a more robust committee process'' and plainly stated that ''bills should go through committee.'' But the bill was drafted behind closed doors by the Senate Intelligence Committee, and it has not been the subject of any open hearings or any meaningful public debate. The text of the bill was only made public after it was reported to the Senate floor, and no other committee of jurisdiction—including the Judiciary Committee—was allowed to consider and improve the bill.

The Judiciary Committee was prevented from considering this bill even though it contains numerous provisions that affect matters squarely within our jurisdiction. First and foremost, the bill creates a framework of information sharing that could severely undermine Americans' privacy. The bill also overrides all existing law to provide broad liability protections for any company that shares information with the government. It also overrides important privacy laws such as the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, ECPA, and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, FISA, over which the Judiciary Committee has long exercised jurisdiction. CISA even amends the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, and creates new exemptions from disclosure.

This is just the latest attempt by the majority leader to bypass the Judiciary Committee and jam a bill through the Senate that contains provisions within the jurisdiction of the committee. The bill reported by the Senate Intelligence Committee includes a broad and unnecessary FOIA exemption. FOIA 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. This important transparency law certainly should not be amended in closed session by the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Shortly after the text of the bill was released, I shared with Chairman GRASSLEY my concern that the Judiciary Committee should also consider this bill. He assured me that there would be a ''robust and open amendment process'' if this bill were considered on the Senate floor. But only a few weeks later, the Republican leadership—with Chairman GRASSLEY's support—attempted to jam the Intelligence Committee's bill through the Senate as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA, without any opportunity for meaningful debate. Republicans and Democrats joined together to reject the majority leader's effort to force the cyber security bill onto the NDAA. Despite this rebuke from both sides of the aisle, just a few weeks later, the majority leader again attempted to jam the bill through the Senate in the final days before August recess, without any serious opportunity to debate and offer amendments.

The majority leader's actions have been part of a consistent disregard for regular order. He has talked about providing an opportunity for fair debate, but at the same time, he has used all procedural mechanisms to stifle process on this bill. Yesterday afternoon, the Senate moved to consideration of this bill—but then not even 2 hours later, the majority leader moved to end debate. That speaks volumes about whether the majority leader is really interested in a full and open debate, and it is not how the U.S. Senate should operate—particularly when it comes to a bill with such sweeping ramifications for Americans' privacy.

Senator FEINSTEIN, the ranking member of the Intelligence Committee, has consistently said that the Senate ''should have an opportunity to fully consider the bill and to receive the input of other committees with jurisdiction in this area.'' She has worked hard to improve the underlying bill with a managers' amendment that addresses a number of my concerns, particularly in regard to FOIA, limiting the sharing of information for cyber security purposes only, and ensuring that the bill would not allow the government to use information to investigate crimes completely unrelated to cyber security. I appreciate these improvements, and Senator FEINSTEIN's efforts to include them in the bill. But again, this bill still has some serious problems and requires a full, public debate. The bill still includes, for example, a FOIA exemption that I believe is overly broad and unnecessary.

In July, the Department of Homeland Security wrote a letter to Senator FRANKEN stating that in their view the bill raises significant operational concerns and certain provisions threaten to severely undermine Americans' privacy. Last week, the Computer & Communications Industry Association—an

organization that includes Google, Facebook, and Yahoo!—voiced serious concerns that the bill fails to protect users' privacy and could ''cause collateral harm'' to ''innocent third parties.'' And this week, major tech companies such as Apple, Dropbox, Twitter, and Yelp have vocally opposed the bill citing concerns for their users' privacy.

The latest version of the bill contains a number of improvements that I and other Senators have been fighting for, and I am glad to see that we are making progress. But we still have work to do on this bill, and the Senate must have an open and honest debate about the Senate Intelligence Committee's bill and its implications for Americans' privacy. I agree that we must do more to protect our cyber security, but we must be responsible in our actions. Legislation of this importance should not be hastily pushed through the Senate, without a full and fair opportunity for Senators to consider the ramifications of this bill. Unfortunately, by moving so quickly to end debate, it appears that the majority leader is trying to do just that.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I wish to support the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act of 2015.

Cyber security is the most pressing economic and national security threat facing our country today. As a member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, I am keenly aware of the damage cyber attacks cause on our Nation. As vice chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I believe we must have a clear and comprehensive approach to funding cyber security.

In boardrooms and around kitchen tables, concern over cyber security is heightening. It is gaining new traction following the cyber attack on the Office of Personnel Management, which compromised the personal information of more than 22 million Federal employees, contractors, and their families.

The American people expect serious action by Congress. This can and must be done, while respecting privacy and avoiding data misuse by the government or businesses. Congress must act with a sense of urgency to pass the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act. If we wait for another major cyber attack, we risk overreacting, overregulating, overspending, and overlegislating. The time to act is now.

Our Nation is under attack. Every day, cyber attacks are happening. Cyber terrorists are working to damage critical infrastructure by taking over the power grid or disrupting air traffic control. Cyber spies are moving at breakneck speeds to steal state secrets, intellectual property, and personal information. Cyber criminals are hacking our networks, stealing financial information, and disrupting business operations. These cyber attacks can disrupt critical infrastructure, wipe out a family's entire life savings, take down entire companies, and put human lives at risk. In the past year alone, we've seen cyber attacks against Sony, Home Depot, UPS, JP Morgan Chase, Experian, T-Mobile, Scottrade, and the list goes on. The economic losses of cyber crime are stunning. In 2014, the Center for Strategic and International Studies and McAfee estimated the annual cost from cyber crime to be over $400 billion.

I have been working on cyber issues since I was elected to the Senate. Our cyber warriors at the National Security Agency are in Maryland, and I have been working with the NSA to ensure signals intelligence was a national security focus even before cyber was a method of warfare.

In my role on the Intelligence Committee, I served on the Cyber Working Group, which developed findings to guide Congress on getting cyber governance right, protecting civil liberties, and improving the cyber workforce.

As vice chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee and the Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee, I put funds in the Federal checkbook for critical cyber security agencies. These include the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which investigates cyber crime; the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which works with the private sector to develop standards for cyber security technology; and the National Science Foundation, which researches ways to secure our Nation. As a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, I fight for critical funding for the intelligence and cyber agencies, including the National Security Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, and Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity, who are coming up with the new ideas to create jobs and keep our country safe. These funds are critical to building the workforce and providing the technology and resources to make our cyber security smarter, safer, and more secure.

This bill does three things from a national security perspective. First, it allows businesses and government to voluntarily share information about cyber threats. Second, it requires the Director of National Intelligence to share more cyber threat information with the private sector, both classified and unclassified. Third, it establishes a Department of Homeland Security ''portal'' for cyber info-sharing with the government to help dot-gov and dot-com in a constitutional manner. These three provisions are an innovation. Despite all the amazing talent companies have, many are being attacked and don't even realize it. This legislation allows unprecedented dot-com and dot-gov cooperation. There are also key provisions on privacy protections and liability protection for companies that monitor their own networks or share information.

Why do we need a bill to make these vital partnerships happen? America is under attack every second of every day. The threat is here, and it is now. If we do not act or if we let the perfect be the enemy of the good, this country will be more vulnerable than ever before, and Congress will have done nothing.

This bill is not perfect. The Department of Homeland Security's role has been criticized by many, including myself. I have been skeptical about their ability to perform some duties assigned in this bill. I am still skeptical, although less so than before. But this bill takes important steps to diversify government and private sector actors, so we are not just focusing on DHS, but also keeping civilian agencies in charge. We cannot have intelligence agencies leading this effort with the private sector. Some would like to see that go further, but that is what the amendment process is for.

People in the civil liberties community worry that this bill could allow government intrusions into people's privacy. This was of tantamount concern for me. If we don't protect civil liberties, the added security is for naught because we lose what we value most: our freedom. The authors of this bill, especially Senator FEINSTEIN, have made key improvements on issues of law enforcement powers and protecting core privacy concerns. While not everyone is entirely pleased, this bill has made important strides to balance information sharing and privacy.

The business community is concerned because it fears strangulation and overregulation. They worry that they will open themselves up to lawsuits if they participate in the program with the government. I have heard from Maryland businesses and these are valid concerns. Importantly, this bill has made strides in accommodating business and builds a voluntary framework to allow businesses to choose that protection. Protection does not come without responsibility for participants, but this bill links the need for cyber security, appropriate liability protection, and the expertise of our business community in a way that answers a lot of companies' concerns. We cannot eliminate all government involvement in this issue because it simply won't work, and we will lose key government expertise in the Department of Defense, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and elsewhere. However, we can work to try to minimize it while maintaining the government's role in protecting national security.

I am so proud that the Senate came together in a bipartisan way to draft and pass this legislation. The Senate must pass this legislation now. Working together, we can make our Nation safer and stronger and show the American people we can cooperate to get an important job done.

AMENDMENT NO. 2557

Mr. President, today I wish to speak about my amendment to the cyber security bill. This amendment would provide an additional $37 million for the Office of Personnel Management, OPM,

to accelerate completion of its information technology, IT, modernization and thwart future cyber attacks.

This additional funding would allow OPM to make needed upgrades to cyber security and network systems 1 year ahead of schedule. This means OPM will not have to wait another year to protect sensitive personnel data by implementing hardware and software upgrades recommended by security experts.

The $37 million is designated as an emergency under the Budget Control Act of 2011.

For over a year, the Office of Personnel Management's systems were compromised. This hack exposed the financial and personal information of 22 million Federal employees and their families, contractors, job candidates and retirees. This is unacceptable.

OPM's retirement services and background investigation databases contain the most sensitive data OPM holds, including Social Security numbers, health information and fingerprints.

I have heard from employees across the government. Data breaches undermine morale and complicate their ability to serve the American people.

OPM has moved to provide protections, but that is not enough. Securing these systems must be done now. We can't wait for the next budget cycle.

I urge support for my amendment. This is a crisis, so we ought to treat it like one. Twenty-two million Americans who entrusted their data and fingerprints to the government deserve the highest standard of protection.

There is a reason OPM was exploited. Federal cyber security has been weak. The Appropriations Committee has consistently given agencies the resources they asked for to protect their dot-gov systems. But under sequester-level budgeting it hasn't been enough. Constrained agencies don't ask for what is truly needed to do the cyber security job.

Tight budgets mean immediate problems get requested and funded before other much needed IT protection and maintenance. We aren't even doing the simple things.

After the OPM breach, the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, conducted a cyber sprint. OMB asked agencies to take four minimal steps: No. 1, deploy Department of Homeland Security malicious activity detectors; No. 2, patch critical vulnerabilities; No. 3, tighten privileged user policies; and No. 4, accelerate deployment of multifactor authentication.

While there was improvement, only 14 of the 24 agencies met the fourth goal. Some of it is a lack of will, but some is a lack of resources.

OPM knows it needs to harden its information technology.

That is why I am offering this amendment, providing $37 million in emergency spending to harden OPM systems now—not a year from now. These funds meet the criteria for being designated as emergency spending as set out in the Budget Control Act of 2011. OPM's needs are urgent, temporary, and, regrettably, unforeseen.

What does it mean to designate funds as emergency spending? It means no offsets, so we don't pay for this amendment by drawing from existing funding used to defend the Nation or help America's families.

The need is urgent—our adversaries are still trying to attack us. The need is temporary—these are one-time costs to accelerate IT reform. And the need is unforeseen which is sadly the reason they were not requested in the President's fiscal year 2016 budget in February.

Some say this funding is premature, and OPM is not ready to deploy it effectively. However, those reports were written before Beth Cobert became OPM Acting Director. She is turning OPM around, but she needs the resources to secure OPM's IT systems, and cyber security is a critical issue.

Government can't be reckless with the sensitive data it has. We must do better with dot-gov and get our own house in order. We know what OPM needs to do—they have the will, they have a business plan, and now they need the wallet.

Vote for my amendment No. 2557 to get OPM the resources it needs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3594

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, last week when I was back in my home State of Wisconsin, I had the privilege of hosting a roundtable with college students from all across the southeastern area of the State. The focus of the conversation was how we in Congress could help keep college affordable and accessible. During the course of that conversation, it was abundantly clear that most of the students were very frustrated that Congress could not take some of the most commonsense steps to make that happen. I told them that I shared their frustration and ensured them that I would be going back to Washington, DC, this week to fight on their behalf.

This morning I hosted a Google Hangout and spoke with campus newspapers from across the State of Wisconsin to reiterate my commitment on this issue. So here I am, almost 1 month from the day that I last stood here on the Senate floor, 1 month since a single United States Senator stood up and blocked a commonsense and bipartisan measure that would have continued to provide critical financial support for America's low-income college students.

In the short month since our efforts to reauthorize the Federal Perkins Loan Program were obstructed, the immediate impacts are already becoming quite clear. Last week, the Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organizations began surveying colleges and universities that participate in the Perkins loan program to learn more about how this obstruction is impacting their students. After a few days, they heard from over 100 students outlining how allowing Perkins to expire is harming students and institutions alike. There are real impacts being felt by real students right now across America. If we don't act, this damaging impact will ripple across our community. Therefore, we cannot sit idly by.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3594, which is at the desk, that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, on behalf of the leadership, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, this is incredibly frustrating. I am going to spend a few minutes talking about how this objection, this obstruction is impacting the students of America and the higher education institutions of America. There are real impacts that are being felt right now. Students who have previously received Perkins loans will lose their future eligibility if they change institutions or academic programs. Students seeking Perkins loans for the upcoming winter and spring semesters will not be eligible at all if we don't act soon to reauthorize this program. Finally, all future students will be ineligible for this program.

This afternoon right before I came down to the Senate floor, I received a letter from the president of the University of Wisconsin's system, Ray Cross—a letter that was co-signed by all 14 of the UW system university chancellors. In their message, they shared compelling insight into how the sudden end to the Federal Perkins Loan Program is already affecting Wisconsin students. They then closed their letter with this:

> [W]e need to keep this program in place. After all, our job is to help students who would not otherwise be able to attend higher education and to help them overcome barriers, particularly financial barriers, all of which helps to ensure access, retention, completion, and a skilled workforce. These are goals upon which all of us can agree.

One month ago our colleagues in the House of Representatives—a body rarely called a place of agreement—took up and passed a measure that would extend this student loan program for 1 year. I previously called up that bill here in the Senate and asked unanimous consent that we extend the Federal Perkins Loan Program. While I look forward to a broader conversation about improving Federal supports for students as we look to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, I don't believe—and I still don't—that we can sit idly by while America's students are left with such uncertainty.

As everyone heard, I asked unanimous consent to proceed to the consideration of the bill, and one Senator stood up on behalf of Republican leadership and blocked our ability at this

point in time to extend the Federal Perkins Loan Program by 1 year.

Again, I understand a desire, and frankly, share a desire to have a broader conversation about Federal student aid as part of the Higher Education Act reauthorization effort. I still do not think it is right or fair to let this program expire to the detriment of thousands of students in need. Frankly, this is a perfect example of why the American people are so upset with Washington.

Since 1958, the Federal Perkins Loan Program has been successfully helping Americans access affordable higher education with low-interest loans for students who cannot borrow or afford more expensive private student loans.

In Wisconsin, the program provides more than 20,000 low-income university and college students with more than $41 million in aid, but the impact of this program isn't just isolated to the Badger State. In fact, the Federal Perkins Loan Program aids over half a million students with financial need each year across 1,500 institutions of higher learning.

The schools themselves originate, service, and collect the fixed interest loan rates, and what is more, institutions maintain loans available for future students because these are revolving funds.

Since the program's creation, institutions have invested millions of dollars of their own funds into the program. In addition to making higher education accessible for low-income students, the program serves as an incentive for people who wish to go into public service by offering targeted loan cancellations for specific professions in areas of high need, such as teaching, nursing, and law enforcement.

As a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, and as a Senator representing a State with such a rich history of higher education, it is among my highest priorities to fight to ensure that the Federal Perkins Loan Program continues for generations to come, but unfortunately, as we saw, one single Senator stood up again today and said no to students across America who ask for nothing more than an opportunity to pursue their dreams—students such as Andrew.

Andrew is currently a student at the University of Wisconsin in Stevens Point. Without the support of his Perkins loan, Andrew said he would not have had the means to attend college. He has little to no income at his disposal. Today, not only is Andrew making the dean's list every semester, but he now has his sights set on attending law school, also at the University of Wisconsin. Andrew said: ''Without the assistance I get from the Perkins Loan I would be forced to either take out other high-interest loans, or delay my graduation date, or drop out—which is the last thing I want to do.''

Today this body also stood up and once again said no to students such as Nayeli Spahr. Nayeli was raised by a single mother who was an immigrant and worked two full-time jobs. Nayeli attended 10 different schools in 3 different States before she finished high school. Without the Federal Perkins Loan Program, Nayeli said her opportunity to get a college education would have been ''an illusionary dream.''

Today Nayeli is the first in her family to finish college and is now in her last year of medical school. She is planning to work with those who are underserved in our urban communities. She finished by saying:

> The Perkins loan program helped me reach this point. And its existence is essential to provide that opportunity for other young adults wanting to believe in themselves and to empower their communities to be better. Please save it!

You don't have to look very far to find the dramatic impact that this investment has on America's students. There are thousands of stories like the ones I just shared, representing thousands of students who are still benefitting from the opportunities provided to them by this hugely successful program.

I am disappointed and frustrated that our bipartisan effort in the Senate has again been obstructed. I will continue to fight to extend support for America's students in the form of extending the Federal Perkins Loan Program so that we can find a way to show the half-million American students who rely on this loan program that we are standing with them and that we are committed to helping them build a stronger future for themselves and our country.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and yield back the remainder of my time.

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I join my colleague from Wisconsin and other Members who are here on the floor to talk about the Perkins Loan Program. It is a really important program. It serves the needs of many of the students in our States, and it serves a unique need. It provides flexibility that other programs don't provide, and it also allows the colleges and universities to actually contribute to it.

I hope we can get this 1-year extension done, and I hope that the objection will be overridden by the common sense of doing something that the House has already done. By the way, the House of Representatives did it for 1 year also at no cost to the Federal Government because there is no reason to pay for a 1-year extension of a program that is a loan program where the colleges and universities take the payments that are made—the repayments—and put them back into the program. So this program is at no cost, and it is certainly an important program that we ought to continue.

I know there is discussion about broader education reform, and I support that. I know this program is not perfect. There are other ways that we could possibly improve it. I am perfectly willing to enter into that discussion and debate it. We should have that debate. We should debate how to make sure college is more affordable for all students, but let's not at this point stop this program that is working and is providing for young people in my State and around the country what they need to be able to afford a quality education.

I was out here a few weeks ago talking about this program, and at that time I talked about some specific schools and the people in my State who depend on this program. It is the oldest Federal program out there that allows students to be able to take advantage of some kind of help in order to get through school, and boy, it is needed now more than ever with tuition costs going up and more and more families feeling the squeeze.

When I go back home, I hear from parents and the students themselves. It is tough. Wages are flat, and in many cases declining. Yet expenses are up, and this is one of them, along with health care and electricity bills. This is not the time to stop the program but to continue this really important program. At the same time, we need to engage in the important debate of how we can reform higher education more generally in order to ensure that everybody has access to an affordable education.

Since 1958, this program has provided more than $28 billion in loans. It is a program that supports 60 different schools in my State. In the Buckeye State of Ohio, we have 60 schools that have loans under this program. Last year, more than 25,000 Ohio students received financial aid through this program—3,000 young people at Kent State and over 1,700 at the Ohio State University in Columbus.

One of those students is an outstanding young woman. Her name is Keri. She is a junior at Kent State. She interned for me last summer. When I talked to Keri about this program, she said that this is something she absolutely needs to be able to stay in school.

Keri is a young woman for whom I have a lot of respect because she fought the odds. She was in foster care. She went from one foster home to another while she was growing up. Yet she not only fought the odds. She is now excelling in college and doing a great job, but she doesn't have the resources to stay in college without this program. She is a Pell grant recipient, but she also needs the Perkins Loan Program to be able stay in school.

This is not just about numbers, folks. This is about people. This is about Keri. This is about young people whom we want to be able to have the opportunity and to be able to get the education they need to get ahead, because it does provide help for those who are most in need.

Well beyond Ohio, of course, 1,700 postsecondary institutions now participate in this program. It shouldn't be

controversial. Again, the House passed it for 1 year. It is something that does not require a new appropriation. It is a flexible program. So many of our student loan programs, including the Pell Grant Program and so on, are programs where the schools cannot provide any kind of flexibility. With many of our families and many of our students, Keri being an example, that flexibility is really important. Circumstances change. They may find themselves in a situation where they need a little help to stay in school so they can finish their academic major. They may find they need a little bit of help because of an unfortunate event that they could not anticipate happening in their families, and this program provides that flexibility. Again, the colleges and universities actually contribute to it. It is a matching program where they have to step up and be counted.

Let's not allow these students to fall through the cracks, and let's consider what happens if we do allow that to happen. Students who are applying for the winter semester, which starts in January, or the spring semester may well find that they are not able to receive the aid they need.

I am told that students can lose their eligibility if they change institutions or if they change their majors. These kids could fall between the cracks even if they have a Perkins loan now.

Finally, of course, if we don't act pretty soon, then next fall when there will be up to 150,000 freshman looking for a Perkins loan, they may find they are not eligible for it. This is not acceptable. Let's be sure we do everything we can here to make sure that college is not road-blocked for low-income students who are trying to get a college degree and pursue their dreams. Let's help them get ahead.

Let's pass this. It creates certainty for the students who benefit from the loans, it creates certainty for these colleges and universities, and it ensures that students who need this funding are not stopped and blocked by these high tuitions.

I wish to thank my colleagues Senator COLLINS and Senator CASEY, whom I see is on the floor. I also wish to thank Senator BALDWIN, Senator AYOTTE, Senator MURPHY, and I see Senator COONS and others who are here.

This is bipartisan, and it is something we can do here in the Senate, just as the House has already acted. Let's not block this program because this could block the students from attaining the educational background they need to be able to succeed in life. Let's move forward with this while at the same time continuing our discussion on the need to ensure that higher education is more broadly reformed to allow everybody to have that opportunity to pursue their dreams.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, let me associate myself with the remarks of Senator BALDWIN and Senator PORTMAN. I thank them for making this bipartisan clarion call to bring this body together on behalf of students. There are over 6,000 students in my State of Connecticut.

I believe Senator BLUMENTHAL is going to give some remarks as well to add Connecticut's list of schools and to debate this issue on the floor.

We have over 1,000 students at the University of Connecticut, over 700 at Yale University, 600 at the University of Bridgeport, 500 at Central Connecticut, and 400 in Eastern Connecticut. All across Connecticut, students are able to attend college because of the Perkins Loan Program. As one of the few Members of the Senate who is still paying back my student loans, who is also saving as fast as I can for my two boys who will hopefully go to college, this debate we are having today strikes me as crazy. We should be having a debate about how we expand access to college. Instead, we are simply trying to protect the existing access we have.

In 10 years the United States has gone from the No. 1 country in the world with respect to the number of 25- to 35-year-olds with college degrees to number 12 in the world. In 10 years we have gone from first to twelfth. The answer for that is the cost of college. The cost of college is making it unaffordable for people to start and unaffordable for many others to complete it.

The Perkins Loan Program is one that doesn't require any additional expenditure of taxpayer dollars. Those 6,000 kids in Connecticut will get to continue to attend college with Perkins loans, with no additional obligation on behalf of taxpayers. That is as good a deal as we can get—no additional expenditure from the Federal Government and hundreds of thousands of kids all across the country—6,000 of them in Connecticut—get to continue in college.

I simply wanted to come to the floor to express my bewilderment that the Republican leadership is standing in the way of simply preserving the student loan programs that are on the books today. If we go back home to our districts, we are not going to hear from a lot of people who are sympathetic to this argument. They want Congress to be talking about how to make college more affordable. They would be as bewildered as many of us are that Republicans in the Senate are trying to make college less affordable, when there is absolutely no additional expenditure required in order for us simply to preserve the Perkins Loan Program as it currently exists.

Let me just add one story to the mix—the story of Amanda, who is a senior at the University of Hartford. Her family makes about $67,000 a year. People are going to be familiar with her story because that is just a little bit too much for her to be able to qualify for a Pell grant. So she has to work two different jobs to put money on top of her Stafford loans, to put money on top of the contribution her parents make, just to get into the neighborhood of being able to afford college, but what makes that final difference for Amanda is the Perkins loan.

The only reason she is able to go to the University of Hartford is because of the Perkins loan. She is doing everything we ask. Her parents are putting in some money, she is taking out loans, and she is working two jobs. She says:

> I can't imagine how difficult it would have been if federal funding sources such as the Perkins loan had been eliminated as options for me. I've utilized the Perkins loan offered to me, in the full amount, every single year to resolve my account balance. Even now, in my senior year, I have no choice but to work two jobs and I'm barely getting by. Without the Perkins and other financial aid, I truly believe that I would have had to transfer to a community college where I would not have been able to accomplish nearly as much as I have here at the University of Hartford.

On behalf of her and the six other students in Connecticut who will lose their Perkins loan eligibility as long as this Republican objection lasts, I hope it will come together.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I stand to join in with the voices we have already heard from, including Senator MURPHY of Connecticut and Senator PORTMAN of Ohio—bipartisan, of course—who have stood in support of the unanimous consent request of Senator BALDWIN, blocked by the opposing party, that we move forward with reauthorizing the Perkins Loan Program.

The voice that I think is so often missing from the deliberations in the Senate is the voice we just heard brought forward by Senator MURPHY of Connecticut, the voice of our constituents—the constituents who connect with us when we are home in our States; the constituents who reach out to us by letter and by email. I just wanted to add the voices of my constituents from the State of Delaware.

Apparently, our colleagues have failed to hear from thousands—even hundreds of thousands—of our home State constituents who rely on Federal Perkins loans. This program is a critical lifeline for students across the country who would be well on their way to a college degree if it weren't for the skyrocketing, unsustainable costs of higher education. I think Congress's failure to reauthorize the Perkins Loan Program is already having a negative impact on students and on households across our country. We can see the real-world impact in our home States if we will but listen to our constituents.

Let me give two examples of Delawareans who have recently reached out to me.

Frank, an incoming University of Delaware student, was counting on the

Perkins Loan Program to help cover a gap in affording the cost of his higher education. Now that those funds are no longer available, now that the Perkins loans have expired, his family is struggling to figure out how they will pay for his education.

There is also Taylor, a Delawarean, already a college student, who had signed up for a promising new course of study because of a Perkins loan that would make the additional cost possible. Without this funding moving forward, future students like Taylor will also have to turn to private loans—sometimes less accessible, sometimes less affordable—to fill that gap. Frank and Taylor's stories are just a few examples of many that I have received in my office from constituents or conversations I have had at home in Delaware.

When I am with working Delawareans, there is no topic raised more frequently amongst those in my age bracket of how they can afford to send their kids to college. Just the other night, standing around on the sideline of a soccer game, I heard a whole group talking about how can we possibly afford the skyrocketing expenses of higher education.

So the question we are here today to address isn't the great big question of how can we make college affordable, it is just a simple question of how can we extend the Perkins Loan Program. I am proud to join with my colleagues in calling for a permanent extension of this program. In my State of Delaware, nearly 2,000 Delawareans last year received Perkins loans from 2013 to 2014. Those are 2,000 of my constituents who had the chance to go to college, invest in their education, improve their lives for the better, and that is in just 1 year of the program.

In the 50 years since Perkins was created, the program has awarded nearly $30 billion through 26 million loans across this entire country. Those are big, abstract numbers, but for my colleagues who remain undecided on whether to support the extension, I urge them to think about the Franks, the Taylors, their constituents, and folks from towns and cities, big and small, all across this country. They are not asking for a free education. The average Perkins loan is just $2,000. It is not even a rounding error in the scope of the total Federal budget that we fight over here week in and week out, but that is an amount that one student, one family can singlehandedly determine—for an aspiring teacher or a business owner or an inventor or someone who just wants to advance themselves through education—whether they can continue their steady forward progress.

This extension alone is not the Higher Education Act reauthorization many of us have been calling for; it is not the substantial education investment many of us know would be a huge boost to our country, its competitiveness, and our constituents' well-being; it is not a perfect solution to the Delawareans I talk to every day who wonder how they can afford college; it is an important start. So let's come together and act. Even the House of Representatives, of all places, has acted on a bipartisan basis to extend the Perkins Loan Program. We can and should do the same.

I thank my colleagues for their work on this critical issue, and I urge this Chamber to come together to approve an extension of the Federal Perkins Loan Program without delay.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the same subject that my colleague from Delaware just raised and so many others before him. It is bipartisan. This loan program, which we have had the luxury, I guess, all these years of relying upon, has allowed us to say that as a country we value higher education. We value that for no matter what family a person is from or what level of income. As I have often said, we believe not only in the context of early learning, when someone is at the beginning of their learning years, but much later when they are in the years of higher education, that they can learn more now and earn more later. That linkage, that direct nexus between learning and earning, is a substantial factor in whether someone can have a good job and a career and success in their life.

However, for a lot of folks, the cost of college, as so many have outlined today, becomes an impossible barrier over which they cannot climb, especially if they are low income. All they are asking for is a fair shot—a fair shot at learning, a fair shot at going to an institution of higher education.

We know this program has meant so much not only to folks across the country, but when we look State by State and examine the number of students, the number of families who are affected now, it is extraordinary, whether we are talking about the Presiding Officer's home State of Colorado or Senator COONS and his constituents in Delaware or Connecticut or Wisconsin or Ohio. Wherever we are, we can see the numbers.

In Pennsylvania, 40,000 students today are beneficiaries of the Perkins Loan Program. We are told as well that this isn't just a program that affects all different income levels; this is a program which is designed and has benefited those who most need it. We are told that one-quarter of recipients are from families with incomes of less than $30,000. The maximum loan amount per student is $5,500. If someone is going to a school where it costs $45,000 or $50,000, that may not seem like a lot, but for a lot of students who are at institutions that are not so high in cost, that is a big number—or a fraction of that number is a big number. If you are going to graduate school, you can get up to $8,000 from the Perkins Loan Program. It is a 10-year repayment period. As the Senator from Ohio pointed out, it is a revolving fund. So as one student is paying their Perkins loan back over 10 years, another student is benefiting from that revolving fund.

We have all had individuals in our States—I have talked a couple of times about Nikki Ezzolo. Nikki is a recent graduate of Edinboro University. She had a long and difficult pathway through her higher education years. She is a single mom. She was in school and then out of school. When she finally got through school and had the benefit of a Perkins loan, among other things, she said the following in talking about her own circumstances as a single mom:

> I am proud to be a college grad and my daughter is proud of me too. I am so grateful for getting a Perkins loan to help me. I know that I wouldn't be where I am right now—

Meaning with a job after graduating from Edinboro—

> without it, and that is a really scary thought.

So she is thinking about where she would have been without a Perkins loan. Where she would have been is highly likely out of school and therefore not working. And the job she got is with a major company in our State.

So that is Nikki.

I also mentioned on the floor a couple of weeks ago—and I will not repeat it, but I just want to remind folks of her name. Kayla McBride. She is a recent graduate of Temple University in Philadelphia. She is in one corner of the State in Philadelphia, the opposite corner of the State where Nikki went to school in Edinboro. She indicated she received a Perkins loan to help with tuition after her mother was laid off.

Then we have another example, someone I met during the break, right near my hometown. We were meeting with students all across the State about this issue. One of them was in Wilkes-Barre. His name is Anthony Fanucci, the student body President, and a senior at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre. Anthony's father works overtime to pay for his tuition, and Anthony works every weekend and two jobs over the summer. His Perkins loan helped him stay in school. I met Anthony and he spoke that day in public. Among the things he said was the following:

> My strengths got me to Wilkes University, but without financial funding, your strengths and your resume and what you've done before that mean nothing. I never ever seek pity for my financial situation because my financial situation is far from rare.

He is talking about so many students out there who face a fork in the road at some point. If they have Perkins, they can likely stay in school. If they don't have Perkins, many of them—far too many—will not be able to continue their higher education.

We know the program expired on September 30. Here is what it means for—here is the practical implications

for students. No new students can receive loans, and while the current recipients are ''grandfathered'' for 5 years, there is uncertainty because we have never been in this circumstance where the program has expired and we don't know exactly what will happen with regard to the implementation of any kind of new changes or new policy by the administration. It is important to note that some will not be benefiting from the grandfathering provision. A student would not be grandfathered if they do one of the following: if they change their major, if they alter their course of study, or if they transfer. I should also mention the cutoff for the grandfathering was June 30, 2015.

Let's consider one of those circumstances—if they change their major. We are told by a recent study in our State that 75 percent of students will change their major at some point in their years in college. Let's just say that it is 50 percent or 33 percent. Whatever the number is, that is a lot of students changing their major and thereby maybe taking themselves out of the protection of that grandfathering provision for Perkins loans now that we are in the period after it has expired.

Financial aid officials who have written to us talk about other circumstances. I won't read a full letter, but in one letter we got from a financial aid official they talked about ''significant changes in a family's financial circumstances'' and ''unexpected financial difficulties.'' That is the real world of real students and real families without Perkins or at least with the uncertainty with regard to Perkins. Neither situation in my judgment is acceptable. Not having a 1-year extension to a Perkins loan program makes no sense to me and to a lot of students. If we had an extension, we could debate if someone wanted to make changes or debate the elements of a program, but having it expire makes no sense. Even if the expiration doesn't definitively impact you, the uncertainty about that should not be part of a college student's experience. While they are studying, while they are getting through their coursework, especially as freshmen, they should have the certainty or at least the expectation that it will continue to help them.

In summary we should, No. 1, continue to work together in a bipartisan fashion to solve this problem. The good news is, despite the partisan rancor and divisions in Washington and in the Senate and the House, on this we have broad bipartisan support—something on the order of 28 co-sponsors, and at last count 6 are Republicans. So we have got folks in both parties working on this.

We all believe that we have an obligation to do everything we can to support higher education. No student should have to drop out of college because Congress has not done its job.

We have more work to do on this, and I would urge those who have concerns about it or want to have another point of view be debated, that I hope we could work together to get through this impasse and get the Perkins loan at least extended for 1 more year as was done in the House most recently by voice vote.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, this discussion by very good Senators—and I congratulate the Senator from Pennsylvania and the other Senators who have spoken. The Senators from Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are both on the education committee and we have worked well together and we will continue to discuss this. This shows how difficult it is to do what most Americans have said they would like to see us do, which is to simplify, deregulate, and make it easier and simpler for students to go to college. That is what we are trying to do in the Senate.

Almost every witness who came before us said this: It is too complicated to fill out a form for the current form of student aid, so simplify it. The witnesses have said: Have one undergraduate student loan, have one loan for graduate students, and have one loan for parents. Right now undergraduate students might have three different loans with different interest rates and different terms.

The application process is so complicated that it turns away millions, we have been told, of students who are frustrated by that. The repayment program, which is very generous—not for the Perkins loan, which I will get to in a minute, but for all other direct loans—is so complicated that students don't take advantage of it.

We are toward the end of our work in the Senate education committee to take our giant student loan program, which loans more than $100 billion taxpayer dollars a year and has more than $1 trillion dollars of outstanding loans, and simplify it to make it easier and cheaper for students to go to college.

One way to do that is to replace the Perkins loan with a direct loan that has a lower interest rate and a more generous repayment plan. What we are proposing to do is to replace the Perkins loan with a direct loan that is available to every single student who is enrolled in an eligible accredited college. You show up, you enroll, you get the loan. That is available to you. The interest is 4.29 percent today. That is lower than your Perkins loan, and when you pay back the direct loan, you may pay it back like a mortgage over 10 years or you may pay it back over 20 or 25 years, not paying more than 10 or 15 percent of your disposable income. And if you haven't paid it back after those years, it is forgiven. That is what the taxpayers have said to the students. So that lower interest rate and generous repayment program are not a part of the Perkins loan program. What we, a bipartisan group of Senators, are saying is that we need to replace the Perkins loan with that better opportunity.

Let's be clear about who is affected by this. Perkins loans are about 1 percent of all student loans. So, about 99 percent of those students who have student loans are not affected by this discussion. Of those who have Perkins loans, you can keep your Perkins loan. The Department of Education notified all the institutions early in this calendar year and said the Perkins loan expires in the fall. If you grant a new Perkins loan this fall, it will be a 1-year loan. For everybody else who has already got a Perkins loan, you can keep receiving Perkins loans through the end of your program. So, in almost every case, you either got a 1-year loan if you got a new loan for the first time, or if you are already in a program, you keep it through to the end of your program. That is the situation.

It is important for students to know that the bipartisan effort here is to simplify the student loan program and give them a lower interest rate and a better repayment program. Why would you not want that instead of this? One might say we may want to have both. Sure, you would like to have both, but the Congressional Budget Office says it will cost $5 billion over 10 years to continue the Perkins loan program. The testimony we heard and our recommendation by this bipartisan group of Senators is we have a better use for that $5 billion.

We might have a higher amount of money that you could borrow. We know there are going to be more Pell grants granted if we simplify the application process and the repayment process. We would like to give students the opportunity to use their Pell grants year-round. Some way we have got to pay for that, and one way to pay for that is to simplify the system. If we take $5 billion to continue the Perkins loan program so we can give students a higher interest loan and a worse repayment program, we are also taking money away from the new Pell grants, from the possibility of a year-round Pell grant, and from the other reforms that we would like to make. Why should we be trying to change this now, when the Department has notified all the institutions that this is how things are going to be?

We are toward the end of our work in our committee. We work in a very good bipartisan way. We don't agree on everything; we don't expect to. But Senator MURRAY and I have the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We expect to be able to do that with the Higher Education Act. The Senators will have a chance to offer amendments in the committee and on the floor. If the full Senate decides that it wants to keep the Perkins loan program and take $5 billion out of the funds available to give year-round Pell grants to students or the extra Pell grants that we would be able to grant by simplifying the application and instead continue a program with a higher

interest rate and a worse repayment program, then the full Senate can do that. I won't recommend it and I won't vote for it, but that is the purpose here.

It is important for everyone considering this to know that President Bush recommended that the program end. President Obama recommended that the program be changed and folded in, in effect, with the regular direct loan program.

The Federal Government hasn't contributed any new money to the Perkins loan program since 2004 because most people know that it is not as good a loan opportunity for almost all students. It is not as fair a use of the money as is the direct loan program.

I prefer private loan programs, but the Congress has decided it is a Federal loan program. To reemphasize, if you are enrolled in any accredited institution, and we have 6,000 of them, all you have to do is show up and you are eligible for the loan. We think you are better off. You will be less likely to over borrow and you will be more likely to go to college if it is a simpler program and if you have a single undergraduate loan, a single graduate loan, and a single loan for parents. That is the purpose behind my point of view on this.

This Senator would like for our committee to finish our work. Hopefully we can do that and give it to Senator MCCONNELL and let him put it on the floor early in the year, and the Senate can decide which loan programs it wants. If we want to continue the mumbo jumbo of student loan programs we have today, which discourage students from going to college and taking advantage of repayment programs and discourage the kinds of education that most of us want, then the Senate can do that, but I will be arguing against that.

That is why I asked the Senator from Arizona to object today to bringing immediately to the floor this continuation of a program that every institution in the country knew was supposed to end when it ended, and that one President has tried to end and another President has tried to change. Almost every witness that came before our committee said that students will be better off. Students are the ones we care about. As long as we are fair to taxpayers, students will be better off if we simplify the system and have a single undergraduate loan, a single graduate loan, and a single loan for parents.

In addition to that, there is a Federal grant system. If you are in Colorado or Tennessee or Connecticut or Pennsylvania and you want 2 years of college, for those who are eligible for the Pell grant, which you do not have to pay back, the 2 years of college is basically free. The average tuition for a 2-year community college is about $3,300 a year, and the average Pell grant is about $3,300 a year. So we are offering the students of this country—it is never easy to pay for college, but the taxpayers have been pretty generous. Basically, we are saying that everywhere in the country if you want 2 years of college and you are in the 40 percent of community college students that are lower income, your 2 years are basically free. If you need more money, you are entitled to a loan that you can pay back at an interest rate this year of 4.29 percent. That is a low interest rate for somebody with no credit rating and no collateral. You can't get that anywhere else, but you can get it from the Federal Government so you can go to college. We are saying in addition to that, you can pay it back over 20 years with your disposable income. If that isn't enough, if you are a teacher or fireman or someone who has not made as much to pay it back, it is forgiven by the taxpayers. We would like the Perkins loan students to have the lower interest rate and the more generous repayment program, and that is why I object to circumventing the committee's decisions.

Let us finish our work. Let us make a decision that we should be able to make as a whole Senate by early next year, and let the students who already have Perkins loans continue all the way through to the end of their program. Let the students who got it for the first time since July know that they will have that program for this 1 year. This is what every single university in the country was told about earlier this year and reminded of by the Department of Education in September.

Let's do this in an orderly way and let's put the students first. All of us are interested in helping students make it easier and simpler to attend college. I think our bipartisan proposal will replace the Perkins loan with a direct loan opportunity with a lower interest rate and a more generous repayment program. It is a better deal for students and avoids spending that $5 billion that I would like to use for the year-round Pell grant and for the additional Pell grants that are going to be created by a simpler student aid program.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I do respect the expertise and experience and dedication of my colleague and friend from Tennessee. I especially understand and am grateful for his leadership as the chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, which has jurisdiction over this legislation. I understand that he is moving toward reform and overhaul of the current system of financial aid and loans that will make it better for students. That is the goal, that it will be ready perhaps sometime early next year.

As we know from our experience in this body, timelines frequently shift and give way. So early next year may turn into later next year or the spring of next year or at some point in time. In the meantime, futures are in the balance—the futures of students in Connecticut and around the country who are trying to plan in their senior year. Their faces and voices are with me and with all of us every day. Their futures are the future of this country.

The House has extended the Perkins Loan Program for 1 year. Why won't the Senate do it? My colleague from Tennessee urges that we simplify the program. Well, let's simplify decisions that are being made right now at the kitchen tables and the living rooms of families across the country and make available this option even as we simplify and reform the program because the failure to do so vastly complicates and confuses the lives of students who are making real-life decisions while we debate. We are, in fact, debating right now a cyber security information sharing act which pertains to the cloud and computing that takes place in the cloud. We are talking here in the clouds compared to real-life decisions being made by students and their families every day. I am hearing from them. I am hearing from financial aid administrators, for example at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, CT, who tell me that there is a level of anxiety and angst they have not seen in recent years because of this body's inaction, its failure to continue a program that has worked and worked well for countless students. In fact, in the 2014–2015 school year, institutions in Connecticut disbursed over $20 million through the Perkins Loan Program, using that funding to provide targeted financial aid to support their very neediest students. Low-income students who face a gap in funding and who have to make hard decisions about real dollars and cents need this program not early next year but right now.

The Senate's failure to act, as the House has done, to extend it for 1 year, abrogates its responsibility. In previous years, Quinnipiac, for example, would have been able to offer these students Perkins loans to close the gaps between what financial aid they are receiving and what they need to continue their education. This year, they are telling students: Sorry, no help available.

These students are the future of our country. They are the ones who are going to be doing the computer science that is necessary for our cyber security. They are the intellectual infrastructure of this country. Our failure to invest in them—and this expiration is only one reflection of that failure to invest—is a failure for the entire country.

I received a note from Nicole Deck—a sophomore at the University of New Haven—telling me how she benefitted from the Perkins program. She is pursuing a double major in marine biology and environmental science. She wrote to me saying: ''I appreciate every day that I spend at the University of New

Haven thanks to the aid of the Federal Perkins loans.''

She said: ''Receiving money from the Federal Perkins Loan has allowed me to achieve many of my goals and has opened many doors of opportunity.''

The doors of opportunity for Nicole in marine biology and environmental science on the shores of Long Island Sound, where she can put that science to work to help to save Long Island Sound and to help us nationally to preserve our environment, are not only doors of opportunity for her, they are doors of opportunity for our whole country. The failure to extend the Perkins loan program closes those doors.

I met recently with seniors at the New Britain High School. At New Britain High School, these seniors are thinking about where they will be going to school. They are making life-changing and transformative decisions about their futures based on their financial alternatives. When I asked them ''How many of you have, in effect, abandoned the school of your first choice because you couldn't afford it and Federal aid was not available and no scholarships were accessible?'' about half of them raised their hands.

I thought to myself, well, things often work out for the better but sometimes not. Sometimes futures are constrained and warped and distorted because a young person with great potential is unable to develop it because of an avenue of education blocked by financial unaffordability.

My colleagues have stated very powerfully and eloquently and it has been a bipartisan debate about what the Perkins Loan Program means to so many students.

I will close by saying that this program involves an example of real institutional skin in the game. It requires institutional capital contributions as a requirement for a school's participation. It fills the gap of affordability that affects our very neediest and often most deserving students.

Our constituents will rightly ask us: Did you reject the student loan program?

No, we did not reject it.

Did you renew it?

No. We simply allowed it to die.

This program has gone into the cloud. We have allowed this to expire when we could extend it for 1 year without really damaging the reform effort underway.

I want to repeat that I respect the HELP Committee chairman's intention and goal to reform all student loan programs, but in the meantime, futures of American students are affected unfairly and unwisely by the inaction by this body.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Senator from Connecticut for his eloquent remarks. Let me offer this different perspective. You don't need a Perkins loan to go to a 2-year college. The average tuition at a community college—and they are a terrific opportunity in my State and most States—is about $3,300. About 40 percent of the students who attend them qualify for a grant of about, on average, $3,300. So those 2 years are free for most students who need the money. Those students are also entitled to a direct loan if they enroll at the community college. Usually it is $4,000, $5,000, to $6,000. They just walk up and they are entitled to it if they think they need it.

You probably don't need a Perkins loan to go to most of the State universities. At the University of Tennessee, the tuition and fees is about $12,000. Many of the best colleges and universities are State institutions.

You are entitled to your Pell grant. You are entitled to your direct loan. Then many States and universities have their own programs. For example, in Tennessee there is the HOPE Scholarship, and almost all of the students at the University of Tennessee Knoxville have one.

Where the Perkins loan has been useful—and I will grant that—has been at the expensive private colleges. If it is $50,000 a year to go to a private college, you can get your Pell Grant, you can get two direct loans, and then you can get a Perkins loan. Then you can end up being in the newspaper for having borrowed so much that people write articles in the Wall Street Journal about how we have created a circumstance where students are overborrowing and cannot pay back their student loans.

So I think the question really is, Should taxpayers spend $5 billion more over the next 10 years to make it possible for a the student to go to a $50,000-a-year tuition school or should taxpayers spend that money to create a year-round Pell Grant and hundreds of thousands of additional Pell Grants for low-income students who want another 2 years or 4 years of education? I think that is the question.

Government is about setting priorities. If we had an unlimited amount of money, we could do everything. Except, we do have a problem with overborrowing and complexity. When you add a third loan on top of two other loans so that can you go to a $50,000-a-year tuition college, that is a choice an American has to make. I am proud of the fact that we have those choices. But we have lots of 18-, 19-, 20-year-olds, and many graduate students, too, who 5 or 10 years later will find they cannot pay it back.

I think we are better off with a single undergraduate loan, a single graduate loan, and a single parent loan that is available to every single student. I think we are better off using whatever savings we have to expand the number of Pell Grants and to offer a year-round Pell Grant.

As I said before, every single institution—all 6,000 of our institutions were told by the Department of Education earlier in 2015: If you grant a Perkins loan this fall to someone who never received one before, it will be for 1 year because the program is ending.

Also, they were told: If someone already has a Perkins loan, you will be able to keep it all the way through the end of their program.

So this is an honest difference of opinion. There are a lot of university presidents—I know a bunch of them. They like the program because it gives them one more tool to use. The question is not just whether they like the program; the question is, What is best for the students? I think taking the available amount of money we have and expanding it for simplifying the student aid system and making the year-round Pell and the other programs available to students who need it the most—I think that is what we should be doing.

We will finish our work in the Senate education committee hopefully within a few weeks. We will have it ready to come to the floor. We can debate it, and the Senator from Connecticut and I can continue our discussion.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

AMENDMENT NO. 2582

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the Flake amendment No. 2582 that is currently pending before the body. This amendment is very simple. It simply adds a 6-year sunset to the bill. This amendment also keeps in place the liability protections established by the Cyber Security and Information Sharing Act for information that is shared pursuant to the requirements of the bill. Furthermore, the amendment ensures that the requirements on how the information is shared under the act is to be handled remain in effect after the sunset date.

That is all this amendment does. It simply sunsets the bill in 6 years, and it does so in a reasonable and responsible way. I believe in the sunset provision. It is good for us to consider our past decisions 6 years from now, to determine whether what we enacted is operating well, and to debate the overall success of the legislation that we passed 6 years prior. We ought to do that, frankly, on a lot of other legislation we pass.

I do believe the bill we are currently considering, as it is written, strikes the right balance. It puts in place the proper privacy protections, and I plan to support the legislation. However, it is important to make sure that we are forced to go back and evaluate it in the years to come to make sure we actually got it right. Given the nature of the bill being debated before us, it is all the more important to do so in this instance.

I would also note that this 6-year sunset is similar to sunset provisions that were included in both House-passed cyber security bills. So if it is in the House, we ought to have it in the Senate as well.

Both the Protecting Cyber Networks Act, which passed the House by a vote

of 307 to 116, and the National Cybersecurity Protection Advancement Act, which passed the House by a vote of 355 to 63, include a 7-year sunset.

I ask my colleagues to support this amendment. I think it does strengthen the bill. It ensures that we evaluate, as we should, any legislation that we pass to ensure that it is having its intended effect.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 697

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act. Over 2 years ago, I sat down with now the late Senator Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey in an attempt to find compromise and to work together on updating the drastically outdated Toxic Substances Control Act. Updating this law was a long-time goal and passion of Frank's. It was a real goal of mine, although we came at it from very different directions, at least initially. I am saddened Frank isn't here with us to see it finally being brought up for consideration on the floor of the Senate. We worked closely together and forged a significant, productive, positive bipartisan compromise—the sort of work we don't see often enough in the Senate or the Congress itself, but we got it done here, and it is a strong, positive compromise in substance as well.

After Frank's passing, Senator TOM UDALL stepped in to help preserve Frank's legacy and continued working with me to move this reform forward. We have done that consistently over months and months, working on issue after issue, detail after detail, to produce a strong result. I am very proud of the substance of this result because it achieves two very important goals: On the one hand, we certainly protect health and safety and give the EPA the proper authorities to do that with regard to chemicals in commerce. On the other hand, we make sure we don't overburden industry and put them at a disadvantage in terms of remaining America's world leaders in innovation and chemistry. We are world leaders now. We innovate, we produce new chemicals and new uses and new products on a spectacular basis, and we certainly don't want to threaten that. Our Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act doesn't threaten it. It enhances it, it protects health and safety, and that is why I am so proud of this bipartisan work.

We have done that work so completely we are now in a position to pass this bill through the Senate in very short order. In fact, we only need 2 hours of floor time, and we need no amendment votes related to the bill in any way. That is virtually unheard of in the Senate, but it goes to the work that so many folks have done on both sides of the aisle. So with 2 hours of floor time, no amendment votes, we can pass this bill and move it on to the House. We have been in contact with the House for months, so we are very hopeful we can follow up our action with House action and a final result in relatively short order.

Mr. President, that is why we are coming to the floor today, to ask unanimous consent to establish that process in the near future—a very simple, very short process so we can get this done and achieve this result. Again, no amendment votes are necessary—whether they are germane, related or unrelated, no amendment votes are necessary—and then pass it on to the House. I certainly hope we can have that agreement to move forward in a productive fashion.

With that, let me yield to my Democratic colleague Senator UDALL, who has been such a great partner in this effort following Frank Lautenberg's unfortunate passing.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague Senator VITTER. It has been a real pleasure working with him on the Toxic Substances Control Act. I think we have brought this a long way.

First, let me speak on the pending cyber security legislation, and then I will be seeking unanimous consent to process another bill.

Protecting our national security and economic interests from cyber attack is a very important priority. I commend Senator BURR and Senator FEINSTEIN for their hard work on their legislation. I know they have also gone through a lot to get floor time on their bill and are working to process amendments. It is clear they have made a serious effort. I respect the chairman, vice chairman, and their staffs for their work.

My understanding is this will pass with a large bipartisan majority in the Senate. As Chairman BURR stated yesterday, the House has already acted on cyber security legislation. He is eager to start reconciling differences and get a bill to the President's desk. That is what good legislators do.

As the chairman knows, I have also been working for a number of years on a complicated legislative project, working with Senator VITTER, Senator INHOFE, and many other Senators of both parties. We are very close to the reform of the totally outdated Toxic Substances Control Act. We all know TSCA is broken. It fails to protect families and it fails to provide confidence in consumer products. We have a chance today to change that and to show that Congress can actually get things done.

I am pleased Chairman BURR is a cosponsor of our legislation, along with over half of the Senate. After years of work, we are now also in a position to seek unanimous passage of TSCA reform so we can go to conference with the House of Representatives. It has been a long road with lots of productive debate and discussion and cooperation and compromise. This is a balanced bill, one that Republicans, Democrats, industry, and public health groups can all support moving forward.

Not everyone loves our Senate product, but its staunchest opponents are now ready to allow for Senate passage. We can then reconcile our bill with the House, just as Senator BURR seeks to do on cyber security legislation. We have cleared this legislation on the Democratic side of the aisle with a short time agreement. My understanding is that there is nearly unanimous consent—unanimous signoff—on the Republican side as well.

With that, I join with Senators VITTER and INHOFE in asking for unanimous consent. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, in consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 121, S. 697; further, that the only amendment in order be a substitute amendment to be offered by Senator INHOFE; that there be up to 2 hours of debate equally divided between the leaders or their designees; and that following the use or yielding back of that time the Senate vote on adoption of the amendment, the bill be read a third time, and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VITTER). Is there objection?

Mr. BURR. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, let me say to the authors, I have deep respect for both of you, and you have done an incredible job with this bill. It is one of the reasons I am a cosponsor, because it is good legislation.

It is no surprise to the Senate that I have had a deep desire to add the Land and Water Conservation Fund reauthorization, which has expired, as an amendment to this bill. I seek no time. I only seek the vehicle for an up-or-down vote and a ride—a ride that I can't seem to get by itself. As a matter of fact, I think the authors of this bill know that I have said if somebody can offer me a stand-alone opportunity to debate and vote on the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we can unanimous consent TSCA. We can't achieve that. I certainly don't want to take anything away from what I think is a great bill, and I wouldn't even require time, I would only require a vote.

So I would ask the authors to modify their unanimous consent request to include a vote on the Burr-Ayotte-Bennet amendment in relation to the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. BURR. I ask unanimous consent that the consent be modified to include a vote on the Burr-Ayotte-Bennet amendment in relation to the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator so modify his request?

Is there objection to the modification?

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, we have an opportunity to update and reform the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and to do so in a way that would ensure it works more efficiently and helps solve the problems facing our Federal Government and States. To do so, we need to pursue a few goals.

First, more money from the LWCF should be sent to the States to implement the worthwhile projects. When the LWCF was conceived, 60 percent of its funding was required to go to the States. That statutory requirement was removed years ago, and now just 12 percent of LWCF money is given to the States, with minimal Federal strings attached.

Next, the LWCF should be used to solve, not to exacerbate, the current Federal lands maintenance backlog. The Federal Government has undertaken an impossible task in trying to manage more than 600 million acres of variant terrain dispersed across thousands of miles. Evidence of the Federal Government's failure to manage its holdings is found in the $13 billion through $20 billion maintenance backlog, a number that has grown nearly every single year since President Obama has been in office.

Since LWCF was created some 50 years ago, Congress has appropriated nearly $17 billion to the fund, and 62 percent of this money has been spent on land acquisition, resulting in 5 million acres being added to the Federal estate.

We should work together to improve the LWCF. Let's work together to make sure that North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and every other State in this country gets more money. Let's work together to make sure that the Federal Government only acquires such land as it can adequately manage.

On that basis, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. BURR. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, again, I respect Senator BURR, but I am very disappointed in that objection. I take a back seat to no one in supporting the Land and Water Conservation Fund. It is extremely popular in New Mexico and critical to enabling our outdoors economy. Senator BURR has been a strong leader on the LWCF. He has brought much needed attention and passion to the issue of reauthorization, and I want to work with him on that. But the current strategy of holding TSCA hostage for LWCF is not the proper one. This is the sort of thing that gives the Senate a bad reputation for dysfunction, and I do not see how it will lead to any progress on LWCF. I have not objected to Senator BURR's efforts to pass reauthorization in the Senate. In fact, I have appraised his efforts. I share his frustration that a small minority of Republicans have blocked his efforts. But now, instead of one bill being blocked, we have two. Without this objection, TSCA would pass today almost unanimously after years of hard work.

So instead of holding TSCA hostage, why not consider LWCF on Senator BURR's legislation?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUPERSTORM SANDY RELIEF AND DISASTER LOAN PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, in the small business committee, we have been working on significant legislation that goes to disaster recovery, the Superstorm Sandy Relief and Disaster Loan Program Improvement Act. We are ready to move that legislation and pass it through the entire Senate.

Since Hurricane Katrina devastated my State of Louisiana in 2005, I have fought to support disaster victims and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our Nation's disaster relief and recovery efforts. I have continued this vital focus on disaster mitigation and recovery as Chairman of the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. I stand by my principle that when people are there for you, you will be there for them. Following my brief remarks, I will ask unanimous consent that the Senate pass H.R. 208, which has passed the House unanimously, with the Vitter amendment.

With Superstorm Sandy, similar to after Katrina, we continued to see—and both the GAO and IG confirmed—significant shortcomings with the SBA's disaster loan programs, particularly application processing times and inaccurate information, which discouraged victims from applying for assistance. H.R. 208 reopens the SBA disaster loan program to those victims for one year, and also includes vital reforms and oversight to the SBA's disaster loan program. This bill does not cost anything as the funds have already been appropriated but sit unused.

The RISE After Disaster Act, which is included in my amendment, passed out of the Small Business Committee with unanimous support, and will provide long-term recovery loans to small businesses through community banks after SBA disaster assistance is no longer available; direct Federal agencies to utilize local contractors for response and recovery efforts, rather than government contractors from Washington, DC, and other areas; address contractor malfeasance, such as the Chinese drywall crisis, by allowing homeowners and businesses to use their SBA disaster loans to remediate their property; provide incentives for innovative firms doing research and development to stay in the disaster-affected area, rather than move elsewhere; and require the SBA to take steps to establish a web portal for disaster assistance, whereby applicants can track the status of applications and approvals, as well as submit required supporting documentation electronically.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, Sandy in 2012, and Joaquin just this month—along with far too many other natural disasters—have all illustrated the devastating effects of hurricanes and flooding on our communities. As Chairman of the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee, I am committed to serving small businesses across the country and ensuring that they are afforded the resources and assistance in order to protect themselves from and recover after disasters.

This means rigorous oversight of the SBA's disaster loan programs and extensive examination of economic recovery efforts, agency coordination, and the efficiency of disaster assistance delivery. Small businesses are vital to every community's economy and serve as the major source of jobs—one great incentive to have folks return after a major disaster—and is why helping them to more quickly recover is one of the most effective and beneficial tactics we can and should take.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 208 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 208) to improve the disaster assistance programs of the Small Business Administration.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Vitter amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read

a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The amendment (No. 2747) was agreed to.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under ''Text of Amendments.'')

The bill (H.R. 208), as amended, was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I congratulate Senator VITTER on the passage of the bill and would remark on the support for it by Senator BOOKER and Senator MENENDEZ on our side of the aisle.

ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED, AND UNREGULATED FISHING ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I now in turn ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 774 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 774) to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, to amend the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950 to implement the Antigua Convention, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 774) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, we have worked long and hard in the bipartisan Oceans Caucus to clear this Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015. It will help fishermen on all of our coasts better withstand foreign competition that cheats, that destroys resources, and that engages in what we call pirate fishing. This is a House bill. It passed with a huge majority on the House side, and now having passed in the Senate, it can go to the President for its signature. It will be good for fishermen across the country.

I thank Senator VITTER for his consideration and for working together to clear both of these bills this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, assuming it is not too late, I ask unanimous consent to be added as a cosponsor of that legislation as well.

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

Mr. VITTER. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, to clarify the request, I ask unanimous consent to be added as a cosponsor of the Senate bill, which represents—excuse me, Mr. President. I withdraw the unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The request is withdrawn.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CYBERSECURITY INFORMATION SHARING ACT OF 2015—Continued

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that if cloture is invoked on the Burr-Feinstein substitute amendment to S. 754, the Senate then vote in relation to the Paul amendment No. 2564, as modified, with 10 minutes divided in the usual form prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up amendment No. 2117, which is a 60-day extension of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I believe the amendment number is 2717.

Mr. UDALL. It is amendment No. 2717. The Senator is correct.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I thank Senator UDALL. He is a cosponsor of the permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I came to the Senate prior to the expiration of the Land and Water Conservation Fund with the hope that my colleagues would give it a 60-day extension. It has now expired. The 60-day extension on an expired act isn't even an offer that is on the table.

For my colleagues, let me just remind you that the Land and Water Conservation Fund has been around a long time—50 years. Some say: They have $20 billion in funds; why don't they just draw on it? It is because they receive about $900 million a year in royalties off of offshore exploration of energy. Congress in its infinite wisdom said if we are going to tap our natural resources we are going to put part of the royalties of that back into conservation. The unfortunate thing is they never got the $900 million a year. Our appropriators in the Congress have seen fit to give them on average over the life of this fund about $390 million a year.

Some of my colleagues suggest that there is a fund over there, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and you could just tap it. Well, no, there isn't. The appropriators spent that money long ago. As a matter of fact, this year it was just over $350 billion for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

So as delighted as I am that he has sponsored the permanent reauthorization, most Members believe that we should reauthorize this permanently. So I would ask the Senator to modify his unanimous consent request to make the amendment read that we would take up the Murkowski-Cantwell permanent extension language.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up amendment No. 2717, as modified, which is a 1-year extension of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BURR. I object to the last unanimous consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. BURR. And on the current unanimous consent request, if I can address that, reserving the right to object, again, without being repetitive, this is a 1-year extension. The beauty of the effort by Senator CANTWELL and Senator MURKOWSKI, a bipartisan approach to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, addresses exactly what Senator LEE asked for, a reformed bill. This is a package that has been negotiated by Republicans and Democrats—the chairman of the energy committee and an individual who is extremely invested in the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

So I would once again ask the Senator to modify his unanimous consent request to make that amendment read that we move to the Murkowski-Cantwell permanent extension language.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LEE. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. BURR. I object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I can't tell you how disappointed I am. The Senator from North Carolina objects to making an unrelated amendment to his bill, but he insists on one to ours. It seems we are at a standoff—a standoff with a bipartisan TSCA reform that

has already moved through the Senate. We have done incredible work on this with Senator INHOFE, Senator VITTER, and 60 cosponsors who are ready to roll with this with a very short timeline, and yet we have this objection.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund reauthorization also has a strong majority of the Senate in favor. Fifty-three Senators signed a letter led by Senator BURR recently, and I am confident there are over 60 supporters for this. I am also confident that we will reauthorize and continue to fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. As the ranking Democrat on the interior subcommittee, that is an extremely high priority for me. But for some reason, TSCA is being held up by demands for a vote on unrelated Land and Water Conservation Fund legislation. I don't see how this would help matters. This dysfunctional situation is what gives the Senate a bad name.

Again, I respect Senator BURR. I know he does not seek a dysfunctional Senate. On the contrary, I have watched him do his best to get the Senate to function on this important cyber security legislation. But this calls out for leadership and cooperation, not ultimatums. I will keep doing what I can to continue the conversation and bring people together on a path forward.

TSCA reform is ready. We will be back one way or another. We will pass in the Senate this bill. We will resolve our differences with the House, and this critical reform will go to the President's desk. With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I thank Senator UDALL for his work on TSCA. His description is pretty accurate. I am doing what the Senate historically has always done, allowing any Member of the Senate to exercise their authority as a Member of this austere body to amend any piece of legislation, and the Senate has functioned for a long time based upon that. It is just recently that we have not allowed that to be exercised. In other words, one Senator can't come to the floor and offer an amendment. He can't come to the floor and propound a unanimous consent request without objection. It has to change. I dare say that TSCA has overwhelming support and so does the Land and Water Conservation Fund. For us to get functional we have to return to where we expect Members to come. I have nongermane amendments on the cyber security bill, and they would all receive a vote if somebody hadn't objected, and we would actually see the Senate process exactly like it is supposed to, where if a nongermane amendment has 60 votes in favor of it, then it is added. I am not scared to have nongermane amendments on my bill. I have them, and because of somebody's fear, they will get knocked off and two Members of the Senate, a Republican and a Democrat, will not get their day to have a vote on their bill.

I don't object to the Land and Water Conservation Fund being a part of it, as I just expressed. What I object to and what I am disappointed about is that there would be an offer to do a 60-day extension or a 1-year extension from a Member that I know supports permanent reauthorization, because this whole deal on TSCA is to make me look bad. Well, you know what; so be it. I am willing to accept it. I have had the hounds sicced on me. We are at a point now where there is no damage you can do, and what we saw was a nice orchestrated process that was supposed to make me back down.

It is not going to happen. I believe in the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The Senate will take it up, whether it is on this bill or another bill or as stand-alone bill.

And let me just say to my good friend that what we are doing has not been a surprise. I shared with all the authors of this bill that I am going to amend it. I am going to amend it with this. So I hope he agrees that I am not trying to pull a swift one. I have been straight up on this since the beginning, and I will continue to press for it.

Here is the solution. Allow us to have a debate on the Land and Water Conservation Fund permanent reauthorization on the floor of the Senate with an up-or-down vote. If we don't get 60 votes, it doesn't pass. That is the way the Senate is. If Members want this bill or any other bill passed, it is very simple. Let's get the process back like it is supposed to be, and with one assurance: that we will get an opportunity to debate the Land and Water Conservation Fund and have a vote. I am a cosponsor of your bill. I will lift my objection, my attempt to try to amend it, and we will pass it by unanimous consent. It is that simple, and there is described the history of how the Senate has always worked. Let's get back to 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. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow, Thursday, October 22, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 339, 340, 341, and 342; that the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations; that following disposition of the nominations the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nominations; that any statements related to the nominations 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

PERKINS LOAN PROGRAM

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to urge my colleagues to act to reauthorize the Perkins Loan Program—the Nation's oldest Federal student loan program and a critical lifeline for thousands of low-income students with exceptional need.

This crucial program has the support of many higher education groups, including the Association of American Universities, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the American Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, the National Association of Financial Aid Administrators, the Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organizations and many others—as well as dozens of individual colleges and universities across the country. Despite this broad support, funding for Perkins Loans expired on October 1.

While our colleagues in the House unanimously approved the Higher Education Extension Act—which would extend the Perkins Loan Program for 1 year—the Senate has yet to act. And that inaction has left thousands of current and future students scrambling to figure out how to pay for school and institutions struggling to find another way to help students afford their education.

This program has existed with broad bipartisan support since 1958 and has provided more than $28 billion in loans to students in all 50 States. In the 2013–2014 academic year alone, more than 539,000 new and returning students benefited from the Perkins Loans Program—including 46,065 students in California.

Unlike the Federal direct lending programs, Federal Perkins loans are made and then repaid to the individual university. They are offered at a low, fixed rate of 5 percent—and repayment doesn't begin for 9 months after a student graduates, giving them enough time to get on their feet. The program also includes important loan forgiveness opportunities for those who decide to enter public service after graduating.

This program particularly helps students who have tapped out all other Federal student aid options and still face a gap in paying for school or other expenses. It helps students bridge that funding hole so they don't have to turn

to expensive private loans—which don't have the same protections as Federal student loans.

But without this program, the California State Student Association estimates that more than 3,400 students in the California State university system alone could be forced to take out private loans or delay graduation.

Student loan debt now exceeds $1 trillion. That's more than credit card debt. It's more than auto loans. In fact, it is second only to mortgage debt in this country. We owe it to current and future students to make sure college is as affordable as possible. That is what the Higher Education Extension Act and the Perkins Loan Program do.

We have no time to spare now. Let's get back on track and take up the extension bill that the House already passed and ensure our students are not left in the lurch. Thank you.

STOP SANCTUARY POLICIES AND PROTECT AMERICANS ACT

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, from January through August of 2014, over 8,100 aliens that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement had identified for deportation were released back into our communities by sanctuary jurisdictions. Over 5,000 of those released had a criminal history. In that same time period, 1,900 of those 8,100 went on to be charged with another 7,500 crimes.

These are crimes that would not have been committed had local authorities cooperated with Federal authorities in enforcing our laws.

This summer, everyone heard the case of Kate Steinle who was shot and killed in San Francisco by an illegal immigrant who had seven felony convictions and had been deported five times. Rather than turn him over to ICE, San Francisco released him, allowing him to commit more crimes. This guy even admitted that he was in San Francisco because their liberal laws would protect him.

While this one case received the media attention it deserved, many other preventable crimes don't.

For example, the city of Los Angeles released one immigrant who had been arrested for the continuous sexual abuse of a child. ICE wanted custody of this deviant. ICE tried to get custody of him. However, rather than hand him over to Federal law enforcement and get this guy out of our country and away from our children, Los Angeles ignored ICE's detainer and released him. He was later arrested for sodomy of a victim under 10 years old. Another child became a victim of this predator because liberal policies would rather release him into our communities then get him out of our country.

This year, sanctuary cities have already released more than 9,000 criminal aliens from jail and these criminals are committing more crimes.

In California, an immigrant was arrested for battery last year, but instead of turning him over to ICE, the local sheriff released him. This July, he raped and beat a 64-year-old woman so severely that she died 8 days later—yet another preventable death due to the intentional failure of a jurisdiction to comply with federal law.

How many more do we have to have before people realize what these policies are doing to our communities? Over 300 States, cities, and counties have sanctuary laws, ordinances, or policies that protect criminals and hurt the innocent. These jurisdictions continue to receive money from the Federal Government even though they continue to ignore Federal laws and rebuff Federal agencies working to enforce the laws.

Enough is enough.

I believe that, if a jurisdiction chooses not to cooperate with federal law enforcement, they should not be the beneficiary of federal grants. This is why I cosponsored S. 2146, the Stop Sanctuary Policies and Protect Americans Act, which my colleagues on the other side of the aisle filibustered. It is why I have cosponsored similar legislation introduced by Senator SESSIONS.

Unfortunately, others would rather let politics come before doing what they know is right and failed to protect our communities from further victimization. When the proper enforcement of current law could save lives and protect the innocent, how could you not vote to do so?

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING TECHNICAL SERGEANT STEPHANIE McLAUGHLIN

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today we honor the life and service of TSgt Stephanie McLaughlin, whose passing signifies a great loss to both our State and country. I send my condolences and prayers to her parents, Sharon and Fred; her partner, Harold Kiesling; and the rest of her family in this time of mourning. Technical Sergeant McLaughlin was an incredible servicemember, going above and beyond to defend our freedom and uplift the local military community. She was an invaluable member of the Nevada family, and her service will never be forgotten.

Technical Sergeant McLaughlin was born on April 27, 1974, and attended North Hunterdon High School in New Jersey, where she graduated in 1992. She joined the U.S. Air Force in 1993 and then the New Jersey Air National Guard in 1997. Throughout her career, she served at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia; the Pentagon, Washington, DC; McMurdo Station, Antarctica; Ramstein Air Base, Germany; and Carson City Joint Force Headquarters, Nevada. She worked for several two, three, and four star generals during her service, including Maj. Gen. Ron J. Bath, retired. Most recently, she served as confidential assistant to the adjunct general of Nevada, Brig. Gen. William Burk. Her efficiency in her work and devotion to her job could never be replicated.

Throughout her service, Technical Sergeant McLaughlin was awarded numerous accolades, including the Meritorious Service Medal, four Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medals, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and two Air Force Achievement Medals. I am grateful the Nevada family was given the opportunity to work with Technical Sergeant McLaughlin and learn by her example.

She embodied only the greatest of Nevada's values with passion, fearlessness, and drive that made her a remarkable individual. Her legacy of empathy and determination will echo on for years to come throughout the Silver State. She was one of a kind, and we are lucky to have had such a strong individual working within our State. We will always remember her for her courageous contributions to the United States of America. My office enjoyed working alongside Technical Sergeant McLaughlin, and I am thankful for all of her hard work and dedication to veterans across Nevada. She was always the first one to volunteer in helping others, which was shown both throughout her career and throughout her time working in the local community.

Technical Sergeant McLaughlin was a shining example in Nevada's military community and put forth a tremendous effort working with the Nevada Military Support Alliance. She deeply cared for veterans across the State, bringing together hundreds of Nevadans to support our wounded and fallen warriors, their families, and loved ones. Technical Sergeant McLaughlin sacrificed countless hours helping plan events and fundraisers in support of our State's heroes. I had the pleasure of attending multiple Nevada Military Support Alliance galas planned by Technical Sergeant McLaughlin and have seen firsthand the incredible impact she had on Nevadans, active military servicemembers, and veterans. The footprint she left on this community will be felt for years to come.

Throughout her life, Technical Sergeant McLaughlin demonstrated unparalleled selflessness, both in defending our Nation and in supporting her fellow servicemembers. Her patriotism and drive will never be forgotten. Today, I join the Nevada family in celebrating the life of an upstanding Nevadan, TSgt Stephanie McLaughlin.•

RECOGNIZING KANSAS CITY KANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

• Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Kansas City Kansas Community College and its efforts to support innovation and entrepreneurship by launching 100 Garages, an initiative of the KCKCC Innovation Center to connect area inventors with local makers who can help translate ideas into products. The initiative enables local makers who have skills and equipment to

assist those with ideas and inventions by helping them find each other through an online database and other avenues. Additionally, as part of this initiative, KCKCC is launching a class to guide potential inventors from the idea phase through patent searches, licensing, prototyping, and product creation to market and revenue generation.

The story of America is a story of entrepreneurs—individuals who took great risks to pursue their dreams. These entrepreneurs built the foundation of the American economy from its earliest days by pushing forward innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges. Innovation by entrepreneurs not only improves our lives, but also results in the creation of countless new jobs and opportunities for Americans.

Many of our favorite and most inspiring stories about innovation and entrepreneurship are those that trace their beginnings to the family garage. Many Fortune 500 companies, such as Ford, Apple, and General Electric, got their start with passionate, committed individuals, a promising idea, and a great deal of hard work. Often, the greatest barrier to creating something innovative and transformative is bringing together people and their respective potentials. I commend KCKCC for its efforts to promote innovation and the spirit of entrepreneurship in Kansas City, Wyandotte County, the State of Kansas, and the region.●

RECOGNIZING COOK ME SOMETHIN' MISTER

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, oftentimes small businesses are grown out of a desire to help folks in their communities. It is especially encouraging to see this after a catastrophic natural disaster. As we honor National Women's Small Business Week, I would like to recognize Cook Me Somethin' Mister of New Orleans, LA, as Small Business of the Week.

In 2005, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina's devastation, a recent college graduate named Kristen Preau was approached by her employer, the University of New Orleans Athletic Department, to come up with a way to generate much-needed funding for the school. Preau took to what she knew best: her family's beloved jambalaya recipe. Raising $100,000 in just 3 months at college tailgating events across the country, Preau knew she had a hit. Over the next few years, Preau—known for much of her life as the ''Jambalaya Girl''—perfected and expanded her seasonings, which were selling as quickly as they were stocked on the shelves of local grocery stores. Having roots firmly planted in the Louisiana culinary scene, Preau's family were some of the first folks to cook and serve jambalaya at the French Quarter Fest in New Orleans's famous Jackson Square. The family also enjoyed a close relationship with the late, world famous Cajun Chef Paul Prudhomme who had a hand in blending the ''Jambalaya Girl's'' seasonings.

Today, Preau's operation has grown into full-time endeavor with five full-time employees producing the ''Jambalaya Girl's'' products in her hometown of New Orleans. Enjoying great success, Kristen and her jambalaya have gained national recognition and was recently named a Top 100 Small Business in the country for 2015 by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Louisiana Small Business Administration's, SBA, Women in Business Champion, and the Women's Business Enterprise Council, WBEC, South Role Model of the Year for 2014, among others.

Congratulations again to Cook Me Somethin' Mister for being selected as Small Business of the Week, and thank you for your inspiration for woman entrepreneurs across Louisiana. I look forward to seeing your continued growth and success.●

RECOGNIZING HEALTHE HABITS FOR LIVING

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I imagine most Americans are familiar with the importance of making healthful living choices. In honor of National Women's Small Business Month, I would like to recognize Healthe Habits for Living of Lafayette, LA, as Small Business of the Week for their commitment to helping folks reach and maintain healthy lifestyles.

In 2007, after a personal battle with medical issues, Jill Hurley opened Healthe Habits for Living with the mission to help train, coach, and advise other adults in the appropriate skills for exercise, nutrition, and mental strategies to live a healthy lifestyle. Putting her education to work in order to develop a unique approach to battling heart disease, Jill has become accustomed to the physical and mental challenges of individuals suffering from heart disease. To complement their life skills counseling in nutrition and long-term mental success strategies, Jill and her team of physical and occupational therapists also provide physical strength training to their patients, encouraging and enabling a balanced active lifestyle that parallels healthier life changes.

Named the Small Business Administration's, SBA, 2011 Women in Business Champion for Louisiana, Jill's proven endeavor to assist others in reaching their healthy living goals has expanded to three successful locations across south Louisiana and currently employs an all-female staff of six physical and occupational therapists. Since opening her first location, Jill has continuously hired some of the most qualified and successful therapists in Louisiana, and she encourages her staff to further their educational training as they build outstanding careers in the therapy field.

Women-owned small businesses have an unequivocal impact on our communities and the lives of those who need assistance the most, and Healthe Habits for Living is a testament to the extraordinary achievements of women entrepreneurs across America. Congratulations again to Lafayette's own, Healthe Habits for Living for being selected as Small Business of the Week, and thank you for your commitment to tackling health issues in your community head-on.●

RECOGNIZING 2 SISTERS' SALSA COMPANY

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, family-owned small businesses provide parents a one-of-a-kind opportunity to teach their children the value of hard work and taking risks to pursue one's dreams. This is especially true for 2 Sisters' Salsa Company, which started as a kitchen conversation between family friends and has since grown into a successful women-owned venture. In honor of National Woman's Small Business Month, I would like to recognize 2 Sisters' Salsa of Plaucheville, LA, as this week's Small Business of the Week.

2 Sisters' Salsa Company began when family friends, the Deshotels and Bordelons, began occasionally making salsa in their kitchen. After a couple of batches, they began to refine their recipe until they created a finished product to their liking. They soon realized that their salsa had immense potential, so they began jarring and labeling their product for store shelves, which was receiving excellent reviews from friends and family. As the company grew, the need for an original name became critical to the development of their small business. They settled upon 2 Sisters' Salsa in honor of the two sets of sisters of the Deshotels and Bordelon families. With a new name and growing clientele, the daughters of the two families went from being the namesake of 2 Sisters' Salsa Company to full-time employees, helping their parents with production and sale of their salsa products.

Today, 2 Sisters' Salsa has expanded from the Deshotels' kitchen to a new facility in Avoylles Parish producing 5,000 salsa products a day. As the reigning world champion for the medium salsa category, 2 Sisters' Salsa can be found in over 100 restaurants and retail locations.

The hard work and creativity of Patrick and Brooke Deshotels; Jason and Stacy Bordelon; and their daughters Sara, Emily, Shellie, and Rayne certainly deserve recognition, especially as we celebrate National Women's Small Business Month. Congratulations again to this week's Small Business of the Week, 2 Sisters' Salsa Company, and I wish you continued success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13413 OF OCTOBER 27, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN OR IN RELATION TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO—PM 29

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 the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo declared in Executive Order 13413 of October 27, 2006, is to continue in effect beyond October 27, 2015.

The situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been marked by widespread violence and atrocities that continue to threaten regional stability, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the 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 13413 with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *October 21, 2015.*

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Under the authority of the order of the Senate of January 6, 2015, the Secretary of the Senate, on October 20, 2015, during the adjournment of the Senate, received a message from the House of Representatives announcing that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1735. An act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) on October 20, 2015.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:30 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 bill, without amendment:

S. 2162. An act to establish a 10–year term for the service of the Librarian of Congress.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1315. An act to amend section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, to require that annual budget submissions of the President to Congress provide an estimate of the cost per taxpayer of the deficit, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1428. An act to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3350. An act 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.

H.R. 3493. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Securing the Cities program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that post a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3572. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to reform, streamline, and make improvements to the Department of Homeland Security and support the Department's efforts to implement better policy, planning, management, and performance, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1315. An act to amend section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, to require that annual budget submissions of the President to Congress provide an estimate of the cost per taxpayer of the deficit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Budget.

H.R. 1428. An act to extend Privacy Act remedies to citizens of certified states, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3350. An act 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 and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3493. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Securing the Cities program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that pose a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 3572. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to reform, streamline, and make improvements to the Department of Homeland Security and support the Department's efforts to implement better policy, planning, management, and performance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2193. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase penalties for individuals who illegally reenter the United States after being removed and for other purposes.

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–3199. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral (lower half) in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3200. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, five (5) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Defense, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3201. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Regulatory Capital Rules: Implementation of Risk-Based Capital Surcharges for Global Systemically Important Bank Holding Companies'' ((RIN7100–AE26) (12 CFR Parts 208 and 217)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3202. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 on November 14, 1979; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3203. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 on April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3204. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security,

Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revisions to the Unverified List (UVL)'' (RIN0694–AG72) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3205. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Updated Statements of Legal Authority for the Export Administration Regulations to Include Continuation of Emergency Declared in Executive Order 13224'' (RIN0694–AG75) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 15, 2015; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–3206. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Disturbance Monitoring and Reporting Requirements Reliability Standard'' ((RIN1902–AF02) (Docket No. RM15–4–000)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–3207. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: The 2016 Critical Use Exemption from the Phaseout of Methyl Bromide'' ((RIN2060–AS44) (FRL No. 9935–69–OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3208. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2-propen-1-aminium, N,N-dimethyl-N-propenyl-, chloride, homopolymer; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance'' (FRL No. 9933–98) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–3209. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Clean Air Act Redesignation Substitute for the Houston-Galveston-Brazoria 1-hour Ozone Nonattainment Area; Texas'' (FRL No. 9935–68–Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3210. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Albuquerque/Bernalillo County; Revisions to State Boards and Conflict of Interest Provisions'' (FRL No. 9935–53–Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3211. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Air Plan Approval; Michigan; 2006 PM2.5 and 2008 Lead NAAQS State Board Infrastructure SIP Requirements'' (FRL No. 9935–63–Region 5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3212. A communication from the Director of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''High Frequency Program: Application Guidance for Functional Confirmation and Fragility Evaluation'' received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3213. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force: 2015 Report to Congress''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3214. A communication from the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Medicare Payments for Clinical Laboratory Tests in 2014: Baseline Data''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3215. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Collection of Administrative Debts'' (RIN0960–AH36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3216. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Legislation, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Recovery Auditing in Medicare for Fiscal Year 2014''; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3217. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Information Reporting on Minimum Essential Coverage'' (Notice 2015–68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on September 22, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3218. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''U.S. Assistance for Palestinian Security Forces and Benchmarks for Palestinian Security Assistance Funds''; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3219. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2015–0103—2015–0116); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3220. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Visas: Procedures for Issuing Visas'' (RIN1400–AD84) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3221. A communication from the Director of Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''National Environmental Policy Act; Environmental Assessments for Tobacco Products; Categorical Exclusions'' (Docket No. FDA–2013–N–1282) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 5, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3222. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Federal Student Loan Repayment Program Calendar Year 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3223. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Scup Fishery; Adjustment to the 2015 Winter II Quota'' (RIN0648–XE156) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3224. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Bluefish Fishery; Quota Transfer'' (RIN0648–XE113) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3225. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2015 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Snowy Grouper'' (RIN0648–XE181) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3226. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2015 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper'' (RIN0648–XE186) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3227. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Reduction'' (RIN0648–XD779) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3228. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reapportionment of the 2015 Gulf of Alaska Pacific Halibut Prohibited Species Catch Limits for the Trawl Deep-Water and Shallow-Water Fishery Categories'' (RIN0648–XE180) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3229. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trip Limit Adjustment for the Common Pool Fishery'' (RIN0648–XE155) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3230. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United

States; Bluefish Fishery and Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for the State of Massachusetts'' (RIN0648–XE189) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3231. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries Off West Coast States; Modifications of the West Coast Commercial and Recreational Salmon Fisheries; Inseason Actions No. 30 Through No. 36'' (RIN0648–XE187) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3232. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher/Processors Using Trawl Gear in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Mexico'' (RIN0648–XE174) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3233. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chief Financial Officer, Department of Transportation, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3234. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Improving 911 Reliability; Reliability and Continuity of communications Networks, Including Broadband Technologies'' ((FCC 15–95) (PS Docket Nos. 13–75 and 11–60)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 13, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3235. A communication from the Deputy Chief of the Auctions and Spectrum Access Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Procedures for Competitive Bidding in Auction 1000, Including Initial Clearing Target Determinations, Qualifying to Bid, and Bidding in Auctions 1001 (Reverse) and 1002 (Forward)'' ((FCC 15–78) (AU Docket No. 14–252, GN Docket No. 12–268, WT Docket No. 12–269, and MB Docket No. 15–146)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3236. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendment to the Commission's Rules Concerning Market Modification; Implementation of Section 102 of the STELA Reauthorization Act of 2014'' ((FCC 15–111) (MB Docket No. 15–71)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3237. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''NASA Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workforce and Mission Critical Systems Personnel Reliability Program'' (RIN2700–AE17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 8, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. ISAKSON, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs:

Special Report entitled ''Legislative and Oversight Activities During the 113th Congress by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs'' (Rept. No. 114–156).

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. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. GARDNER):

S. 2187. A bill to establish a third-party quality system assessment program; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 2188. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the humanitarian device exemption; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. HELLER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. TESTER, Mr. DAINES, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 2189. A bill to reauthorize the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. TESTER:

S. 2190. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish a scholarship program for educators of rural students and provide for loan forgiveness for rural educators, to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide professional development grants for rural elementary schools and secondary schools, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2191. A bill to establish Federal-State higher education financing partnerships to drive down the cost of tuition for millions of American students; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCHUMER:

S. 2192. A bill to ensure that States submit all records of individuals who should be prohibited from buying a firearm to the national instant criminal background check system; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. PERDUE):

S. 2193. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase penalties for individuals who illegally reenter the United States after being removed and for other purposes; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KING, Mr. KAINE, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mr. WARNER, Mr. PERDUE, Ms. WARREN, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. Res. 291. A resolution honoring the lives of the 33 crew members aboard the *El Faro*; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 235

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 235, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 479

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 479, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail, and for other purposes.

S. 571

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 571, a bill to amend the Pilot's Bill of Rights to facilitate appeals and to apply to other certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, to require the revision of the third class medical certification regulations issued by the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes.

S. 804

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) 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. 1473

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1473, a bill to authorize the appropriation of funds to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for conducting or supporting research on firearms safety or gun violence prevention.

S. 1491

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1491, a bill to provide sensible relief to community financial institutions, to protect consumers, and for other purposes.

S. 1503

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to provide for enhanced Federal efforts concerning the prevention, education, treatment, and research activities related to Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases, including the establishment of a Tick-Borne Diseases Advisory Committee.

S. 1518

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1518, a bill to make exclusive the authority of the Federal Government to regulate the labeling of products made in the United States and introduced in interstate or foreign commerce, and for other purposes.

S. 1555

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) 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. 1631

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1631, a bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify certain provisions relating to multiemployer pensions, and for other purposes.

S. 1833

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) 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. 1856

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1856, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for suspension and removal of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance or misconduct that is a threat to public health or safety and to improve accountability of employees of the Department, and for other purposes.

S. 1964

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1964, a bill to amend parts B and E of title IV of the Social Security Act to invest in funding prevention and family services to help keep children safe and supported at home with their families, and for other purposes.

S. 1972

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1972, a bill to require air carriers to modify certain policies with respect to the use of epinephrine for inflight emergencies, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to authorize a Wall of Remembrance as part of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and to allow certain private contributions to fund the Wall of Remembrance.

S. 2034

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2034, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide additional aggravating factors for the imposition of the death penalty based on the status of the victim.

S. 2041

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2041, a bill to promote the development of safe drugs for neonates.

S. 2066

At the request of Mr. SASSE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2066, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

S. 2123

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2123, a bill to reform sentencing laws and correctional institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 2137

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) and the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) were added as cosponsors of S. 2137, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide a period for the relocation of spouses and dependents of certain members of the Armed Forces undergoing a permanent change of station in order to ease and facilitate the relocation of military families.

S. 2148

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2148, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to prevent an increase in the Medicare part B premium and deductible in 2016.

S. 2170

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2170, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the ability of health care professionals to treat veterans through the use of telemedicine, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 4

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 4, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 148

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 148, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

S. RES. 274

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 274, a resolution commemorating the 25th anniversary of the peaceful and democratic reunification of Germany.

AMENDMENT NO. 2548

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2548 proposed to S. 754, an original bill to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2564

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2564 proposed to S. 754, an original bill to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 291—HONORING THE LIVES OF THE 33 CREW MEMBERS ABOARD THE ''EL FARO''

Mr. RUBIO (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. KING, Mr. KAINE, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mr. WARNER, Mr. PERDUE, Ms. WARREN, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 291

Whereas the *El Faro* departed Jacksonville, Florida for Puerto Rico on September 29, 2015, with 33 crew members aboard;

Whereas the crew of the *El Faro* on September 29, 2015, consisted of 28 citizens of the United States and 5 Polish nationals;

Whereas the *El Faro* sent distress alerts on October 1, 2015;

Whereas members of the Coast Guard, Navy, and Air Force valiantly searched for the crew members of the *El Faro*; and

Whereas the people of the United States mourn the loss of the 33 seamen aboard the *El Faro*: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and honors the lives of the 33 crew members aboard the *El Faro* who were lost after the *El Faro* departed on September 29, 2015;

(2) recognizes the valiant search efforts of the members of the Coast Guard, Navy, and Air Force who searched for the crew members of the *El Faro*; and

(3) offers heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and loved ones of the crew members of the *El Faro*.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2720. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2721. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2722. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2723. Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2724. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2725. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2726. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2727. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2728. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2729. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2730. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2731. Ms. AYOTTE (for Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Ms. Ayotte to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2732. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2733. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2734. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2735. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2736. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table .

SA 2737. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2738. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2739. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2740. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2741. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2742. Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2743. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2744. Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2745. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2746. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2747. Mr. VITTER proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 208, to improve the disaster assistance programs of the Small Business Administration.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2720. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 16, line 9, insert ''make reasonable efforts to'' before ''review''.

On page 16, line 11, strike ''knows'' and insert ''reasonably believes''.

On page 16, line 17, insert ''identify and'' before ''remove''.

On page 16, line 19, strike ''knows'' and insert ''reasonably believes''.

SA 2721. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. REPORT ON ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE DATA BREACH OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term ''appropriate committees of Congress'' means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Homeland Security, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

(2) DATA BREACH.—The term ''data breach'' means the data breach of systems of the Office of Personnel Management that occurred during fiscal year 2015 which resulted in the theft of sensitive information of at least 21,500,000 Federal employees and their families.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress and make available to the public a report that—

(1) identifies the perpetrator, including any state sponsor, of the data breach;

(2) includes a plan to impose penalties on such perpetrator under United States law; and

(3) describes a strategy to initiate diplomatic discussions with any state sponsor of the data breach.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Identification of any individual perpetrator of the data breach, by name and nationality.

(2) Identification of any state sponsor of the data breach, including each agency of the government of the state sponsor that was responsible for authorizing, performing, or endorsing the data breach.

(3) A description of the actions proposed to penalize each individual identified under paragraph (1) under United States law.

(4) The strategy required by subsection (a)(3) shall include—

(A) a description of any action the President has undertaken to initiate or carry out diplomatic discussions with any state sponsor identified under paragraph (2); and

(B) a strategy to initiate or carry out diplomatic discussions in high-level forums and interactions during the 180-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2722. Mr. GARDNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. BIENNIAL CYBER REVIEW.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR REVIEW.—Beginning in 2016 and not less frequently than once every two years thereafter, the President shall complete a review of the cyber posture of the United States, including an unclassified summary of roles, missions, accomplishments, plans, and programs.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of each such review are—

(1) to assess the cyber security of the United States;

(2) to determine and express the cyber strategy of the United States; and

(3) to establish a revised cyber program for the next 2-year period.

(c) CONTENT.—Each review required by subsection (a) shall include—

(1) a comprehensive examination of the cyber strategy, force structure, personnel, modernization plans, infrastructure, and budget plan of the United States;

(2) an assessment of the ability of the United States to recover from a cyber emergency;

(3) an assessment of other elements of the cyber program of the United States;

(4) an assessment of critical national security infrastructure and data that is vulnerable to cyberattacks and cybertheft; and

(5) an assessment of international engagement efforts to establish viable norms of behavior in cyberspace to implement the 2011 International Strategy for Cyberspace.

(d) INVOLVEMENT OF CYBERSECURITY ADVISORY PANEL.—

(1) REQUIREMENT TO INFORM.—The President shall inform the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel established or designated under section _____, on an ongoing basis, of the actions carried out to conduct each review required by subsection (a).

(2) ASSESSMENT PRIOR TO COMPLETION OF REVIEW.—Not later than 1 year prior to the date of completion of each review required by subsection (a), the Chairman of the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel shall submit to the President, the assessment of such Panel of actions carried out to conduct the review as of the date of the submission, including any recommendations of the Panel for improvements to the review or for additional matters to be covered in the review.

(3) ASSESSMENT OF COMPLETED REVIEW.—At the time each review required by subsection (a) is completed and in time to be included in a report required by subsection (d), the Chairman of the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel shall submit to the President, on behalf of the Panel, an assessment of such review.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than September 30, 2016, and not less frequently than once every two years thereafter, the President shall submit to Congress a comprehensive report on each review required by subsection (a). Each report shall include—

(1) the results of the review, including a comprehensive discussion of the cyber strategy of the United States and the collaboration between the public and private sectors best suited to implement that strategy;

(2) a description of the threats examined for purposes of the review and the scenarios developed in the examination of such threats;

(3) the assumptions used in the review, including assumptions relating to the cooperation of other countries and levels of acceptable risk; and

(4) the assessment of the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel submitted under subsection (c)(3).

SEC. _____. CYBERSECURITY ADVISORY PANEL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish or designate a Cybersecurity Advisory Panel.

(b) APPOINTMENT.—The President—

(1) shall appoint as members of the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel representatives of industry, academic, nonprofit organizations, interest groups, and advocacy organizations, and State and local governments who are qualified to provide advice and information on cybersecurity research, development, demonstrations, education, personnel, technology transfer, commercial application, or societal and civil liberty concerns;

(2) shall appoint a Chairman of the Panel from among the members of the Panel; and

(3) may seek and give consideration to recommendations for appointments to the Panel from Congress, industry, the cybersecurity community, the defense community, State and local governments, and other appropriate organizations.

(c) DUTIES.—The Cybersecurity Advisory Panel shall advise the President on matters relating to the national cybersecurity program and strategy and shall assess—

(1) trends and developments in cybersecurity science research and development;

(2) progress made in implementing the strategy;

(3) the need to revise the strategy;

(4) the readiness and capacity of the Federal and national workforces to implement the national cybersecurity program and strategy, and the steps necessary to improve workforce readiness and capacity;

(5) the balance among the components of the national strategy, including funding for program components;

(6) whether the strategy, priorities, and goals are helping to maintain United States leadership and defense in cybersecurity;

(7) the management, coordination, implementation, and activities of the strategy;

(8) whether the concerns of Federal, State, and local law enforcement entities are adequately addressed; and

(9) whether societal and civil liberty concerns are adequately addressed.

(d) REPORTS.—Not less frequently than once every 4 years, the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel shall submit to the President a report on its assessments under subsection (c) and its recommendations for ways to improve the strategy.

(e) TRAVEL EXPENSES OF NON-FEDERAL MEMBERS.—Non-Federal members of the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel, while attending meetings of the Panel or while otherwise serving at the request of the head of the Panel while away from their homes or regular places of business, may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by section 5703 of title 5, United States Code, for individuals in the Government serving without pay. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit members of the Panel who are officers or employees of the United States from being allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with law.

(f) EXEMPTION FROM FACA SUNSET.—Section 14 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Cybersecurity Advisory Panel.

SA 2723. Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 408. AUDIT OF USE OF DEA ADMINISTRATIVE SUBPOENA AUTHORITY.

(a) AUDIT.—The Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall perform an audit of the effectiveness and use, including any improper or illegal use, of subpoenas issued pursuant to section 506 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 876).

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The audit required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) an examination of the use of subpoenas issued pursuant to section 506 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 876) during calendar years 2012 through 2014;

(2) a description of any noteworthy facts or circumstances relating to such use, including any improper or illegal use of such authority; and

(3) an examination of the effectiveness of subpoenas issued pursuant to section 506 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 876) as an investigative tool, including—

(A) the manner in which information acquired pursuant to such subpoenas is collected, retained, analyzed, and disseminated by the Department of Justice, including any direct access to such information (such as access to raw data) provided to any other department, agency, or instrumentality of the Federal Government, State, local, or tribal governments, or any private sector entity;

(B) whether, and how often, such information was used in civil and criminal proceedings; and

(C) whether, and how often, the Department of Justice used such information to produce an analytical intelligence product for distribution within the Department of Justice to the intelligence community (as defined in section 3 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003)) or to any other department, agency, or instrumentality of the Federal Government or of a State, local, or tribal government.

(c) SUBMISSION DATES.—

(1) PRIOR YEARS.—The Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report containing the results of the audit conducted under this section for calendar years 2012 through 2014 not later than the earlier of—

(A) 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act; or

(B) the date on which the audit required under this section for calendar years 2012 through 2014 is completed.

(2) CALENDAR YEARS 2015 THROUGH 2017.—The Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives a report containing the results of the audit conducted under this section for calendar years 2015 through 2017 not later than the earlier of—

(A) December 31, 2018; or

(B) the date on which the audit required under this section for calendar years 2015 through 2017 is completed.

(3) DELAY OF EXISTING REVIEWS PROHIBITED.—The Inspector General of the Department of Justice shall not delay the completion of any review commenced before the date of enactment of this Act pertaining to subpoenas issued pursuant to section 506 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 876) pending the completion of the reports required by this section.

SA 2724. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 86, line 26, insert ''the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and'' after ''in coordination with''.

SA 2725. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 89, line 23, insert ", the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology," after "Director".

SA 2726. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 91, line 21, insert ", in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology," after "Security".

SA 2727. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 92, line 9, insert ", in consultation with the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology," after "Secretary".

SA 2728. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 103, line 12, insert "the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and" after "consultation with".

SA 2729. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 111, strike lines 21 through 24, and insert the following:

(E) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

(F) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives; and

(G) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

SA 2730. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 85, strike lines 12 through 20, and insert the following:

(D) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives;

(F) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(G) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives; and

(H) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

SA 2731. Ms. AYOTTE (for Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Ms. AYOTTE to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the Sense of the Senate that the Memorandum Opinion for the Assistant Attorney General dated September 20, 2011, does not carry the force of law and the Senate is concerned with the cybersecurity implications of activities undertaken in reliance of such Opinion, including the potential for thefts of personally identifiable information, and the participation in such activities by entities, including successors of such entities, charged or sued by the Government with respect to such activities, with a violation of subchapter IV of chapter 53 of title 31, United States Code, or any other Federal statute relating to monetary transactions.

SA 2732. Mr. MCCAIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 501. EXPANSION OF CHOICE PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ELIMINATION OF SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (p); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (q), (r), (s), and (t) as subsections (p), (q), (r), and (s), respectively.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such section is amended—

(A) in subsection (i)(2), by striking "during the period in which the Secretary is authorized to carry out this section pursuant to subsection (p)"; and

(B) in subsection (p)(2), as redesignated by paragraph (1)(B), by striking subparagraph (F).

(b) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended to read as follows:

"(b) ELIGIBLE VETERANS.—A veteran is an eligible veteran for purposes of this section if 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.".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such section is amended—

(A) in subsection (c)(1)—

(i) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking "In the case of an eligible veteran described in subsection (b)(2)(A), the Secretary shall, at the election of the eligible veteran" and inserting "The Secretary shall, at the election of an eligible veteran"; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by striking "described in such subsection" and inserting "of the Veterans Health Administration";

(B) in subsection (f)(1), by striking "subsection (b)(1)" and inserting "subsection (b)";

(C) in subsection (g), by striking paragraph (3); and

(D) in subsection (p)(2)(A), as redesignated by subsection (a)(1)(B), by striking ", disaggregated by—" and all that follows through "subsection (b)(2)(D)".

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to hospital care and medical services furnished under section 101 of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (Public Law 113–146; 38 U.S.C. 1701 note) on and after the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2733. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 48, between lines 6 and 7, insert the following:

(c) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS BY FEDERAL ENTITIES OF RESTRICTIONS ON DISCLOSURE, USE, AND PROTECTION OF VOLUNTARILY SHARED CYBER THREAT INDICATORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If a department or agency of the Federal Government knowingly or recklessly violates the requirements of this Act with respect to the disclosure, use, or protection of voluntarily shared cyber threat indicators, the United States shall be liable to a person adversely affected by such violation in an amount equal to the sum of—

(A) the actual damages sustained by the person as a result of the violation or $50,000, whichever is greater; and

(B) the costs of the action together with reasonable attorney fees as determined by the court.

(2) VENUE.—An action to enforce liability created under this subsection may be brought in the district court of the United States in—

(A) the district in which the complainant resides;

(B) the district in which the principal place of business of the complainant is located;

(C) the district in which the department or agency of the Federal Government that disclosed the information is located; or

(D) the District of Columbia.

(3) STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.—No action shall lie under this subsection unless such

action is commenced not later than two years after the person adversely affected by a violation described in paragraph (1) first learns, or by which such person reasonably should have learned, of the facts and circumstances giving rise to the action.

SA 2734. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 47, between lines 7 and 8, insert the following:

(c) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION FOR VIOLATIONS BY FEDERAL ENTITIES OF RESTRICTIONS ON DISCLOSURE, USE, AND PROTECTION OF VOLUNTARILY SHARED CYBER THREAT INDICATORS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If a department or agency of the Federal Government knowingly or recklessly violates the requirements of this Act with respect to the disclosure, use, or protection of voluntarily shared cyber threat indicators, the United States shall be liable to a person adversely affected by such violation in an amount equal to the sum of—

(A) the actual damages sustained by the person as a result of the violation or $1,000, whichever is greater; and

(B) the costs of the action together with reasonable attorney fees as determined by the court.

(2) VENUE.—An action to enforce liability created under this subsection may be brought in the district court of the United States in—

(A) the district in which the complainant resides;

(B) the district in which the principal place of business of the complainant is located;

(C) the district in which the department or agency of the Federal Government that disclosed the information is located; or

(D) the District of Columbia.

(3) STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.—No action shall lie under this subsection unless such action is commenced not later than two years after the person adversely affected by a violation described in paragraph (1) first learns, or by which such person reasonably should have learned, of the facts and circumstances giving rise to the action.

SA 2735. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 9, between lines 11 and 12, insert the following:

(16) REAL TIME; REAL-TIME.—The terms ''real time'' and ''real-time'' means as close to real time as practicable.

(17) DELAY.—The term ''delay'', with respect to the sharing of a cyber threat indicator, excludes any time necessary to ensure that the cyber threat indicator shared does not contain any personally identifiable information not needed to describe or identify a cybersecurity threat.

(18) MODIFICATION.—The term ''modification'', with respect to the sharing of a cyber threat indicator, excludes any process necessary to ensure that the cyber threat indicator modified does not contain any personally identifiable information not needed to describe or identify a cybersecurity threat.

SA 2736. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. PROHIBITION ON THE INDEFINITE DETENTION OF PERSONS BY THE UNITED STATES.

(a) LIMITATION ON DETENTION.—Section 4001 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (a) and inserting the following:

''(a) No person shall be imprisoned or otherwise detained by the United States except consistent with the Constitution.'';

(2) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (a) the following:

''(b)(1) A general authorization to use military force, a declaration of war, or any similar authority, on its own, shall not be construed to authorize the imprisonment or detention without charge or trial of a person apprehended in the United States.

''(2) Paragraph (1) applies to an authorization to use military force, a declaration of war, or any similar authority enacted before, on, or after the date of the enactment of the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act of 2015.

''(3) This section shall not be construed to authorize the imprisonment or detention of any person who is apprehended in the United States.''.

(b) REPEAL OF AUTHORITY OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES TO DETAIN COVERED PERSONS PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE.—Section 1021 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81; 10 U.S.C. 801 note) is repealed.

SA 2737. Mr. MANCHIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 16, strike lines 4 through 10, and insert the following:

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) AUTHORIZATION.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B) and paragraph (2) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, an entity may, for the purposes permitted under this Act and consistent with the protection of classified information, share with, or receive from, any other entity or the Federal Government a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure.

(B) EXCEPTION FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), no entity is permitted under this Act to share with the Department of Defense or any component of the Department, including the National Security Agency, a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure.

SA 2738. Mr. BOOKER (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 32, between lines 20 and 21, insert the following:

(6) LIMITATION ON RECEIPT OF CYBER THREAT INDICATORS.—A Federal entity may not receive a cyber threat indicator that another Federal entity shared through the process developed and implemented under paragraph (1) unless the Inspector General of the receiving Federal entity certifies that the receiving Federal entity meets the data security standard for receiving such a cyber threat indicator, as established by the Secretary of Homeland Security.

On page 52, strike line 14 and insert the following:

SEC. 10. REPORT ON REDUCTION OF CYBERSECURITY RISK IN AGENCY DATA CENTERS.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives a report on the feasibility of Federal civilian agencies creating an environment for the reduction in cybersecurity risks in agency data centers, including by—

(1) increasing compartmentalization between systems; and

(2) providing a mix of security controls between such compartments.

SEC. 11. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

SA 2739. Mr. REED submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. CYBERSECURITY TRANSPARENCY.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''Commission'' means the Securities and Exchange Commission;

(2) the term ''issuer'' has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78c); and

(3) the term ''reporting company'' means any company that is an issuer—

(A) the securities of which are registered under section 12 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 781); or

(B) that is required to file reports under section 15(d) of such Act (15 U.S.C. 78o(d)).

(b) REQUIREMENT TO ISSUE RULES.—Not later than 360 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue final rules to require each reporting company, in the annual report submitted under section 13 or section 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m and 78o(d)) or the annual proxy statement submitted under section 14(a) of such Act (15 U.S.C. 78n(a))—

(1) to disclose whether any member of the governing body, such as the board of directors or general partner, of the reporting company is a cybersecurity expert (based on minimum standards established by the Commission, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security and the National

Institute of Standards and Technology), in such detail as necessary to fully describe the nature of the expertise; and

(2) if no member of the governing body of the reporting company is a cybersecurity expert, to briefly describe how the absence of such expertise was taken into account by such persons responsible for identifying and evaluating nominees for any member of the governing body, such as a nominating committee.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—In establishing the minimum standards for a cybersecurity expert for purposes of subsection (b), the Commission, in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall consider whether a person has substantive experience with preventing and addressing cybersecurity threats.

SA 2740. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall—

(1) conduct a cost-benefit analysis for small business concerns (as defined in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)) adopting measures for the sharing of cyber threat indicators and information related to cybersecurity threats; and

(2) submit to Congress a report detailing the results of the cost-benefit analysis conducted under paragraph (1).

SA 2741. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY ON IMPROVING THE CYBERSECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Under Secretary for Industry and Security, shall submit to Congress a comprehensive strategy for improving the cybersecurity of the United States.

SA 2742. Mr. CARPER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, line 22, insert ''the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and'' before ''the Director of National Intelligence''.

On page 77, line 14, insert ''the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and'' before ''the Director of National Intelligence''.

On page 78, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to designate an information system as a national security system.

On page 78, line 18, strike ''owned'' and insert ''used''.

Beginning on page 80, line 25, strike ''use'' and all that follows through ''other'' on page 81, line 6, and insert ''intrusion detection and prevention capabilities under section 230(b)(1) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 for the purpose of ensuring the security of''.

SA 2743. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 113, strike line 1 and all that follows through page 114, line 6.

SA 2744. Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 408. GAO REPORT ON CELL-SITE SIMULATORS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than September 30, 2017, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report regarding the use of cell-site simulators (commonly known as ''IMSI catchers'') by Federal, State, and local agencies inside the United States, which shall include to the extent that information is available—

(1) a list of each Federal, State, and local agency that uses cell-site simulators, and for what purposes;

(2) an explanation of the approval process that Federal, State, and local agencies require prior to use of cell-site simulators, including whether such agencies have written policies;

(3) the number of State and local agencies that are subject to non-disclosure agreements with respect to the use of cell-site simulators, and an analysis of whether the non-disclosure agreements are necessary in light of publicly available information about government use of the devices;

(4) the extent to which the Federal Government is providing or funding the purchase of cell-site simulators for State and local agencies, including which Federal grants are used for such purpose;

(5) an explanation of whether Federal, State, and local agencies obtain judicial approval prior to deployment of cell-site simulators, and if so, what type and with what frequency;

(6) an examination of whether court applications seeking approval for the use of cell-site simulators sufficiently explain how the devices work, including—

(A) whether the devices collect information about non-target phones;

(B) the extent to which the devices disrupt service to non-target phones; and

(C) how each Federal, State, or local agency intends to address deletion of data not associated with the target phone;

(7) whether any Federal, State, or local agencies are using cell-site simulators to obtain the contents of communications or for purposes other than locating a particular cellular device;

(8) whether Federal, State, or local agencies have policies or procedures governing the deletion of information collected by cell-site simulators;

(9) an evaluation of whether Federal, State, or local agencies have adequate training and auditing mechanisms in place regarding the use of cell-site simulators;

(10) an evaluation of compliance by the Department of Justice its components with Department of Justice policy guidance governing the use of cell-site simulator technology; and

(11) an evaluation of compliance by the Department of Homeland Security and its components with Department of Homeland Security policy guidance governing the use of cell-site simulator technology.

SA 2745. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Mr. LEAHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2716 proposed by Mr. BURR (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 14, strike line 4 and all that follows through page 39, line 21, and insert the following:

(b) AUTHORIZATION FOR OPERATION OF DEFENSIVE MEASURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a private entity may, for cybersecurity purposes, operate a defensive measure that is applied to—

(A) an information system of such private entity in order to protect the rights or property of the private entity;

(B) an information system of another entity upon written consent of such entity for operation of such defensive measure to protect the rights or property of such entity; and

(C) an information system of a Federal entity upon written consent of an authorized representative of such Federal entity for operation of such defensive measure to protect the rights or property of the Federal Government.

(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed—

(A) to authorize the use of a defensive measure other than as provided in this subsection; or

(B) to limit otherwise lawful activity.

(c) AUTHORIZATION FOR SHARING OR RECEIVING CYBER THREAT INDICATORS OR DEFENSIVE MEASURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, an entity may, for a cybersecurity purpose and consistent with the protection of classified information, share with, or receive from, any other entity or the Federal Government a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure.

(2) LAWFUL RESTRICTION.—An entity receiving a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure from another entity or Federal entity shall comply with otherwise lawful restrictions placed on the sharing or use of such cyber threat indicator or defensive measure by the sharing entity or Federal entity.

(3) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed—

(A) to authorize the sharing or receiving of a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure other than as provided in this subsection; or

(B) to limit otherwise lawful activity.

(d) PROTECTION AND USE OF INFORMATION.—

(1) SECURITY OF INFORMATION.—An entity operating a defensive measure or providing or receiving a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure under this section shall implement and utilize a security control to protect against unauthorized access to or acquisition of such cyber threat indicator or defensive measure.

(2) REMOVAL OF CERTAIN PERSONAL INFORMATION.—An entity sharing a cyber threat indicator pursuant to this title shall, prior to such sharing—

(A) review such cyber threat indicator to assess whether such cyber threat indicator contains any information that the entity knows at the time of sharing to be personal information or information that identifies a specific person not directly related to a cybersecurity threat and remove such information; or

(B) implement and utilize a technical capability configured to remove any information contained within such indicator that the entity knows at the time of sharing to be personal information or information that identifies a specific person not directly related to a cybersecurity threat.

(3) USE OF CYBER THREAT INDICATORS AND DEFENSIVE MEASURES BY ENTITIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Consistent with this title, a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure shared or received under this section may, for cybersecurity purposes—

(i) be used by an entity to operate a defensive measure that is applied to—

(I) an information system of the entity; or

(II) an information system of another entity or a Federal entity upon the written consent of that other entity or that Federal entity; and

(ii) be otherwise used, retained, and further shared by an entity subject to—

(I) an otherwise lawful restriction placed by the sharing entity or Federal entity on such cyber threat indicator or defensive measure; or

(II) an otherwise applicable provision of law.

(B) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to authorize the use of a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure other than as provided in this section.

(4) USE OF CYBER THREAT INDICATORS BY STATE, TRIBAL, OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—

(A) LAW ENFORCEMENT USE.—

(i) PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT.—Except as provided in clause (ii), a cyber threat indicator shared with a State, tribal, or local government under this section may, with the prior written consent of the entity sharing such indicator, be used by a State, tribal, or local government for the purpose of preventing, investigating, or prosecuting any of the offenses described in section 105(d)(5)(A)(vi).

(ii) ORAL CONSENT.—If exigent circumstances prevent obtaining written consent under clause (i), such consent may be provided orally with subsequent documentation of the consent.

(B) EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE.—A cyber threat indicator shared with a State, tribal, or local government under this section shall be—

(i) deemed voluntarily shared information; and

(ii) exempt from disclosure under any State, tribal, or local law requiring disclosure of information or records.

(C) STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure shared with a State, tribal, or local government under this title shall not be directly used by any State, tribal, or local government to regulate, including an enforcement action, the lawful activity of any entity, including an activity relating to operating a defensive measure or sharing of a cyber threat indicator.

(ii) REGULATORY AUTHORITY SPECIFICALLY RELATING TO PREVENTION OR MITIGATION OF CYBERSECURITY THREATS.—A cyber threat indicator or defensive measures shared as described in clause (i) may, consistent with a State, tribal, or local government regulatory authority specifically relating to the prevention or mitigation of cybersecurity threats to information systems, inform the development or implementation of a regulation relating to such information systems.

(e) ANTITRUST EXEMPTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in section 108(e), it shall not be considered a violation of any provision of antitrust laws for 2 or more private entities to exchange or provide a cyber threat indicator, or assistance relating to the prevention, investigation, or mitigation of a cybersecurity threat, for cybersecurity purposes under this title.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—Paragraph (1) shall apply only to information that is exchanged or assistance provided in order to assist with—

(A) facilitating the prevention, investigation, or mitigation of a cybersecurity threat to an information system or information that is stored on, processed by, or transiting an information system; or

(B) communicating or disclosing a cyber threat indicator to help prevent, investigate, or mitigate the effect of a cybersecurity threat to an information system or information that is stored on, processed by, or transiting an information system.

(f) NO RIGHT OR BENEFIT.—The sharing of a cyber threat indicator with an entity under this title shall not create a right or benefit to similar information by such entity or any other entity.

SEC. 105. SHARING OF CYBER THREAT INDICATORS AND DEFENSIVE MEASURES WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—

(1) INTERIM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall, in coordination with the heads of the appropriate Federal entities, develop and submit to Congress interim policies and procedures relating to the receipt of cyber threat indicators and defensive measures by the Federal Government.

(2) FINAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall, in coordination with the heads of the appropriate Federal entities, promulgate final policies and procedures relating to the receipt of cyber threat indicators and defensive measures by the Federal Government.

(3) REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.—Consistent with the guidelines required by subsection (b), the policies and procedures developed and promulgated under this subsection shall—

(A) ensure that cyber threat indicators shared with the Federal Government by any entity pursuant to section 104(c) through the real-time process described in subsection (c) of this section—

(i) are shared in an automated manner with all of the appropriate Federal entities;

(ii) are only subject to a delay, modification, or other action due to controls established for such real-time process that could impede real-time receipt by all of the appropriate Federal entities when the delay, modification, or other action is due to controls—

(I) agreed upon unanimously by all of the heads of the appropriate Federal entities;

(II) carried out before any of the appropriate Federal entities retains or uses the cyber threat indicators or defensive measures; and

(III) uniformly applied such that each of the appropriate Federal entities is subject to the same delay, modification, or other action; and

(iii) may be provided to other Federal entities;

(B) ensure that cyber threat indicators shared with the Federal Government by any entity pursuant to section 104 in a manner other than the real time process described in subsection (c) of this section—

(i) are shared as quickly as operationally practicable with all of the appropriate Federal entities;

(ii) are not subject to any unnecessary delay, interference, or any other action that could impede receipt by all of the appropriate Federal entities; and

(iii) may be provided to other Federal entities;

(C) consistent with this title, any other applicable provisions of law, and the fair information practice principles set forth in appendix A of the document entitled ''National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace'' and published by the President in April, 2011, govern the retention, use, and dissemination by the Federal Government of cyber threat indicators shared with the Federal Government under this title, including the extent, if any, to which such cyber threat indicators may be used by the Federal Government; and

(D) ensure there are—

(i) audit capabilities; and

(ii) appropriate sanctions in place for officers, employees, or agents of a Federal entity who knowingly and willfully conduct activities under this title in an unauthorized manner.

(4) GUIDELINES FOR ENTITIES SHARING CYBER THREAT INDICATORS WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security shall develop and make publicly available guidance to assist entities and promote sharing of cyber threat indicators with Federal entities under this title.

(B) CONTENTS.—The guidelines developed and made publicly available under subparagraph (A) shall include guidance on the following:

(i) Identification of types of information that would qualify as a cyber threat indicator under this title that would be unlikely to include personal information or information that identifies a specific person not directly related to a cyber security threat.

(ii) Identification of types of information protected under otherwise applicable privacy laws that are unlikely to be directly related to a cybersecurity threat.

(iii) Such other matters as the Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security consider appropriate for entities sharing cyber threat indicators with Federal entities under this title.

(b) PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES.—

(1) GUIDELINES OF ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall, in coordination with heads of the appropriate Federal entities and in consultation with officers designated under section 1062 of the National Security Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 2000ee–1), develop, submit to Congress, and make available to the public interim guidelines relating to privacy and civil liberties which shall govern the receipt, retention, use, and dissemination of cyber threat indicators by a Federal entity obtained in connection with activities authorized in this title.

(2) FINAL GUIDELINES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall, in coordination with heads of the appropriate Federal entities and in consultation with officers designated under section 1062 of the National Security Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 (42 U.S.C. 2000ee–1) and such private entities with industry expertise as the Attorney General considers relevant, promulgate final guidelines relating to privacy and civil liberties which shall govern the receipt, retention, use, and dissemination of cyber threat indicators by a Federal entity obtained in connection with activities authorized in this title.

(B) PERIODIC REVIEW.—The Attorney General shall, in coordination with heads of the appropriate Federal entities and in consultation with officers and private entities described in subparagraph (A), periodically, but not less frequently than once every two years, review the guidelines promulgated under subparagraph (A).

(3) CONTENT.—The guidelines required by paragraphs (1) and (2) shall, consistent with the need to protect information systems from cybersecurity threats and mitigate cybersecurity threats—

(A) limit the effect on privacy and civil liberties of activities by the Federal Government under this title;

(B) limit the receipt, retention, use, and dissemination of cyber threat indicators containing personal information or information that identifies specific persons, including by establishing—

(i) a process for the timely destruction of such information that is known not to be directly related to uses authorized under this title; and

(ii) specific limitations on the length of any period in which a cyber threat indicator may be retained;

(C) include requirements to safeguard cyber threat indicators containing personal information or information that identifies specific persons from unauthorized access or acquisition, including appropriate sanctions for activities by officers, employees, or agents of the Federal Government in contravention of such guidelines;

(D) include procedures for notifying entities and Federal entities if information received pursuant to this section is known or determined by a Federal entity receiving such information not to constitute a cyber threat indicator;

(E) protect the confidentiality of cyber threat indicators containing personal information or information that identifies specific persons to the greatest extent practicable and require recipients to be informed that such indicators may only be used for purposes authorized under this title; and

(F) include steps that may be needed so that dissemination of cyber threat indicators is consistent with the protection of classified and other sensitive national security information.

(c) CAPABILITY AND PROCESS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the heads of the appropriate Federal entities, shall develop and implement a capability and process within the Department of Homeland Security that—

(A) shall accept from any entity in real time cyber threat indicators and defensive measures, pursuant to this section;

(B) shall, upon submittal of the certification under paragraph (2) that such capability and process fully and effectively operates as described in such paragraph, be the process by which the Federal Government receives cyber threat indicators and defensive measures under this title that are shared by a private entity with the Federal Government through electronic mail or media, an interactive form on an Internet website, or a real time, automated process between information systems except—

(i) consistent with section 104, communications between a Federal entity and a private entity regarding a previously shared cyber threat indicator to describe the relevant cybersecurity threat or develop a defensive measure based on such cyber threat indicator; and

(ii) communications by a regulated entity with such entity's Federal regulatory authority regarding a cybersecurity threat;

(C) ensures that all of the appropriate Federal entities receive in an automated manner such cyber threat indicators shared through the real-time process within the Department of Homeland Security;

(D) is in compliance with the policies, procedures, and guidelines required by this section; and

(E) does not limit or prohibit otherwise lawful disclosures of communications, records, or other information, including—

(i) reporting of known or suspected criminal activity, by an entity to any other entity or a Federal entity;

(ii) voluntary or legally compelled participation in a Federal investigation; and

(iii) providing cyber threat indicators or defensive measures as part of a statutory or authorized contractual requirement.

(2) CERTIFICATION.—Not later than 10 days prior to the implementation of the capability and process required by paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall, in consultation with the heads of the appropriate Federal entities, certify to Congress whether such capability and process fully and effectively operates—

(A) as the process by which the Federal Government receives from any entity a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure under this title; and

(B) in accordance with the policies, procedures, and guidelines developed under this section.

(3) PUBLIC NOTICE AND ACCESS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure there is public notice of, and access to, the capability and process developed and implemented under paragraph (1) so that—

(A) any entity may share cyber threat indicators and defensive measures through such process with the Federal Government; and

(B) all of the appropriate Federal entities receive such cyber threat indicators and defensive measures in real time with receipt through the process within the Department of Homeland Security.

(4) OTHER FEDERAL ENTITIES.—The process developed and implemented under paragraph (1) shall ensure that other Federal entities receive in a timely manner any cyber threat indicators and defensive measures shared with the Federal Government through such process.

(5) REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to Congress a report on the development and implementation of the capability and process required by paragraph (1), including a description of such capability and process and the public notice of, and access to, such process.

(B) CLASSIFIED ANNEX.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) INFORMATION SHARED WITH OR PROVIDED TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.—

(1) NO WAIVER OF PRIVILEGE OR PROTECTION.—The provision of cyber threat indicators and defensive measures to the Federal Government under this title shall not constitute a waiver of any applicable privilege or protection provided by law, including trade secret protection.

(2) PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—Consistent with section 104(c)(2), a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure provided by an entity to the Federal Government under this title shall be considered the commercial, financial, and proprietary information of such entity when so designated by the originating entity or a third party acting in accordance with the written authorization of the originating entity.

(3) EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE.—Cyber threat indicators and defensive measures provided to the Federal Government under this title shall be—

(A) deemed voluntarily shared information and exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, and any State, tribal, or local law requiring disclosure of information or records; and

(B) withheld, without discretion, from the public under section 552(b)(3)(B) of title 5, United States Code, and any State, tribal, or local provision of law requiring disclosure of information or records.

(4) EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS.—The provision of a cyber threat indicator or defensive measure to the Federal Government under this title shall not be subject to a rule of any Federal agency or department or any judicial doctrine regarding ex parte communications with a decision-making official.

(5) DISCLOSURE, RETENTION, AND USE.—

(A) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Cyber threat indicators and defensive measures provided to the Federal Government under this title may be disclosed to, retained by, and used by, consistent with otherwise applicable provisions of Federal law, any Federal agency or department, component, officer, employee, or agent of the Federal Government solely for—

(i) a cybersecurity purpose;

(ii) the purpose of identifying a cybersecurity threat, including the source of such cybersecurity threat, or a security vulnerability;

(iii) the purpose of identifying a cybersecurity threat involving the use of an information system by a foreign adversary or terrorist;

(iv) the purpose of responding to, or otherwise preventing or mitigating, an imminent threat of death, serious bodily harm, or serious economic harm, including a terrorist act or a use of a weapon of mass destruction;

(v) the purpose of responding to, or otherwise preventing or mitigating, a serious threat to a minor, including sexual exploitation and threats to physical safety; or

(vi) the purpose of preventing, investigating, disrupting, or prosecuting an offense arising out of a threat described in clause (iv) or any of the offenses listed in—

(I) sections 1028 through 1030 of title 18, United States Code (relating to fraud and identity theft);

(II) chapter 37 of such title (relating to espionage and censorship); and

(III) chapter 90 of such title (relating to protection of trade secrets).

(B) PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES.—Cyber threat indicators and defensive measures provided to the Federal Government under this title shall not be disclosed to, retained by, or used by any Federal agency or department for any use not permitted under subparagraph (A).

(C) PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES.—Cyber threat indicators and defensive measures provided to the Federal Government under this title shall be retained, used, and disseminated by the Federal Government—

(i) in accordance with the policies, procedures, and guidelines required by subsections (a) and (b);

(ii) in a manner that protects from unauthorized use or disclosure any cyber threat indicators that may contain personal information or information that identifies specific persons; and

(iii) in a manner that protects the confidentiality of cyber threat indicators containing personal information or information that identifies a specific person.

(D) FEDERAL REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), cyber threat indicators and defensive measures provided to the Federal Government under this title shall not be directly used by any Federal, State, tribal, or local government to regulate, including an enforcement action, the lawful activities of any entity, including activities relating to operating defensive measures or sharing cyber threat indicators.

(ii) EXCEPTIONS.—

(I) REGULATORY AUTHORITY SPECIFICALLY RELATING TO PREVENTION OR MITIGATION OF CYBERSECURITY THREATS.—Cyber threat indicators and defensive measures provided to the Federal Government under this title may, consistent with Federal or State regulatory authority specifically relating to the prevention or mitigation of cybersecurity threats to information systems, inform the development or implementation of regulations relating to such information systems.

(II) PROCEDURES DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED UNDER THIS TITLE.—Clause (i) shall not apply to procedures developed and implemented under this title.

SEC. 106. PROTECTION FROM LIABILITY.

SA 2746. Mr. BURR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 11, line 3, strike ''period'' and insert ''periodic''.

On page 20, line 21, strike ''measures'' and insert ''measure''.

On page 56, line 8, strike ''and'' and all that follows through ''(7)'' on line 9 and insert the following:

(7) the term ''national security system'' has the meaning given the term in section 11103 of title 40, United States Code; and

(8)

On page 57, line 8, strike ''and''.

On page 57, line 11, strike the period at the end and insert ''; and''.

On page 57, between lines 11 and 12, insert the following:

''(4) the term 'national security system' has the meaning given the term in section 11103 of title 40, United States Code.

On page 64, lines 14 and 15, strike ''Notwithstanding section 202, in this subsection'' and insert ''In this subsection only''.

On page 69, line 13, strike ''all taken'' and insert ''taken all''.

On page 76, line 22, insert ''and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget'' after ''Intelligence''.

On page 77, lines 12 and 13, strike '', as defined in section 11103 of title 40, United States Code''.

On page 77, line 14, insert ''and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget'' after ''Intelligence''.

On page 78, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to designate an information system as a national security system.

On page 78, line 18, strike ''owned'' and insert ''used''.

Beginning on page 80, line 25, strike ''use'' and all that follows through ''other'' on page 81, line 6, and insert ''intrusion detection and prevention capabilities under section 230(b)(1) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 for the purpose of ensuring the security of''.

On page 84, line 25, strike ''Act'' and insert ''Act of 2015''.

On page 88, line 8, strike ''non-civilian'' and insert ''noncivilian''.

On page 91, line 11, strike ''203 and 204'' and insert ''303 and 304''.

On page 96, line 19, strike ''likely,'' and insert ''likely''.

On page 96, line 22, strike ''present'' and insert ''present,''.

On page 107, line 10, strike ''shall each'' and insert ''shall''.

On page 107, lines 11 and 12, strike ''each Comptroller General of the United States and''.

On page 110, strikes lines 6 through 16.

On page 114, line 7, strike ''SENATE'' and insert ''SENSE''.

SA 2747. Mr. VITTER proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 208, to improve the disaster assistance programs of the Small Business Administration; as follows:

On page 2, strike lines 1 through 5 and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''Recovery Improvements for Small Entities After Disaster Act of 2015'' or the ''RISE After Disaster Act of 2015''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

DIVISION A—SUPERSTORM SANDY RELIEF AND DISASTER LOAN PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

Sec. 1001. Short title.
Sec. 1002. Findings.

TITLE I—DISASTER ASSISTANCE IMPROVEMENTS

1101. Revised disaster deadline.
1102. Use of physical damage disaster loans to construct safe rooms.
1103. Reducing delays on closing and disbursement of loans.
1104. Safeguarding taxpayer interests and increasing transparency in loan approvals.
1105. Disaster plan improvements.

DIVISION B—RECOVERY IMPROVEMENTS FOR SMALL ENTITIES

Sec. 2001. Short title.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENTS OF DISASTER RESPONSE AND LOANS

Sec. 2101. Additional awards to small business development centers, women's business centers, and SCORE for disaster recovery.
Sec. 2102. Collateral requirements for disaster loans.
Sec. 2103. Assistance to out-of-State business concerns to aid in disaster recovery.
Sec. 2105. FAST program.
Sec. 2106. Use of Federal surplus property in disaster areas.
Sec. 2107. Recovery opportunity loans.
Sec. 2108. Contractor malfeasance.
Sec. 2109. Local contracting preferences and incentives.
Sec. 2110. Clarification of collateral requirements.

TITLE II—DISASTER PLANNING AND MITIGATION

Sec. 2201. Business recovery centers.

TITLE III—OTHER PROVISIONS

Sec. 2301. Increased oversight of economic injury disaster loans.
Sec. 2302. GAO report on paperwork reduction.
Sec. 2303. Report on web portal for disaster loan applicants.

DIVISION A—SUPERSTORM SANDY RELIEF AND DISASTER LOAN PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

SEC. 1001. SHORT TITLE.

This division may be cited as the ''Superstorm Sandy Relief and Disaster Loan Program Improvement Act of 2015''.

SEC. 1002. FINDINGS.

On page 3, strike line 5 and insert the following:

TITLE I—DISASTER ASSISTANCE IMPROVEMENTS

SEC. 1101. REVISED DISASTER DEADLINE.

On page 3, line 14, insert ''nonprofit entity,'' after ''homeowner,''.

On page 4, line 9, strike the quotation marks and the second period and insert the following:

''(C) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—Not later than 6 months after the date on which the Administrator begins carrying out this authority, the Inspector General of the Administration shall initiate a review of the controls for ensuring applicant eligibility for loans made under this paragraph.''.

On page 4, line 10, strike ''**SEC. 4.**'' and insert ''**SEC. 1102.**''.

On page 4, line 24, insert '', if such safe room or similar storm shelter is constructed in accordance with applicable standards issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency'' after ''disasters''.

On page 5, strike lines 1 through 21 and insert the following:

SEC. 1103. REDUCING DELAYS ON CLOSING AND DISBURSEMENT OF LOANS.

Section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) is amended by inserting before the undesignated matter following paragraph (9) the following:

On page 5, line 22, strike ''(11)'' and insert ''(10)''.

On page 6, strike lines 5 through 8 and insert the following:

SEC. 1104. SAFEGUARDING TAXPAYER INTERESTS AND INCREASING TRANSPARENCY IN LOAN APPROVALS.

Section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) is amended by inserting before the undesignated matter following paragraph (10), as added by section 1103 of this Act, the following:

On page 6, line 9, strike ''(12)'' and insert ''(11)''.

Beginning on page 6, strike line 14 and all that follows through page 7, line 20, and insert the following:

SEC. 1105. DISASTER PLAN IMPROVEMENTS.

Beginning on page 8, strike line 6 and all that follows through page 9, line 6, and insert the following:

DIVISION B—RECOVERY IMPROVEMENTS FOR SMALL ENTITIES

SECTION 2001. SHORT TITLE.

This division may be cited as the ''Recovery Improvements for Small Entities After Disaster Act of 2015'' or the ''RISE After Disaster Act of 2015''.

TITLE I—IMPROVEMENTS OF DISASTER RESPONSE AND LOANS

SEC. 2101. ADDITIONAL AWARDS TO SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS, WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS, AND SCORE FOR DISASTER RECOVERY.

Section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) is amended by inserting before the undesignated matter following paragraph (11), as added by section 1104 of this Act, the following:

''(12) ADDITIONAL AWARDS TO SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTERS, WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS, AND SCORE FOR DISASTER RECOVERY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administration may provide financial assistance to a small business development center, a women's business center described in section 29, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, or any proposed consortium of such individuals or entities to spur disaster recovery and growth of small business concerns located in an area for which the President has declared a major disaster.

''(B) FORM OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—Financial assistance provided under this paragraph shall be in the form of a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement.

''(C) NO MATCHING FUNDS REQUIRED.—Matching funds shall not be required for any grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this paragraph.

''(D) REQUIREMENTS.—A recipient of financial assistance under this paragraph shall provide counseling, training, and other related services, such as promoting long-term resiliency, to small business concerns and entrepreneurs impacted by a major disaster.

''(E) PERFORMANCE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in cooperation with the recipients of financial assistance under this paragraph, shall establish metrics and goals for performance of grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements under this paragraph, which shall include recovery of sales, recovery of employment, reestablishment of business premises, and establishment of new small business concerns.

''(ii) USE OF ESTIMATES.—The Administrator shall base the goals and metrics for performance established under clause (i), in part, on the estimates of disaster impact prepared by the Office of Disaster Assistance for purposes of estimating loan-making requirements.

''(F) TERM.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term of any grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this paragraph shall be for not more than 2 years.

''(ii) EXTENSION.—The Administrator may make 1 extension of a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this paragraph for a period of not more than 1 year, upon a showing of good cause and need for the extension.

''(G) EXEMPTION FROM OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—Financial assistance provided under this paragraph is in addition to, and wholly separate from, any other form of assistance provided by the Administrator under this Act.

''(H) COMPETITIVE BASIS.—The Administration shall award financial assistance under this paragraph on a competitive basis.''.

SEC. 2102. COLLATERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DISASTER LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7(d)(6) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(d)(6)) is amended in the third proviso—

(1) by striking ''$14,000'' and inserting ''$25,000''; and

(2) by striking ''major disaster'' and inserting ''disaster''.

(b) SUNSET.—Effective on the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, section 7(d)(6) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(d)(6)) is amended in the third proviso—

(1) by striking ''$25,000'' and inserting ''$14,000''; and

(2) by inserting ''major'' before ''disaster''.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days before the date on which the amendments made by subsection (b) are to take effect, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall submit to Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives a report on the effects of the amendments made by subsection (a), which shall include—

(1) an assessment of the impact and benefits resulting from the amendments; and

(2) a recommendation as to whether the amendments should be made permanent.

SEC. 2103. ASSISTANCE TO OUT-OF-STATE BUSINESS CONCERNS TO AID IN DISASTER RECOVERY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 21(b)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648(b)(3)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''(3) At the discretion'' and inserting the following:

''(3) ASSISTANCE TO OUT-OF-STATE SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(B) DISASTER RECOVERY ASSISTANCE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—At the discretion of the Administrator, the Administrator may authorize a small business development center to provide advice, information, and assistance, as described in subsection (c), to a small business concern located outside of the State, without regard to geographic proximity to the small business development center, if the small business concern is located in an area for which the President has declared a major disaster.

''(ii) TERM.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—A small business development center may provide advice, information, and assistance to a small business concern under clause (i) for a period of not more than 2 years after the date on which the President declared a major disaster for the area in which the small business concern is located.

''(II) EXTENSION.—The Administrator may, at the discretion of the Administrator, extend the period described in subclause (I).

''(iii) CONTINUITY OF SERVICES.—A small business development center that provides counselors to an area described in clause (i) shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure continuity of services in any State in which the small business development center otherwise provides services.

''(iv) ACCESS TO DISASTER RECOVERY FACILITIES.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the Administrator shall, to the maximum extent practicable, permit the personnel of a small business development center to use any site or facility designated by the Administrator for use to provide disaster recovery assistance.''.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that, subject to the availability of funds, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration should, to the extent practicable, ensure that a small business development center is appropriately reimbursed for any legitimate expenses incurred in carrying out activities under section 21(b)(3)(B) of the Small Business Act, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 2105. FAST PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 34(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657d(a)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (9) as paragraphs (4) through (10), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) CATASTROPHIC INCIDENT.—The term 'catastrophic incident' means a major disaster that is comparable to the description of a catastrophic incident in the National Response Plan of the Administration, or any successor thereto.''.

(b) PRIORITY.—Section 34(c)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657d(c)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B)(vi)(III), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(C) shall give special consideration to an applicant that is located in an area affected by a catastrophic incident.''.

(c) ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.—Section 34(c) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657d(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CATASTROPHIC INCIDENTS.—Upon application by an applicant that receives an award or has in effect a cooperative agreement under this section and that is located in an area affected by a catastrophic incident, the Administrator may—

''(A) provide additional assistance to the applicant; and

''(B) waive the matching requirements under subsection (e)(2).''.

SEC. 2106. USE OF FEDERAL SURPLUS PROPERTY IN DISASTER AREAS.

Section 7(j)(13)(F) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(j)(13)(F)) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''(i)'' after ''(F)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(ii)(I) In this clause—

''(aa) the term 'covered period' means the 2-year period beginning on the date on which the President declared the applicable major disaster; and

''(bb) the term 'disaster area' means the area for which the President has declared a major disaster, during the covered period.

''(II) The Administrator may transfer technology or surplus property under clause (i) on a priority basis to a small business concern located in a disaster area if—

''(aa) the small business concern meets the requirements for such a transfer, without regard to whether the small business concern is a Program Participant; and

''(bb) for a small business concern that is a Program Participant, on and after the date on which the President declared the applicable major disaster, the small business concern has not received property under this subparagraph on the basis of the status of the small business concern as a Program Participant.

''(III) For any transfer of property under this clause to a small business concern, the terms and conditions shall be the same as a transfer to a Program Participant, except that the small business concern shall agree not to sell or transfer the property to any party other than the Federal Government during the covered period.

''(IV) A small business concern that receives a transfer of property under this clause may not receive a transfer of property under clause (i) during the covered period.

''(V) If a small business concern sells or transfers property in violation of the agreement described in subclause (III), the Administrator may initiate proceedings to prohibit the small business concern from receiving a transfer of property under this clause or clause (i), in addition to any other remedy available to the Administrator.''.

SEC. 2107. RECOVERY OPPORTUNITY LOANS.

Section 7(a)(31) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)(31)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by redesignating clauses (i), (ii), and (iii) as clauses (ii), (iii), and (iv), respectively; and

(B) by inserting before clause (ii), as so redesignated, the following:

''(i) The term 'disaster area' means the area for which the President has declared a major disaster, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the declaration.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(H) RECOVERY OPPORTUNITY LOANS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may guarantee an express loan to a small business concern located in a disaster area in accordance with this subparagraph.

''(ii) MAXIMUMS.—For a loan guaranteed under clause (i)—

''(I) the maximum loan amount is $150,000; and

''(II) the guarantee rate shall be not more than 85 percent.

''(iii) OVERALL CAP.—A loan guaranteed under clause (i) shall not be counted in determining the amount of loans made to a borrower for purposes of subparagraph (D).

''(iv) OPERATIONS.—A small business concern receiving a loan guaranteed under clause (i) shall certify that the small business concern was in operation on the date on which the applicable major disaster occurred as a condition of receiving the loan.

''(v) REPAYMENT ABILITY.—A loan guaranteed under clause (i) may only be made to a small business concern that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Administrator, sufficient capacity to repay the loan.

''(vi) TIMING OF PAYMENT OF GUARANTEES.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which a request for purchase is filed with the Administrator, the Administrator shall determine whether to pay the guaranteed portion of the loan.

''(II) RECAPTURE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, unless there is a subsequent finding of fraud by a court of competent jurisdiction relating to a loan guaranteed under clause (i), on and after the date that is 6 months after the date on which the Administrator determines to pay the guaranteed portion of the loan, the Administrator may not attempt to recapture the paid guarantee.

''(vii) FEES.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—Unless the Administrator has waived the guarantee fee that would otherwise be collected by the Administrator under paragraph (18) for a loan guaranteed under clause (i), and except as provided in subclause (II), the guarantee fee for the loan shall be equal to the guarantee fee that the Administrator would collect if the guarantee rate for the loan was 50 percent.

''(II) EXCEPTION.—Subclause (I) shall not apply if the cost of carrying out the program under this subsection in a fiscal year is more than zero and such cost is directly attributable to the cost of guaranteeing loans under clause (i).

''(viii) RULES.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this subparagraph, the Administrator shall promulgate rules to carry out this subparagraph.''.

SEC. 2108. CONTRACTOR MALFEASANCE.

Section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) is amended by inserting before the undesignated matter following paragraph (12), as added by section 2101 of this Act, the following:

''(13) SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR CONTRACTOR MALFEASANCE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If a contractor or other person engages in malfeasance in connection with repairs to, rehabilitation of, or replacement of real or personal property relating to which a loan was made under this subsection and the malfeasance results in substantial economic damage to the recipient of the loan or substantial risks to health or safety, upon receiving documentation of the substantial economic damage or the substantial risk to health and safety from an independent loss verifier, and subject to subparagraph (B), the Administrator may increase the amount of the loan under this subsection, as necessary for the cost of repairs, rehabilitation, or replacement needed to address the cause of the economic damage or health or safety risk.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The Administrator may only increase the amount of a loan under subparagraph (A) upon receiving an appropriate certification from the borrower and person performing the mitigation attesting to the reasonableness of the mitigation costs and an assignment of any proceeds received from the person engaging in the malfeasance. The assignment of proceeds recovered from the person engaging in the malfeasance shall be equal to the amount of the loan under this section. Any mitigation activities shall be subject to audit and independent verification of completeness and cost reasonableness.''.

SEC. 2109. LOCAL CONTRACTING PREFERENCES AND INCENTIVES.

Section 15 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644) is amended by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

''(f) CONTRACTING PREFERENCE FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS IN A MAJOR DISASTER AREA.—

''(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term 'disaster area' means the area for which the President has declared a major disaster, during the period of the declaration.

''(2) CONTRACTING PREFERENCE.—An agency shall provide a contracting preference for a small business concern located in a disaster area if the small business concern will perform the work required under the contract in the disaster area.

''(3) CREDIT FOR MEETING CONTRACTING GOALS.—If an agency awards a contract to a small business concern under the circumstances described in paragraph (2), the value of the contract shall be doubled for purposes of determining compliance with the goals for procurement contracts under subsection (g)(1)(A).''.

SEC. 2110. CLARIFICATION OF COLLATERAL REQUIREMENTS.

Section 7(d)(6) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(d)(6)) is amended by inserting after ''which are made under paragraph (1) of subsection (b)'' the following: '': *Provided further*, That the Administrator, in obtaining the best available collateral for a loan of not more than $200,000 under paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (b) relating to damage to or destruction of the property of, or economic injury to, a small business concern, shall not require the owner of the small business concern to use the primary residence of the owner as collateral if the Administrator determines that the owner has other assets of equal quality and with a value equal to or greater than the amount of the loan that could be used as collateral for the loan: *Provided further*, That nothing in the preceding proviso may be construed to reduce the amount of collateral required by the Administrator in connection with a loan described in the preceding proviso or to modify the standards used to evaluate the quality (rather than the type) of such collateral''.

TITLE II—DISASTER PLANNING AND MITIGATION

SEC. 2201. BUSINESS RECOVERY CENTERS.

Section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) is amended by inserting before the undesignated matter following paragraph (13), as added by section 2108 of this Act, the following:

''(14) BUSINESS RECOVERY CENTERS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, acting through the district offices of the Administration, shall identify locations that may be used as recovery centers by the Administration in the event of a disaster declared under this subsection or a major disaster.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS FOR IDENTIFICATION.—Each district office of the Administration shall—

''(i) identify a location described in subparagraph (A) in each county, parish, or similar unit of general local government in the area served by the district office; and

''(ii) ensure that the locations identified under subparagraph (A) may be used as a recovery center without cost to the Government, to the extent practicable.''.

TITLE III—OTHER PROVISIONS

SEC. 2301. INCREASED OVERSIGHT OF ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) is amended by inserting before the undesignated matter following paragraph (14), as added by section 2201 of this Act, the following:

''(15) INCREASED OVERSIGHT OF ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOANS.—The Administrator shall increase oversight of entities receiving loans under paragraph (2), and may consider—

''(A) scheduled site visits to ensure borrower eligibility and compliance with requirements established by the Administrator; and

''(B) reviews of the use of the loan proceeds by an entity described in paragraph (2) to ensure compliance with requirements established by the Administrator.''.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS RELATING TO USING EXISTING FUNDS.—It is the sense of Congress that no additional Federal funds should be made available to carry out the amendments made by this section.

SEC. 2302. GAO REPORT ON PAPERWORK REDUCTION.

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives a report evaluating steps that the Small Business Administration has taken, with respect to the application for disaster assistance under section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)), to comply with subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Paperwork Reduction Act'') and related guidance.

SEC. 2303. REPORT ON WEB PORTAL FOR DISASTER LOAN APPLICANTS.

Section 38 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 657j) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) REPORT ON WEB PORTAL FOR DISASTER LOAN APPLICATION STATUS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business of the House of

Representatives a report relating to the creation of a web portal to the track the status of applications for disaster assistance under section 7(b).

''(2) CONTENTS.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include—

''(A) information on the progress of the Administration in implementing the information system under subsection (a);

''(B) recommendations from the Administration relating to the creation of a web portal for applicants to check the status of an application for disaster assistance under section 7(b), including a review of best practices and web portal models from the private sector;

''(C) information on any related costs or staffing needed to implement such a web portal;

''(D) information on whether such a web portal can maintain high standards for data privacy and data security;

''(E) information on whether such a web portal will minimize redundancy among Administration disaster programs, improve management of the number of inquiries made by disaster applicants to employees located in the area affected by the disaster and to call centers, and reduce paperwork burdens on disaster victims; and

''(F) such additional information as is determined necessary by the Administrator.''.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 21, 2015, at 10 a.m. in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Agriculture Biotechnology: A Look at Federal Regulation and Stakeholder Perspectives.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 21, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. SULLIVAN. 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 October 21, 2015, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Ongoing Migration from Central America: An Examination of FY2015 Apprehensions.''

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 21, 2015, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The GAO Report on 'INDIAN ENERGY DEVELOPMENT: Poor Management by BIA Has Hindered Development on Indian Lands.' ''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 21, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Nominations.''

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 21, 2015, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD–562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Virtual Victims: When Computer Tech Support Becomes a Scam.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SUPERFUND, WASTE MANAGEMENT, AND REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on October 21, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Oversight of Regulatory Impact Analyses for U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Regulations.''

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

HONORING THE LIVES OF THE 33 CREW MEMBERS ABOARD THE ''EL FARO''

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 291, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 291) honoring the lives of the 33 crew members aboard the *El Faro*.

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. 291) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

COMMEMORATING THE DISCOVERY OF THE POLIO VACCINE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 108 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 108) commemorating the discovery of the polio vaccine and supporting efforts to eradicate the disease.

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 considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 108) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 24, 2015, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2193

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2193) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase penalties for individuals who illegally reenter the United States after being removed and for other purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I now ask for a second reading and, in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, October 22; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of S. 754, with the time until 11 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; finally, that the filing deadline for all second-degree

amendments to both the substitute amendment No. 2716 and the underlying bill, S. 754, be at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow.

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 7:01 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, October 22, 2015, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

LINDA I. ETIM, OF WISCONSIN, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 22, 2021, VICE MIMI E. ALEMAYEHOU, TERM EXPIRED.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

LISA M. FAIRFAX, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 5, 2020, VICE LUIS AGUILAR, TERM EXPIRED.

HESTER MARIA PEIRCE, OF OHIO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM EXPIRING JUNE 5, 2016, VICE DANIEL M. GALLAGHER, JR., RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JEAN ELIZABETH MANES, OF FLORIDA, 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 EL SALVADOR.

SCOT ALAN MARCIEL, OF CALIFORNIA, 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 UNION OF BURMA.

LINDA SWARTZ TAGLIALATELA, OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO BARBADOS, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERATION OF ST. KITTS AND NEVIS, SAINT LUCIA, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA, GRENADA, AND SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SECURING THE CITIES ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, and Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3493, the "Securing the Cities Act of 2015," which will require the Director for Domestic Nuclear Detection to create a Securing the Cities program.

The codification of the Securing the Cities Program under H.R. 3493, will:

1. Assist state, local, tribal, and territorial governments in creating and implementing, or perfecting existing structures for coordinated and integrated detection and interdiction of nuclear or other radiological materials that are out of regulatory control;

2. Support the creation of a region-wide operating capability to identify and report on nuclear and other radioactive materials out of operational control;

3. Provide resources to improve detection, analysis, communication, and organization to better integrate state, local, tribal, and territorial property into federal operations;

4. Facilitate the establishment of protocol and processes to effectively respond to threats posed by nuclear or radiological materials being acquired or used by terrorists; and

5. Designate participating jurisdictions from among high-risk urban areas and other cities and regions, as appropriate, and notify Congress at least three days before designating or changing such jurisdictions.

H.R. 3493 would also require the Comptroller General to investigate and assess the effectiveness of the "Securing the Cities Program."

The potential for a terrorist attack using nuclear or radiological material is low, but should it occur the consequences would be catastrophic, and for this reason we cannot be lax in our efforts to deter, detect and defeat attempts by terrorists to perpetrate such a heinous act of terrorism.

I represent the 18th Congressional District of Texas, which is located in the Houston area, which is the 4th largest city in the United States and home to over 2 million residents.

Earlier this year the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that the city of Houston would receive $30 million dollars over 5 years under the Securing the Cities Program.

The funding, came from DHS's Domestic Nuclear Office and, will be used to work with partners in the Houston area to build a robust, regional nuclear detection capability for law enforcement and first responder organizations.

This is an important federal effort to increase the ability of major urban cities to detect and protect against radiological and nuclear threats.

The Securing Cities Program began in 2006 as a pilot project for the New York City region.

The cities and regions that are participating include Washington DC/National Capital Region, New York City, Los Angeles/Long Beach area, and now Houston Texas.

The DHS Domestic Nuclear Detection Office provides equipment and assistance to regional partners in conducting training and exercises to further their nuclear detection capabilities and coordinate with federal operations.

Unfortunately, the age of terrorism makes this a more dangerous and uncertain time than the decades following World War II when nation/state nuclear arsenals were being created.

I am pleased that Houston is at the forefront of nuclear safety in our country, and it is time to make the Securing the Cities Program vital for all of our major cities to catch up.

Nuclear threats are more perilous than what our nation faced during the Cold War because these threats come from non-state actors who often do not have the same level of concern for the wellbeing of their people who may face the consequences of a nuclear attack against the United States.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this important resolution.

HONORING RAY GARON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE MANCHESTER RADIO GROUP AFTER MORE THAN 20 YEARS

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my congratulations to Ray Garon on his retirement after 20 plus years with the Manchester Radio Group, and thank him for the outstanding work he did during his career.

Mr. Garon's broad expertise in the radio business has been instrumental to the growth of local stations such as WZID–AM, WFEA–AM, The Mill and Hot Hits. Over the last twenty years with the Manchester Radio Group he has been an integral part of the community and his leadership will be greatly missed.

It is with great admiration that I congratulate Ray Garon on his retirement, and wish him the best on all future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF BISHOP W. W. HAMILTON

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bishop W. W. Hamilton on the occasion of the 35th pastoral anniversary of his leadership of the Greater Victory Temple Church of God in Christ in Seaside, California. Bishop Hamilton is a beacon of service to God and his community and an example of love and compassion for all to follow. Under his leadership, Greater Victory Temple has grown into one of the strongest community pillars of the Monterey Peninsula and all of northern California.

Bishop Hamilton was born in San Antonio, Texas. He followed his father, the late Bishop E.E. Hamilton, on the path of religious service and received a Doctor of Divinity degree from Simpson College in San Francisco. He then served as the founding pastor of the Hamilton Memorial Church of God In Christ in San Francisco, California. In 1987, W.W. Hamilton was consecrated as the Bishop and Prelate of the California Northwest Jurisdiction of the Church of God in Christ, the church his father had established.

In 1980 Bishop Hamilton was appointed to serve as Pastor of the Victory Temple Church of God In Christ of Seaside, California. Under his Pastoral leadership a new church building was completed and on March 16, 1984, the Great Victory Church of God In Christ was dedicated debt free. In addition to the remodeling, Bishop Hamilton sought to provide housing and family resources to his community.

Bishop Hamilton has also focused his leadership on community service. He served as the executive director of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency. Later, under his leadership, the Greater Victory Temple has become a force for community service on the Monterey Peninsula. It offers services for youth such as after school tutoring programs, a community computer lab, after school chess club, and hosts scout groups. It also offers a food pantry in partnership with the local food bank, divorce counseling, works with other community organizations to bring peace to the community, and has invested in community based senior housing.

Throughout his 35 years of leadership, Greater Victory Temple has impacted the lives of countless people within the Seaside and surrounding Monterey Peninsula communities. All those who have had the pleasure to meet Bishop Hamilton know first hand his love and personal commitment to his congregation and surrounding community.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I speak for the whole House in extending our deepest gratitude to Bishop Hamilton for his many years of dedication to the Greater Victory Temple family and the broader community of the Monterey County and Northern California. Our world is a better place because of his efforts.

JUDICIAL REDRESS ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan H.R. 1428, the ''Judicial Redress Act of 2015.''

H.R. 1428 is important bill that will help conclude longstanding negotiations to improve the framework for data transfers between law enforcement agencies in United States and Europe.

European nations have long provided privacy protections to U.S. citizens and this legislation would reciprocate that practice.

If enacted, the Judicial Redress Act would extend the legal rights granted to American citizens under the 1974 Privacy Act to citizens of select foreign nations.

Specifically, those individuals would be given the ability to seek access to records private entities turn over to U.S. government officials as part of criminal investigations and they would be able to correct those records if they contain false information, as well as get redress from the government if those records were turned over illegally.

Under the current law, U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents are able to sue the United States for intentional and willful public disclosures of law enforcement information that injures those citizens.

The same rights should be afforded to our closest allies and those we entrust with our privacy protection and hold accountable for reciprocal offenses.

Let me express my appreciation to Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security and Investigations, Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Ranking Member CONYERS for their leadership and commitment to privacy protection and accountability to our foreign allies.

As a nation that aims to uphold the principles of justice and fairness, it is time that we ensure that all those engaged with our nation are afforded these core protections.

The Judicial Redress Act upholds these principles by providing critical remedies to citizens of designated U.S. allies who have been unfairly targeted by American surveillance and law enforcement activities.

By extending legal rights afforded under the 1974 Privacy Act to citizens of select foreign nations, we all benefit.

Citizens of the United States benefit from privacy protections in other countries, and the Judicial Redress Act provides reciprocal trust and assurances that our closest allies will be treated fairly and justly.

Strengthening international relationships and building trust backed by our government is essential to our national security and economic growth.

Passing the Judicial Redress Act simply is the right thing to do.

H.R. 1428 will ensure greater cooperation among international law enforcement agencies, and encourage these nations to share critical law enforcement information with one another.

H.R. 1428 will also mend critical relationships between American businesses and international consumers by restoring trust that transnational data will be kept secure and protected.

International consumers will feel more comfortable sharing their information allowing for the free-flow of data and commerce.

This legislation is endorsed by the Department of Justice and federal law enforcement agencies and broadly supported by tech companies and businesses, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Trans-Atlantic Business Council, the Internet Infrastructure Coalition, and other groups.

The Judicial Redress Act is a step in the right direction to ensure continued advancement in the technology industry, international corporate competitiveness, and demonstrated leadership in privacy protection and upholding foundational legal rights.

For all of these reasons, I support H.R. 1428 and urge my colleagues to join me.

RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF THE NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MUSEUM TO HONOR AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of the National WWII Museum to honor African American veterans of World War II. Most notably, I would like to commend the Museum on its outstanding exhibit, ''Fighting for the Right to Fight: African American Experiences in World War II.''

African Americans played a vital role in securing Allied victory in World War II and their service helped to preserve democratic institutions in the United States and around the world. The contributions of African Americans during wartime spanned all areas of the war effort, from military combat to domestic manufacturing.

Unfortunately, the same patriotic citizens who sacrificed and risked their lives in the war effort also faced discrimination in military and civilian life. In many cases, African Americans were denied the very liberties they fought to defend. These experiences led many African American soldiers to a dual mission: to win the war and to secure freedoms at home, a movement that would come to be known as the ''Double Victory'' campaign. The modern Civil Rights Movements would rise from these historic moments during wartime.

The award-winning exhibit, which opened on July 4, 2015, is a landmark contribution that displays the foundational work by twentieth century African Americans to seek comprehensive social change. The exhibit will remain at the National World War II Museum until May 2016, when it will begin a two-year tour of museums around the country. The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Veterans Braintrust, supported by President Obama and the First Lady, distinguished the efforts of the National WWII Museum with the 2015 Veterans Braintrust Award.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the National WWII Museum for their leadership and recognition of the tireless contributions from all Americans during times of war. The unwavering dedication of African Americans to protecting America's values of freedom and liberty is an example for all citizens.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL IN MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Manchester, New Hampshire.

I am pleased to join with the Eastern Diocese and Polish National Catholic Church in recognizing this great milestone for Holy Trinity Cathedral and its parishioners.

This is a great achievement for both the church and community of Manchester, and speaks highly to the outstanding services and spiritual guidance the parish has offered to residents of the Queen City and surrounding communities. For the past 100 years, Holy Trinity Cathedral has been a landmark in the City of Manchester, and the recent restoration of the church, which included the awarding of a Restoration of a City Landmark Award from the Manchester Historic Association demonstrates the deep impact this church has had on the community and the significance of its presence in downtown Manchester.

Under the leadership of Bishop Paul Sobiechowski the church and its parish community continue to flourish today by spreading the work and word of our savior Jesus Christ, and focusing their efforts on the Polish American community in the city and Southern New Hampshire. I am proud to join with my fellow Granite Staters in recognizing the 100th anniversary of Holy Trinity Cathedral, and wish them all the best in their future years.

SALUTE TO THE LIVINGSTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Livingston Volunteer Fire Department, in Livingston, Texas.

On August 23, 1915, the Livingston Volunteer Fire Department was officially established following a decision by the city to give Fire Chief Keenan Peebles full authority over the firefighting equipment, which at the time consisted of three hand pulled hose reels, a few fire hydrants, and three hose reel houses.

During the last 100 years, 275 citizen firefighters have volunteered their time and energy to respond to 24,000 calls under the direction of 17 fire chiefs. Currently, the Livingston Volunteer Fire Department has 39 fire fighters operating out of three stations.

Today, thanks to the support of the local community, the Livingston Volunteer Fire Department is as fully equipped and prepared as any department in Texas.

In celebration of this important milestone, we thank all those who have served as volunteers at the Livingston Volunteer Fire Department for their commitment, dedication and bravery.

DHS HEADQUARTERS REFORM AND IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, I rise in support of H.R. 3572, the ''Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Reform and Improvement Act of 2015.''

This bill will establish DHS-wide strategic priorities for international engagement, mechanisms for monitoring resource deployment abroad, and strategic priorities and cost data for DHS programs and activities abroad.

H.R. 3572 provides support for DHS's ''Unity of Effort'' campaign and addresses redundancy among departmental programs.

The bill clarifies and streamlines the offices that constitute DHS Headquarters and better outlines their respective responsibilities.

Specifically, H.R. 3572 achieves these goals by:

1. Establishing an undersecretary for management and makes him or her the chief acquisition officer in the Homeland Security Department; and

2. Establishing two new offices within the department and updates the department's acquisition procedures.

Finally, the bill empowers the Inspector General to review the Department's suspension and debarment program and assess whether disparities exist in the criteria applied.

The bill addresses the need for DHS to develop strategic priorities for international engagement, establish mechanisms for monitoring resource deployment abroad, and developing strategic priorities, and collecting cost data for its programs and activities abroad.

I am pleased that H.R. 3572 incorporates several amendments that I offered during the full committee markup which improve the bill.

Jackson Lee Amendment Number 1 requires the Assistant Security for International Affairs to advise the Secretary of Homeland Security on strategic priorities for overseas deployment, establish a mechanism for monitoring alignment between assets, including personnel, with said priorities, and develop a standardized framework to collect and maintain cost data for overseas personnel.

Jackson Lee Amendment Number 2 made technical changes to H.R. 3572 regarding the conversion of contractor positions to Federal employee positions and requiring congressional authorization for adding any new office within the Office of Policy.

Since its creation in 2002, in the aftermath of the terrorist attack of 9/11, the Department of Homeland Security has been, and must continue to be, ever vigilant in its activities to protect the homeland and the lives and property of Americans.

DHS faces a number of challenges, including the need for more resources, better training, better use of technology, and a constantly changing environment of homeland security threats.

H.R. 3572 is a positive step forward in this effort and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the ''Department of Homeland Security Headquarters Reform and Improvement Act of 2015.''

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT BISHOP, ESQ., RECIPIENT OF THE LACKAWANNA PRO BONO'S ROBERT W. MUNLEY AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Robert Bishop, Esq., who will be awarded the 2015 Lackawanna Pro Bono's Attorney Robert W. Munley Award. Lackawanna Pro Bono is a non-profit organization established in 1997 to increase the availability of free legal representation for low-income individuals and families throughout Lackawanna County.

Robert has been principal of Hourigan, Kluger & Quinn, PC, since 1985. His practice specializes in estate planning and administration, as well as elder law matters, real estate transactions, business transactions, and corporate matters for clients in Luzerne, Lackawanna and surrounding counties. He is a graduate of Penn State University and Temple University School of Law.

In addition to volunteering his expertise to the Lackawanna Pro Bono, Robert is very active in the Northeastern Pennsylvania community. He is president of the Amos Lodge of B'nai B'rith, vice president of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, secretary of the Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania, past president of Glen Oak Country Club, past president and board member of Temple Israel of Scranton, past president of the ARC of Northeastern Pennsylvania, past president and board member of Jewish Family Services of Northeastern Pennsylvania, past president and life member of Scranton Counseling Center, past president and advisory board member of the Salvation Army Citadel in Scranton, past president and board member of the Estate Planning Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania, and a board member of the Schwartz/Mack Foundation. Robert serves on the boards of the ARC Foundation and the Amos Towers Housing Foundation and the advisory boards of the Scranton Area Foundation, the Kania School of Management at the University of Scranton, and M&T Bank. He is an emeritus member of the Penn State Worthington advisory board, and serves on the board of the Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

It is an honor to recognize Robert Bishop for the great service he has done for his community, and I extend my congratulations on being awarded the Lackawanna Pro Bono's Robert W. Munley Award. I commend Robert for all the effort he has put into making northeastern Pennsylvania a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

HONORING COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR ALBERT L. CAMPBELL, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Command Sergeant Major Albert L. Campbell, U.S. Army, Retired of Round Rock, Texas, as a recipient of the Texas 31st District Congressional Veteran Commendation. CSM Campbell answered the call to defend our great nation for over 30 years in the United States Army. Today he lives in Round Rock, Texas where he continues his service to his fellow countrymen as a vibrant part of this growing central Texas community.

Born in Greenwood, SC CSM Campbell left the 11th grade and entered the Army in 1950. After rigorous training at Ft. Benning, GA, he was assigned to K Company, 3rd Battalion, 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team and stationed in Japan. CSM Campbell earned the Combat Infantrymen's Badge and Bronze Star for heroism fighting in Korea.

Following his assignment in Japan and Korea, CSM Albert L. Campbell served as the Platoon Sergeant for the 2nd Platoon, Company C, 508th of the 82nd Airborne, where he was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry. CSM Campbell would continue his leadership ascension as an instructor at West Point preparatory School at Ft. Belvoir, VA, the United States Military Academy at West Point, and Howard University in Washington, DC. CSM Campbell rounded out his military service in Ft. Hood, Texas where he retired in 1980.

CSM Campbell's service and sense of duty did not end with his military service. CSM Campbell traded his guns for crosses as a Deacon at the One Way Baptist Church, in Round Rock, Texas.

Family and Service to God and Country remain at the center of his life. CSM Campbell continues his longstanding commitment to helping those in need whether physically as a caregiver or emotionally at Round Rock Independent School District's Opportunity Center, where he helps troubled children participate in the mainstream educational process.

I am stirred with the strongest sense of pride and honor as an American that I should have the opportunity to highlight the life of a true servant of the people. All should marvel and stand proud of an American who so strongly answered the call to serve.

CSM Campbell's patriotism and commitment to service reflect the very best values of both our beloved military servicemen and Central Texas. Let today be a celebration of one of our nation's heroes, one who devoted his life to keeping us free and making America a beacon of hope in the world. Along with his friends, family, and loved ones, I wish him both a happy, prosperous, and healthy life in the years ahead.

SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE TO FREELY ELECT THEIR GOVERNMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 348 in support of the people of Ukraine in their exercise of their self determination to free, fair and uninterrupted elections.

As the country with the oldest and most powerful democracy in the world, the United States has supported democracy, the rule of law and human rights all over the globe from Nigeria to Pakistan to China, to name a few.

The outcome of the October 25 elections in Ukraine is at the backdrop of the forcible and illegal occupation of Crimea, ordered by President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

The rights of the people of Ukraine to free, fair and transparent elections is especially critical, with Crimea currently under siege of Russian-led separatists who continue their attacks on Ukraine's forces set in place to protect the sovereignty of Ukraine.

Here in Congress, we have worked tirelessly to support free and fair elections in Ukraine through our support of its May 2014 elections, ensuring that international standards were upheld just as we have assisted in many elections in countries in transition or fighting insecurity from Nigeria to Pakistan.

In Nigeria and Pakistan, the elections occurred at the background of terrorism from Boko Haram, Al Qaida and other terrorist networks, who acted so viciously and caused thousands of Nigerians and Pakistanis to lose their lives and livelihoods.

Similarly, the citizens of Ukraine are at risk of being disenfranchised because of separatist controlled areas.

To this end the United States has worked to broker peace in Ukraine so that the people of Ukraine can exercise their right to self determination though our support of the cease-fire agreement brokered between Ukraine, Russia and the Russian-led separatists which was not fully implemented and the subsequent Minsk Implementation Agreement.

But I say to the people of the Ukraine, remain strong, we stand with you in exercising your Constitutional and human right to choose who will represent you.

The upcoming October 25, 2015 elections are critical for sustainable legislative and constitutional reform in Ukraine which will help promote democracy, the rule of law, upholding of human rights, the creation of security, all of which will catalyze the economic, social, cultural and political enfranchisement of the people of Ukraine, securing a bright future for the capable and exciting youth of Ukraine.

Indeed, here in Congress, we have taken numerous actions to uphold the sanctity of the right to economic, political and social enfranchisement of the people of Ukraine by passing the following legislation:

The Ukraine Freedom Support Act of 2014, authorizing the United States President to provide Ukraine's government with support necessary to set up infrastructure for reforms that will facilitate restoring Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity including lethal defense services and articles, such as anti-tank, anti-armor and counter-artillery radar (worth $100 million in FY 2015 and $125 million in each of fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for such weapons); and

Sovereignty, Integrity, Democracy, and Economic Stability of Ukraine Act of 2014, which authorized loan guarantees for the Government of Ukraine.

Due to its geographical location, the Central European nation of Ukraine historically has been pushed and pulled between its neighbors with Europe to its west and Russia to its east.

This push pull from interested parties has caused conflict over the direction Ukraine would take after its independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991.

For example, in November of 2013, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych suspended negotiations with the European Union over an agreement to integrate Ukraine into various European economic and political associations and instead accepted $15 billion and other inducements to enter into closer ties with Moscow.

The decisions taken by President Yanukovych triggered demonstrations by thousands of Ukrainian citizens in the capital city of Kiev and throughout the country which led to numerous arrests, detentions and violent clashes, which led to the deaths of close to 100 protesters in February 2014.

In a cowardly act, President Yanukovych fled to the predominantly ethnic Russian region of Crimea in southeastern Ukraine, and then to Russia because of the chaos caused by his suspension of negotiations with the EU and the subsequent unrest that ensued, which also caused his unpopularity within his own party.

After President Yanukovych deserted his own people, an opportunistic Russian military force took up positions throughout Crimea, where, under a series of treaties that followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia had continued to maintain a series of military bases, notably at Sevastopol, where the Russian Black Sea naval fleet is based.

Indeed, Crimea itself was technically transferred from the Soviet republic of Russia to the Soviet republic of Ukraine in 1954.

Subsequently, in March 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed legislation formally incorporating Crimea into Russia.

The United States and the European Union have opined that Russia's action is illegal and we have imposed a series of economic sanctions on Russia.

Russia continues to provide military equipment, training and other assistance to separatists and paramilitary forces in eastern Ukraine, resulting in an ongoing conflict with an estimated 6,000 deaths, hundreds of thousands of refugees and widespread destruction.

The Russian-led separatists in eastern Ukraine continue to refuse to implement Ukrainian law and stand in the way of the Ukrainian authorities to conduct elections in areas controlled by the separatists and hence are a stumbling block to free and fair elections in those areas.

Yet under all this stress, Ukraine continues to strive for its self determination.

I commend all anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine.

The state Anti-Corruption Strategy Program Implementation for 2014–2017, which delineates anti-corruption reforms, persons, deadlines and infrastructure;

The creation of a National Agency for Prevention of Corruption;

The Ukrainian Law on Prevention of corruption, a new system which outlines financial control with electronic asset declaration of public servants;

The specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office;

Corruption Offender Registry; and

Many more efforts to combat corruption and enhance the rule of law and financial integrity in Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of this resolution protecting the rights of the people of Ukraine to freely elect their government and determine their future.

Mr. Speaker, I also urge the Administration to expedite assistance to Ukraine to facilitate the political, economic and social reforms necessary for free and fair elections that meet international standards.

The Russian government, Russian-led separatists, its agents and supporters should not interfere in Ukraine's elections, through intimidation, violence or coercion.

The current relentless political, economic and military aggression on the people of Ukraine geared at subverting the independence, self determination and the territorial integrity of Ukraine must stop.

I urge the people of Ukraine to help facilitate free and fair elections in Ukraine.

TRIBUTE TO URBANDALE'S WEBSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Webster Elementary School in Urbandale, Iowa, for being selected as a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.

In order to receive this prestigious designation, schools must demonstrate a commitment to enriching the academic experience of each and every student by closing the achievement gaps among student subgroups. Overall, 335 schools have received this designation. Urbandale's Webster Elementary School has shown that hard work, dedication, and a commitment to excellence can lead an entire school to academic success. The leaders within this school have found a formula for success by working together to improve student-teacher relationships, meeting each student and their learning styles on an individual level.

Mr. Speaker, the efforts shown by Urbandale's Webster Elementary School demonstrates Iowa's commitment to academic excellence. This award is an embodiment of the hard work and dedication every member of their faculty has displayed to improve the lives of their students. It is truly an honor to represent the students and faculty of the Webster Elementary School in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating them for their achievements, and wish each and every one of them nothing but continued success.

HONORING SERGEANT MAJOR RICHARD ''ROCKY'' HERNANDEZ, SR., U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant Major Richard ''Rocky'' Hernandez, Sr., U.S. Army, Retired. As a man who has lived his life in the service of his country and fellow man, it brings me great pride as a Texan to highlight the life of this public servant who has inspired many to pay the good will forward. SGM Hernandez selflessly served with distinction throughout his life in the military, the School District of Killeen, and the volunteer service that brought much needed help to retired veterans.

SGM Hernandez was born in Corpus Christi, Texas in March 1946. Heeding the call to service, SGM Hernandez departed high school early and enlisted in the U.S. Army in May, 1963. During his U.S. Army career he served over 14 years in Germany, deployed for one tour in Korea, and served two tours in Vietnam. While in Vietnam SGM Hernandez was assigned to the 196th Infantry Brigade, 23rd Infantry Division. SGM Hernandez was wounded in action on March 23, 1969 by enemy mortar fire and was awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

After achieving the rank of Sergeant Major, Rocky medically retired in 1989 having been disabled through peacetime and wartime injuries sustained in the service of his country. Nevertheless, SGM Hernandez would not be kept down for long. Following his military retirement SGM Hernandez served another 20 years for the Killeen Independent School District.

Yet still the call to serve and desire to help others burned inside. After joining a local Veterans Organization and hearing the voices of veterans seeking help, SGM Hernandez felt inspired to help his fellow veterans and their families navigate the complex VA system. In 1994 SGM Hernandez became a volunteer Veterans Service Officer. Since that time, SGM Hernandez has helped hundreds of veterans gain their well-deserved benefits. Today SGM Hernandez serves as Citizen on Patrol, where he continues his service with his eyes and ears to fight crime and evil wherever it resides.

After serving two full careers, SGM Hernandez exemplifies what it means to be an American and a Texan. May we follow the examples of great men such as SGM Hernandez and live our lives in the service of our fellow men and country. I join SGM Hernandez's family and friends in wishing him nothing but the best in the years ahead.

KNOW THE CBRN TERRORISM THREATS TO TRANSPORTATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 20, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3350, the ''Know the CBRN Terrorism Threats to Transportation Act,'' which requires the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Intelligence and Analysis to conduct a terrorism threat assessment regarding the ground transportation of chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological (CBRN) materials.

As a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee and the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, I appreciate the significance of this bill.

On September 11, 2001, 2,977 people were killed after terrorists hijacked four commercial aircraft and used three of them as guided missiles to destroy much of the complex that made up the New York City Twin Towers as well as a wing of the Pentagon.

The fourth plane was crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania as passengers heroically attempted to retake the plane from the control of hijackers.

Since September 11, 2001, security experts have warned of vulnerabilities that exist should terrorists plan to attack a chemical facility located within the United States or worse yet, gain unlawful access to a facility, pipelines, or transit routes and steal chemicals for a mass attack against civilians.

Transportation of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials across our borders and within the United States may become targets for terrorists who seek to do us harm.

The 18th Congressional District of Texas, which I serve, is home to some of the world's largest petrochemical producers, which employ thousands of Houston area residents.

Chemicals are a vital and common presence in the lives of our nation's citizens, but we often forget how dangerous they can be under the wrong conditions.

On April 17, 2013, the small town of West, Texas felt the power and destructive force of ammonium nitrate when an accidental fire ignited what is believed to have been between 140 to 160 tons of the chemical.

This was no terrorist attack, but a very tragic accident.

The accident in the town of West, Texas reminded all of us who represent districts that count chemical plants or their owners and operators as constituents—how important it is to protect the transport of these products from theft or misuse by terrorists.

Ports, railways, pipelines, and trucks are critical to the domestic transport of chemical products.

U.S. seaports, like the Port of Houston, are vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

Ports serve as America's gateway to the global economy since the nation's economic prosperity rests on the ability of containerized and bulk cargo arriving unimpeded at U.S. ports to support the rapid delivery system that underpins the manufacturing and retail sectors.

A central component of national security is the ability of our international ports to move goods into and out of the country.

According to the Department of Commerce in 2012, Texas exports totaled $265 billion.

The Port of Houston is a 25-mile-long complex of diversified public and private facilities located just a few hours' sailing time from the Gulf of Mexico.

In 2012, ship channel-related businesses contributed 1,026,820 jobs and generated more than $178.5 billion in statewide economic activity.

In 2014, the Port of Houston was ranked among U.S. ports:

1. 1st in foreign tonnage;
2. 1st among Texas ports with 46% of market share by tonnage and 95% market share in containers by total TEUS in 2014;
3. 1st among Gulf Coast container ports, handling 67% of U.S. Gulf Coast container traffic in 2014; and
4. 2nd in U.S. port in terms of total foreign cargo value (based on U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Census)

The Government Accountability Office (GAO), reports that the Port of Houston and its waterways and vessels, are part of an economic engine handling more than $700 billion in cargo annually.

The Port of Houston houses approximately 100 steamship lines offering services that link Houston with 1,053 ports in 203 countries.

The Port of Houston is home to a $15 billion petrochemical complex, the largest in the nation and second largest in the world.

With the nation's largest petrochemical complex supplying over 40 percent of the nation's base petrochemical manufacturing capacity, what happens at the Port of Houston affects the entire nation.

In 2004, nearly 155 million tons of chemicals were transported by rail in North America, which constitutes 1.75 million rail cars of hazardous materials.

The volume of hazardous materials moving by rail more than doubled since 1980 indicates that rail has become an integral part of the tremendous increase in the transport of hazardous materials.

According to the Texas Department of Transportation approximately 2,200 trains per week travel within the Houston regional rail network, which is comprised of more than 800 miles of mainline tracks and 21 miles of railroad bridges.

I support this bill because we must protect the American people against potential terrorism through the unconventional use of biological, chemical or radiological materials that have a beneficial commercial or industrial purpose.

Without the proper precautions and security measures major U.S. cities such as Houston, Texas may be vulnerable to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear attacks by terrorist.

H.R. 3350 addresses many problems by requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a terrorism threat assessment of the transportation of chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological materials through the United States land borders and within the United States.

In order to enforce the required threat assessment the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis shall consult with the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border protection, and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies, as deemed appropriate to ensure that such terrorism threat assessment is informed by current information about homeland security threats.

Congress must take forward action as threats of chemical and biological terrorism rise and terrorist groups actively seeking hazardous chemicals in order to inflict harm against American citizens.

I urge my colleagues to support me on H.R. 3350 in order to assess threats to our transportation infrastructure.

TRIBUTE TO WELCH'S ORCHARD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Joe and Joan Welch of Council Bluffs, Iowa, for celebrating their Orchard's 25th anniversary this season.

As one of a handful of local orchards, Welch's has provided high quality products along with a dedication to customer service. Thousands of local residents flock to the orchard each year to enjoy the wide variety of products that the orchard offers, from honey crisp apples to 100-pound pumpkins. For 25 years Welch's Orchard has been a fun and entertaining attraction for children and adults alike.

Mr. Speaker, I commend and congratulate Joe and Joan Welch and their staff for their 25 years of dedicated service to Council Bluffs and southwest Iowa. I urge my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Welch's Orchard and wishing them nothing but continued success moving forward.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL JERRI JONES, U.S. MARINE CORPS, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Colonel Jerri Jones, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired for her extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our Nation. LtCol Jones has served as a guardian of those in need while serving in the military and continues that service today in the great state of Texas.

LtCol Jones entered the United States Marine Corps on October 28, 1975. Her years of service have taken her throughout the Pacific theater, serving tours in California, Hawaii, and Japan. LtCol Jones' dedication to leading by example earned her the nickname ''Combat Jones'' while living in a tent in South Korea during the winter of 1979.

LtCol Jones was called to duty again and served a critical role during the first Gulf War that plunged many of her fellow Marines into the heat of battle. The first Gulf War saw many families' breadwinners deployed to active duty, leaving many spouses and families with financial difficulties. LtCol Jones took this crisis head on and eased the burden on these Marine families during these challenging times. LtCol retired on December 1, 1995.

Today LtCol Jones continues her service with the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce, where she coordinates the monthly business networking roundtable. LtCol Jones is well known for motivating and inspiring the Chamber's members with her warm sense of humor and energizing personality.

Nowhere is LtCol Jones' compassion for the defenseless more profound than in her work with the Williamson County Children's Advocacy Center. During her tenure as Executive Director of the Advocacy Center LtCol Jones doubled the number of children and teens helped through the Center. Her leadership, tenacity, and compassion to serve those in need are felt by all who associate with her.

In celebrating LtCol Jones' life I am reminded of the parable of the talents found in the New Testament in which each servant was rewarded according to the work they had done. With deep admiration and respect, I pay tribute to her for all she has done with her talents in the service of her fellow man. Well done thou good and faithful servant.

H.R. 702—TO ADAPT TO CHANGING CRUDE OIL MARKETS

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I voted against H.R. 702—to adapt to changing crude oil markets—on Friday, October 9th. This legislation will broadly remove almost all restrictions on crude oil exports from the United States. It was ill-advised and represented a huge missed opportunity to address our energy needs comprehensively.

Right now, we export limited amounts of crude oil from the United States, and this policy is working. There may come a time when it would be strategic to make an adjustment on our export strategy, but right now we are awash in oil in this country, gasoline prices are low and the President already has the latitude to help some of our strategic partners with limited U.S. exports if he deems it in the national interest.

Those in favor of exporting more crude tout benefits of job creation and lower gas prices. This is dramatically overstated. If some jobs are created in the oil fields, other jobs will be lost in refineries. The Energy Information Administration estimates that exporting more crude now would either have no impact on the cost of gasoline or only slightly reduce the price of gasoline. The real benefactors of this policy change would be large oil companies.

If Congress is going to provide yet another benefit to oil companies who don't need it, at the very least it should be part of a larger energy package that would actually help the American people and further our domestic energy security needs. We need to extend tax credits that support the wind and solar electricity sectors, industries that actually create far more jobs than would come from exporting more crude oil. We need to end some of the more egregious subsidies for the oil and gas sector, subsidies that cost the taxpayers billions of dollars every year. We need to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund which supports important conservation projects in every community in America. Instead of passing an isolated giveaway to big oil, we should take any energy legislation that comes to the floor as opportunity to look at energy comprehensively, with the ultimate goal of transitioning away from fossil fuels while keeping energy affordable and reliable for the American people.

If Republicans were actually serious about pursuing a bipartisan agenda, they would not have included provisions that broadly prevent the federal government from imposing any restriction on the export of crude oil under other authorities. They would not have included nongermane, vote-buying provisions such as the last-minute addition of funding for the Maritime Security Program (MSP). That is why I voted for an amendment offered by my colleague, Representative AMASH, to keep MSP at its currently authorized level, instead of the $500 million increase included in this legislation. There's no doubt that the sustainability of the MSP program is in question without increased funding. That is sadly the case for many federally-supported programs, all directly impacted by a Congress unwilling to provide additional revenue or compromise on an effort to finally eliminate the reckless sequestration caps that I've voted against since day one. Even if MSP were to receive the relief they need ahead of many others hurt by budgetary brinksmanship, the funding level ought to be carefully scrutinized. The highly debated, amended, and conferenced fiscal year 2016 Defense Authorization did exactly that, and concluded that the annual subsidy for MSP participants should increase from $3.1 million per vessel to $3.5 million per vessel—a 12.9 percent increase, not the 40 percent increase included in H.R. 702.

Overall, H.R. 702 was bad policy and represented a huge missed opportunity to address our real energy needs.

CELEBRATING LISA KORBATOV'S RECOGNITION BY THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Lisa Korbatov on her receipt of the Boy Scouts of America's Distinguished Citizen Award. This award is presented to individuals who have demonstrated leadership above and beyond the call of duty, and dedicated themselves to the betterment of their communities. Lisa's long and distinguished history of leadership throughout the greater Los Angeles area makes her an ideal choice for this great honor.

I have known Lisa for a long time, and I have seen the depth of her commitment to making Los Angeles a better place to live. I have seen the pride she takes in serving our community, and I have seen her work with her fellow Angelenos to improve our city.

Lisa and I share a passion for supporting local youth. Since 2009, she has served as a Governing Member of the Beverly Hills School Board, including a term as its President. In addition, she has served on the Board of Directors for USC Hillel at the University of Southern California, and the Jewish Education Trade School in Granada Hills.

She has been active in numerous youth-oriented community organizations, including Aviva Family and Children's Services, Vista Del Mar, and the Boy Scouts of America, Western Los Angeles County Council. And in 2013, she was honored with the ''Legacy of Hope'' award by Chai Lifeline, a charity that

helps support and inspire children with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses.

Lisa is not afraid to take bold and creative measures to help our children. She initiated and co-wrote a Los Angeles city resolution to institute a grading system for schools, similar to the way the city grades restaurants. In Beverly Hills, she has petitioned the school board for safer and more sanitary campuses, and even hired a photographer to help her document the campus conditions she was seeking to correct.

I also admire Lisa's support for Israel and the Jewish people: she has been a Board Member of the Israel Grants Fund, a Trustee of the Jewish Community Foundation, and a Senate Club member of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

Finally, Lisa is a distinguished L.A. businesswoman, and a superb example of the talent that women bring to leadership positions in our local businesses. She is a co-owner of the commercial property management company Amalgamated Real Estate Services, where she manages twenty Downtown and Westside commercial buildings.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Lisa Korbatov on her well-deserved honor from the Boy Scouts of America, and in urging her to keep up her great work to improve Los Angeles.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT NOAH DE KRUIF

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Noah De Kruif of Boy Scout Troop 98 in Urbandale, Iowa, for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Noah is the son of Jim and Elizabeth De Kruif of Johnston, Iowa.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about four percent of Boy Scouts earn the prestigious Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained for more than a century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout must pass specific tests organized by requirements and merit badges, and complete an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Noah has earned 21 merit badges as a Boy Scout. For his Eagle Scout Service Project he and his twin brother Nicholas, who is also an Eagle Scout, revitalized a local school, the Joshua Christian Academy. The project included a complete renovation of the landscaping, painting fresh lines in the parking lots, adding concrete barriers in areas of need, and making a sign to help identify the school. The staff at Joshua Christian Academy really appreciated the effort to make the school safer and more visually appealing.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Noah and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating him on reaching the rank of Eagle Scout and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

HONORING COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR ROOSEVELT HUGGINS, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Command Sergeant Major Roosevelt Huggins, U.S. Army, Retired. It brings me great pride to highlight the life of this great American.

CSM Huggins' service to his beloved nation began July 19, 1961, where he entered the Army at Ft. Hood, Texas. Upon his promotion to Sergeant in Okinawa, Japan, CSM Huggins was shipped out to Vietnam in 1965, where he would serve two tours. On November 6, 1966 while participating in Operation ''Eagle Shot Cow'' his battery was overrun by a Vietnamese Battalion. For his valiant efforts in Vietnam, CSM Huggins was awarded the Bronze Star and Army Commendation Award with Valor.

After Vietnam CSM Huggins was called to lead and teach in a variety of roles. From 1975–1981 CSM Huggins was assigned to Ft. Carlson, Colorado where he attended a boxing camp. There, he learned the skills that would bring Army Boxing back to Ft. Hood Texas.

CSM Huggins retired August 1, 1991 after more than 30 years of service in the U.S. Army that spanned five countries, war-time conflicts, and multiple states that called him to learn, lead, and teach his fellow soldiers the discipline and skills necessary to defend a nation. CSM Huggins continued his proud tradition of service to his fellow man after his retirement. In 1997 CSM Huggins organized the first Back to School—Stay in School program designed to promote both youth and adult education. CSM Huggins has served as a role model for youth and adults alike.

I am proud to have such a man residing right here in Texas so dedicated to the uplifting and betterment of the community in which he lives, works, and serves. May we all remember and honor this fine example of humility and service. I join CSM Huggins' wife Charmaine, their two sons, three granddaughters, family, and friends in wishing him nothing but the best in the years ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GREATER WILKES-BARRE ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Greater Wilkes-Barre Association of Realtors as they celebrate 100 years of service to the community. For the past century, the Association's members have helped families in their pursuit of the American dream of home ownership.

The Greater Wilkes-Barre Association of Realtors traces its origins with the establishment of Wilkes-Barre Real Estate Exchange in 1915. Today, with over 400 members, the organization is an affiliate of the National Association of Realtors and operates under the capable leadership of Charles Adonizio III. On January 1, 2016 the Greater Wilkes-Barre Association of Realtors plans to merge with its counterpart, the Greater Hazelton Association of Realtors. The two groups will form the Luzerne County Association of Realtors. With this consolidation, both organizations hope to provide more professional services to their members and to better serve all of Luzerne County.

It is an honor to recognize the Greater Wilkes-Barre Association of Realtors, and I applaud the organization and its members for a century of top-notch professional service to the community. I wish the Association all the best as its members continue their work for northeastern Pennsylvania through the new Luzerne County Association of Realtors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JODY B. HICE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 550 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3493—the Securing the Cities Act of 2015, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 551 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3350—the Know the CBRN Terrorism Threats to Transportation Act, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call Number 552 on suspending the rules and adopting H. Res. 348—a resolution supporting the right of the people of Ukraine to freely elect their government and determine their future, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

TRIBUTE TO DONALD AND JUANITA CLOUSE

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Donald and Juanita Clouse of Griswold, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary. They were married on September 24, 1950 in Tingley, Iowa.

Mr. Speaker, Donald and Juanita's lifelong commitment to each other and their children, Diane, Penny, Cindy and Steve, their grandchildren, and their great-grandchildren, truly embodies our Iowa values. I commend this great couple on their 65th 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.

TRIBUTE TO JERRY C. PRUIETT

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the career of veteran, community leader, and my longtime friend Jerry C. Pruiett, who will retire after a lifetime of work. Jerry's extraordinary commitment to community service reflects the best values of Central Texas; his strong work ethic and his friendly and inspiring attitude lifts all around him.

Jerry's military career was but a humble beginning of a life filled with love and service. A gifted athlete, Jerry turned down an opportunity to try out for the New York Mets to join the Navy. He served his country aboard two Navy aircraft carriers: the USS Coral Sea, known as the ''Ageless Warrior'', and the USS Enterprise, the world's first nuclear powered aircraft carrier.

After the Navy, Jerry continued life in the civil service for two more years at Kelly Air Force Base. Shortly thereafter, Jerry accepted a Job with ButterKrust Bakery and shouldered the responsibility of General Sales Manager for 28 years. In 2003, Jerry went to work for K&N Management and will retire on October 24, 2015

Over the years, Jerry found numerous ways to serve his fellow man in the Round Rock, Texas Community. In 2010 Jerry coordinated a successful golf tournament to support Nevus Outreach to help children born with skin diseases. Having seen his father diagnosed with Alzheimer's, Jerry wanted to do all he could to help those in need and would later organize a fundraiser in support of research into that debilitating disease.

When I reflect on Jerry's life of service and our friendship over the years I am reminded of the teachings of Christ when he taught, ''whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'' To Jerry, these are not mere words but a summons by which to live a fulfilling live. I am proud to call Jerry my friend. Round Rock is lucky to have him as a part of our growing community.

Retirement is to be celebrated and enjoyed. It is not the end of a career, but rather the beginning of a new adventure. I salute Jerry Pruiett for his hard work and dedication to his community. I wish him only the best in the years ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER, RECIPIENT OF THE LACKAWANNA PRO BONO'S ROBERT W. MUNLEY AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Women's Resource Center which will be awarded the 2015 Lackawanna Pro Bono's Robert W. Munley Award. Lackawanna Pro Bono is a non-profit organization established in 1997 to increase the availability of free legal representation for low-income individuals and families throughout Lackawanna County.

The Women's Resource Center is a non-profit organization located in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The Women's Resource Center is the sole provider of domestic violence and sexual assault services in Lackawanna and Susquehanna Counties. Since 1976, Women's Resource Center has provided free and confidential services that support justice, autonomy, restoration, and safety for adult and child survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. Women's Resource Center utilizes a holistic approach, providing crisis and advocacy services, safe housing, transitional housing and civil/legal representation for survivors. Programs are designed to be flexible to meet the needs of survivors from diverse ethnic, cultural, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. In 2014, Women's Resource Center provided services to 1,504 survivors of domestic violence and 297 survivors of sexual assault, providing safe housing for 145 families. Civil legal representation was provided for 110 program participants with 206 case filings.

Today, under the leadership of Executive Director Peg Ruddy, the Women's Resource Center remains a dynamic force in northeastern Pennsylvania, helping over 50,000 women and children in Lackawanna and Susquehanna Counties rebuild their lives free of violence and fear since beginning operations. Of that number, 42,138 were adult and child victims of domestic violence and 9,949 victims of sexual abuse. Those reaching out for help come from all walks of life, socioeconomic backgrounds, education, ethnicities, and sexual orientation. Services are free and extended to everyone, including family members, adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, and men in same sex relationships.

It is an honor to recognize the Women's Resource Center for the great service it has done for the community, and I extend my congratulations on being awarded the Lackawanna Pro Bono's Robert W. Munley Award. I commend the Women's Resource Center for the great efforts it puts forth to make northeastern Pennsylvania a better community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following remarks regarding my absence from votes which occurred on October 9, 2015. I departed from Washington due to the flood crisis in the district to accompany Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson and Red Cross National President Gail McGovern.

1) H.R. 702—To Adapt to Changing Crude Oil Market Conditions—YES; Amash Amendment 1—NO; Messer Amendment 5—YES; Messer Amendment 6—YES; Motion to recommit H.R. 702—NO.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT NICHOLAS DE KRUIF

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Nicholas De Kruif of Boy Scout Troop 98 in Urbandale, Iowa, for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Nicholas is the son of Jim and Elizabeth De Kruif of Johnston, Iowa.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about four percent of Boy Scouts earn the prestigious Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained for more than a century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout must pass specific tests organized by requirements and merit badges, and complete an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Nicholas has earned 21 merit badges as a Boy Scout. For his Eagle Scout Service Project he and his twin brother Noah, who is also an Eagle Scout, revitalized a local school, the Joshua Christian Academy. The project included a complete renovation of the landscaping, painting fresh lines in the parking lots, adding concrete barriers in areas of need, and making a sign to help identify the school. The staff at Joshua Christian Academy really appreciated the effort to make the school safer and more visually appealing.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Nicholas and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating him on reaching the rank of Eagle Scout and in wishing him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL MEDICAL ASSISTANTS WEEK

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor all medical assistant professionals as we observe National Medical Assistants Week.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, medical assisting is one of our country's fastest growing occupations with an estimated 584,000 men and women serving nationwide. These medical professionals are central figures in the health care industry as they promote, support, and help maintain cooperative and successful relationships between patients and physicians.

In the U.S., medical assistants have traditionally held jobs almost exclusively in ambulatory care centers, urgent care facilities, and clinics, but this is now changing. Today, medical assistants work in private and public hospitals, inpatient and outpatient facilities, assisted living facilities, or in general practice and specialists' offices. Operating with a wide

array of skills at their disposal, medical assistants are responsible for administrative roles such as scheduling appointments, maintaining medical records, recording billing and coding information for insurance purposes, as well as performing clinical duties like taking and recording vital signs, completing medical histories, preparing patients for examination, drawing blood, and administering medications as directed by a physician.

With their unique versatility, medical assistants are assets to the medical field that serves both doctors and patients with loyalty and dedication. It is a privilege to recognize these honorable men and women who are committed to health care and work diligently to heal fellow citizens and others in our country. I wish all who pursue this worthy vocation the best, and I urge all Americans to be aware of their sizeable contributions to our health care system.

REAUTHORIZING THE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND AND ITS IMPACT ON OHIO'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the need for federal highway and transit programs across the nation and for Republican leadership to pass the Highway Trust Fund.

Federal highway and transit programs are vitally important to the third congressional district of Ohio, which I proudly represent.

The design, construction, and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in the third congressional district supports 15,184 full-time jobs, earning these families a total of $602.1 million annually.

Between 2005 and 2014, the federal investment in my congressional district has provided $1.4 billion to support 380 highway and bridge projects worth $2.1 billion.

Republican Leadership's failure to enact a robust, long-term funding bill for our decaying infrastructure system, is hurting our economy and hardworking American families all across our nation.

Mr. Speaker, a long-term bill helps provide good-paying jobs, safe and modern infrastructure, and efficient transportation.

Let's reauthorize the Highway and Transit Trust Fund today, before the October 29th deadline.

HONORING COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR GEORGE FRANCIS (FRANK) MINOSKY, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Command Sergeant Major George Francis (Frank) Minosky, U.S. Army, Retired. CSM Minosky answered the call to defend our great nation for over 25 years. Today he lives in Belton, Texas where he continues to serve his fellow countrymen as a vibrant part of his growing central Texas community.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio CSM Minosky entered the Army in 1970. After a period of rigorous initial entry training, he was assigned to the legendary 82nd Airborne Division. Due to impeccable achievement and promotion to the non-commissioned officer ranks, he was selected for drill sergeant training in 1975. In this capacity, CSM Minosky provided superior leadership and shared his tactical expertise with thousands of recruits at Forts Ord and Sill.

Following his assignment as a drill sergeant, CSM Minosky served in Korea, Fort Bragg, and Hawaii. CSM Minosky's career culminated at Ft Hood, Texas where he retired in 1995 after 25 years of dedicated service. His last official assignment in the United States Army was Command Sergeant Major of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, a critical and prestigious assignment. Among a long list of accomplishments, CSM Minosky earned the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Expert Infantryman Badge, and the Master Parachutist Badge.

Upon retiring, CSM Minosky's sense of duty did not end with his active military service. Frank Minosky's dedication to country and soldiers manifested in his efforts with the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 10377, American Military Retiree Association, Enlisted Retiree Association, Fort Hood Commanding Generals Retiree Council, and the Chief of Staff Army's Retirees Council. Frank Minosky is also an active member of the Association for the United States Army and the First Cavalry Division Association.

Frank Minosky firmly embraced central Texas as his new home in 1992; since then, he has become an indispensable local community leader. Belton, TX singled Frank out as its Citizen of the year on one occasion. He has served superbly as a Belton City Councilman and presently contributes on the Belton Planning and Zoning Board. The good people of Central Texas are blessed to have him among us.

I am stirred with the strongest sense of pride and honor as an American to highlight the life of a true servant of the people. CSM Minosky's patriotism and commitment to service reflect the very best values of our beloved military servicemen and Central Texas. Let today be a celebration of one of our nation's heroes who devoted his life to keeping us free and making America a beacon of hope in the world. Along with his friends, family, and loved ones, I wish him both a happy, prosperous, and healthy life in the years ahead.

HONOR THE WORKERS AT THE MAPLE RIDGE WIND FARM

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the workers at the Maple Ridge Wind Farm in my district. Many of their employees recently visited Washington, calling on Congress to pass policy that drives more clean energy solutions. Not only does the Maple Ridge Wind Farm supply the electricity needs for 96,000 homes in upstate New York, but since it became a part of the community in 2006, it has also provided $8 million a year in tax revenues to Lewis County. What has this meant for the community? Well, at Lowville Academy and Central School, they have been able to add 11 positions to the payroll, add 10 advanced placement classes and keep other important programs such as art and music, all thanks to the added tax revenue from the wind project. This has been a remarkable advantage for this school district and the surrounding community. I want to thank the 35 employees—all of whom are local to upstate New York—who keep the Maple Ridge Wind Farm operating. I urge my colleagues to support clean energy incentives, like the Production Tax Credit, which has not only helped the U.S. become the leader in wind energy, but at a local level, drives private investments that can have such a positive impact on our rural communities.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. ROBERT WRIGHT, RECIPIENT OF THE LACKAWANNA PRO BONO'S ROBERT W. MUNLEY AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Robert Wright, recipient of the 2015 Lackawanna Pro Bono's Robert W. Munley Award. Lackawanna Pro Bono is a non-profit organization established in 1997 to increase the availability of free legal representation for low-income individuals and families throughout Lackawanna County.

Credited with transforming the training given to doctors in northeastern Pennsylvania, Dr. Wright is the former president and CEO of the Wright Center for Graduate Medical Education. Originally established by Dr. Wright in 1977 as the Scranton Temple Residency Program, it was renamed in 2010 to honor Dr. Wright. Since its founding, The Wright Center's mission is to continuously improve education and patient care in a collaborative spirit in order to enhance health care outcomes, access, and affordability. The program includes all three Scranton hospitals and clinics in Scranton, Archbald, and Clarks Summit. Dr. Wright also played an integral role in establishing The Commonwealth Medical College in Scranton and generated significant community support for the endeavor.

Dr. Wright is a graduate of the Temple School of Medicine. He completed his residency training in Internal Medicine at Temple and fellowship training in Hematology and Oncology at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is a Professor of Medicine at Temple University and also holds a volunteer faculty appointment at The Commonwealth Medical College. Dr. Wright was the Founding Chair of The Commonwealth Medical College Board and currently chairs its Academic Affairs and Compliance Committees.

It is an honor to recognize Dr. Robert Wright for the pioneering work he has done for the medical community, and I extend my congratulations to him on being awarded the

Lackawanna Pro Bono's Robert W. Munley Award. I commend Dr. Robert Wright for all the effort he has put forth to make northeastern Pennsylvania a better place to live.

TRIBUTE TO THE POULOS FAMILY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dan, Kathy, and Pete Poulos, of the Pizza King Restaurant in Council Bluffs, Iowa. For 50 years, Pizza King has been a landmark in the business community. It was founded in 1965, and has been a family-owned operation since its inception.

Pizza King has hosted events of all kinds, from wedding rehearsal dinners, to children's parties, to anniversary celebrations. Pizza King has been the restaurant of choice for a quiet dinner for two, a business meeting, or a gathering of over 100. The Poulos Family works together to provide outstanding customer service each and every day. The Pizza King Restaurant is a Council Bluffs institution and has provided delicious food, paired with a warm and inviting atmosphere, for generations of diners.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Dan, Kathy, Pete and the entire Poulos family for 50 years of dedicated service to Council Bluffs and southwest Iowa. I urge my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Pizza King and its owners for this outstanding achievement. I wish the Poulos family and staff nothing but the best moving forward.

TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT JIM TORRES, U.S. AIR FORCE, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Master Sergeant Jim Torres, U.S. Air Force, Retired for his 23 years of dedication, loyalty, and honorable service to our great nation and his continued outstanding community involvement. His has been a life lived in devoted service to others.

MSgt Torres served 3 tours in Vietnam, all as a volunteer. For his selfless service to our country, he was awarded the Bronze Star, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry for heroic combat action among other awards.

Upon retirement, MSgt Torres continues to serve his fellow veterans in Round Rock, Texas in countless ways. He serves in an involved role in El Amistad, an organization dedicated to helping high school seniors go to college or trade school. MSgt Torres has long been a volunteer at the VA hospital in Kerrville where he takes on an active role reaching out to patients. Known locally as a "one man veteran's help line" he engages in conversations with veterans to hear their story and help with any problem they might be having. MSgt Torres' service doesn't simply stop at conversations with his fellow veterans; he also volunteers at the local Round Rock Veteran's thrift store where proceeds go to help Central Texas veterans. He is beloved by the community for these selfless actions.

MSgt Torres is a quiet hero who takes on community tasks for his fellow man to seek and ensure that local veterans receive the recognition they deserve. I commend him for his selfless service to the United States Air Force and especially to his community. He has been a shining example and direct reflection of the very best values of our nation by his acts of patriotism, citizenship, and commitment to service. I wish him and his family all the best in the future.

SITE COMMISSIONS

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit a letter that I and my colleagues sent to the FCC asking for an end to site commissions.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the FCC will finally take action to reform prison telephone rates also known as Inmate Calling Services. This action is long overdue. The inmate calling service industry is a monopoly with less than three dominant players. Basically, each correctional facility contracts with one of the big players to be an exclusive service provider. While there is a bidding process, the companies typically agree to pay a percentage of their profits back to the department in exchange for the contract. (an average of 48 percent according to Prison Legal News). Simply, the company that can offer the largest "Kickbacks" wins the contract. This is purely "reverse competition". Operating without regulation or proper oversight this shadowy industry has taken advantage of millions of families and their loved ones.

I must mention two citizens critical in my education on this process. First is Charlie Sullivan of CURE a tireless prison reform advocate who approached me over 10 years ago about this injustice. The second is Ms. Martha Wright, a grandmother, who in 2003 filed a class action lawsuit against these unscrupulous businesses alleging they charged "exorbitant and unconscionable long-distance rates.

In 2005, I first introduced The Family Telephone Connection Protection Act, calling for more competition, rate caps and an end to these insane and insidious "Kickbacks" also known as "site commissions"—which is just a polite name for "Bribery".

For too many years we have allowed predatory companies like Securus to gauge these faceless and voiceless families who are already emotionally and financially devastated. It is unreasonable, unjust and unacceptable to pay $17 for a 15 minute call or $300 dollars a month to talk to a loved one.

Mr. Speaker, more than two million Americans are currently incarcerated in our nation's jails and prisons. Their chances for rehabilitation and a successful return to society are vastly improved if they can remain in communication with their families, children, and critical support services. Expensive phone call rates deter such communication and result in recidivism and costly re-incarceration.

After a decade of no oversight, no regulation and no transparency the FCC has a chance tomorrow to finally right a wrong to a powerless segment of our society.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, October 20, 2015.

Hon. TOM WHEELER,
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WHEELER: More than two million Americans are currently incarcerated in our nation's jails and prisons. Their chances for rehabilitation and a successful return to society are vastly improved if they can remain in communication with their families, children, and critical support services. Expensive phone call rates deter such communication and result in recidivism and costly re-incarceration.

For the past decade we, the undersigned Members of Congress, have been imploring the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to provide a market-based solution to curb these high telephone rates (see the Family Telephone Connection Protection Act, first introduced in the 109th Congress). The Commission is poised on October 22, 2015, to approve a final order on comprehensive inmate calling services (ICS) and we firmly believe that such comprehensive reform is needed to rein in the predatory practices in the ICS marketplace. The lack of competition and the out of control site commissions paid to correctional facilities are partly the cause of these skyrocketing costs. Simply put, up to 60 percent of what prisoners' families pay to receive phone calls from their incarcerated loved ones has nothing to do with the cost of the phone services provided. These artificial rates account for hundreds of millions of dollars paid to state prison systems for exclusive contracts.

For several years, the Commission has correctly concluded that unconstrained site commission practices are the most significant contributing factor to high ICS rates. In its 2013 order, Reducing High Inmate Calling Rates, the Commission cited many examples demonstrating the correlation of site commission and high phones rates.

On September 15, 2015, the Commission outlined in a fact sheet that it "strongly discourages site commissions" but did not provide any assurance that it plans to eliminate or curb this predatory practice. It also outlined a rate cap of $1.65 for intrastate, interstate, and international calls. Although establishing a rate cap is a step in the right direction, we believe it must be coupled with eliminating site commissions in order to yield the lowest possible phone rates. We, therefore, urge the Commission to use its statutory authority under Sections 201 and 276 to address site commissions when it undertakes comprehensive ICS reform.

We have all heard the stories and cries of our constituents who, at times, have had to pay up to $17 for a 15 minute call just to stay in touch with their incarcerated loved ones. We know all too well that ongoing contact between the incarcerated and their families reduces the rate of recidivism in our society. Ending these predatory practices of price gouging at the expense of families is a human rights issue. As the Commission moves towards a vote on ICS, we urge you to exercise the fullest extent of your jurisdiction to protect and service more vulnerable consumers.

Sincerely,

BOBBY L. RUSH,
Member of Congress.
G. K. BUTTERFIELD,
Member of Congress.
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON,

Member of Congress.
CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Member of Congress.
MARCIA L. FUDGE,
Member of Congress.

TRIBUTE TO DALE AND JANICE WARD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dale and Janice Ward of Council Bluffs, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. They married in 1965.

Dale and Janice's lifelong commitment to each other and their children, Jill and Lisa, along with their grandchildren, truly embodies our Iowa values. I commend this great 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.

THE PASSING OF WORLD WAR II VETERAN AND PEARL HARBOR SURVIVOR EDWARD F. BORUCKI

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to speak about the passing of one of western Massachusetts' heroes, World War II veteran and survivor of the Pearl Harbor attack, Edward F. Borucki.

Edward was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts to Polish immigrants and worked as a machinist apprentice until he decided to enlist in the Navy in 1940. After going through training in Newport, Rhode Island, he was shipped to the Pacific and assigned to the light cruiser, the USS *Helena*. He moved through the ranks to Yeoman Third Class aboard the vessel and worked in the forward engine room. On the morning of December 7, 1941, Edward was running to his station when the first torpedo hit the forward engine room and knocked him into a bulkhead. He was only thirty seconds from being in the section that was destroyed. He helped seal the section of the ship off and help in anyway he could. After the attack was over, Edward helped carry his wounded and dead shipmates up out of the section and to the hospital.

After the USS *Helena* was transferred back to California for repairs, Edward was transferred to the USS *Rockaway* and then preceded to attend various training schools. In 1944, Edward married his late wife, Viola Mul of Southampton. A year later, he left the Navy with the rank of Chief Petty Officer. Edward was able to take advantage of the GI Bill to get a business degree at American International College in Springfield, MA and a Masters degree at Boston University. Starting in 1955, Edward taught at Chicopee High School and later Chicopee Comprehensive High School until he retired.

Edward never forgot about his experiences in the war and the need to show appreciation to veterans. He was a fixture at a multitude of events honoring veterans around western Massachusetts. He worked for ten years as a veteran's agent in Southampton, helping veterans work through what services are available to them. In the early 2000s, Edward led an effort to get a bridge on Route 5 over the Manhan River dedicated to all those who lost their lives and the survivors of the Pearl Harbor attack. He commented during the campaign to express why the bridge should be named for the Pearl Harbor veterans, "War is hell. We who were in it never want to see another again." Lawmakers in Massachusetts gladly listened to his request and in 2005, the Pearl Harbor Veterans Memorial Bridge.

Mr. Speaker, Edward Borucki was a fine example of the men and women that put their lives on the line for our freedom against the threat of tyranny during the Second World War and who served their community selflessly afterward. I would like to extend my condolences to his family, including his seven sons, and let them know that the thoughts of a grateful nation are with them.

HONORING LIEUTENANT COLONEL MAJOR STEWART, U.S. AIR FORCE, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Colonel Major Stewart, U.S. Air Force, Retired. It is my great honor to highlight the life of this humble American.

Lt. Col. Stewart enlisted in the Army Air Corp in August of 1941 and served throughout the duration of World War II. Millions of Americans answered the call and sacrificed when our Allies were in trouble; Lt. Col. Stewart was no exception. As a bomber pilot, he completed 70 missions while serving in the Pacific Fleet; 39 of these in the legendary B–25 Mitchell Bomber. Lt. Col. Stewart later transitioned to the B–24; it was in this aircraft that Colonel Stewart would lead a decisive mission to attack a key enemy oil refinery.

The strategic oil-refinery at Balikpapen, Borneo produced over thirty percent of Japan's wartime fuel supply and was heavily defended by enemy fighters and anti-aircraft weapons. On October 14, 1944, Lt. Col. Stewart led a formation of dangerously overloaded B–24 bombers on a daylight bombing run in what was one of the longest flights ever undertaken in the Southwest Pacific. Dedication to mission enabled him to stay the course and place bombs on target despite the damage his plane experienced on approach from enemy fire. For his heroism and extraordinary achievement, Lt. Col. Stewart was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, one of the highest honors the military bestows.

I know Lt. Col. Stewart wouldn't boast of his service during WWII, a trying time for our Nation, yet it is his type of heroic actions that led to the defeat of the Axis allies and the evil they spread. Lt. Col. Stewart's achievements didn't stop there. He was awarded the Asiatic-Pacific Theatre Campaign Ribbon with four Bronze Stars for the New Guinea, Bismarck Archipelago, Northern Solomon, and Mandated Islands Campaigns.

Upon return to reserve duty in November of 1945, Lt. Col. Stewart maintained airplanes at Tinker Air Force Base. Yearning to give greater service to his community, he attended school and became a math teacher. After retiring from both the U.S. Air Force Reserves and a teaching career in California, he made his way to Texas. Today Lt. Col. Stewart and his wife live in Cedar Park where he was recently presented a key to the City by Cedar Park Mayor and City Council at the WWII Veteran's Recognition Ceremony. We are honored to have such a humble hero in our midst.

These few meager words cannot fully express the gratitude I share for Lt. Col. Stewart and the brave service he has given. I join his family, friends, and loved ones in deep appreciation for his service to the Nation. May we all follow the example of bravery, heroism, and humility he displays everyday as part of the greatest generation that ever lived.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $18,152,669,947,434.69. We've added $7,525,792,989,521.61 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.

TRIBUTE TO CRAIG AND LINDA WOLTMANN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Craig and Linda Woltmann of Walnut, Iowa, on the very special occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. They were married on September 12, 1965, at the First Presbyterian Church in Walnut.

Craig and Linda's lifelong commitment to each other, their daughter, Wendy, and their grandchildren, truly embodies our Iowa values. I commend this great 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.

HONORING DR. ROBERT R. HOLMES

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Robert R. Holmes for his

outstanding achievements in the field of engineering. Dr. Holmes was honored in New York on October 13th with the 2015 Government Civil Engineer of the Year award. This award recognizes distinguished civil engineers employed in public service for significant engineering contributions.

Dr. Holmes earned a Bachelor of Science in 1987 and Master of Science in 1989 at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in civil engineering. Dr. Holmes continued his education earning a Ph.D. in civil and environmental engineering from the University of Illinois and began his teaching career soon after. He has taught as an assistant adjunct professor at the University of Illinois since 2006 and adjunct professor at Missouri S&T since 2008.

For over 28 years, Dr. Holmes has worked as a hydrologist and leading member of the United States Geological Survey. He currently serves as a national flood hazard specialist and the senior adviser on flood science and response for the United States Geological Survey. His United States Geological Survey colleagues have given high praise for his contributions to water resources engineering and flood hazards management during his time there.

Dr. Robert R. Holmes is a model of excellence in his field and it is my pleasure to recognize him before the United States House of Representatives.

IN RECOGNITION OF NEW MEXICAN ORGANIZATIONS RECOGNIZED AS ''BRIGHT SPOTS'' BY THE WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR HISPANICS

HON. BEN RAY LUJÁN

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three New Mexican organizations that have gone above and beyond in serving Hispanic students in my home state of New Mexico. Their outstanding work earned them recognition by the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics as ''Bright Spots.'' Bright Spots are described as organizations or programs that help to close the achievement gap.

A total of six organizations in New Mexico have been recognized by the White House and three of those organizations are located in New Mexico's third congressional district. The Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation (LANLF) encourages Hispanic academic excellence through the support of educational programs. LANLF created programs to support early childhood learning, STEM elementary education, as well as college/workforce development. The second organization in our district is New Mexico Highlands University's Achieving in Research Math and Science (ARMAS). ARMAS has increased the number of Hispanic students earning a Bachelor's of Science degree in a STEM field at the university level. The third organization to receive recognition within our district is ⟨Santa Fe YouthWorks! This is a program dedicated to targeting at-risk youth in order to ensure that they have the educational, leadership and life skills to succeed and get ahead.

These programs help raise awareness about Hispanic education and the need to address the achievement gap while serving as models of best practices for successfully engaging our diverse population. Together, these programs have helped countless Hispanics achieve academic and social success. These organizations have had a tremendous effect within their particular communities and on New Mexico as a state, by increasing the number of Hispanic students who attain educational degrees. I applaud these outstanding organizations for contributing to Hispanic academic success in New Mexico.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL ROBERT SHOEMAKER OF THE U.S. ARMY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of General Robert Shoemaker of the U.S. Army. For more than 36 years Gen. Shoemaker served his country in many of our most trying times and has honored both his nation and the Army through his long and distinguished military service.

Robert Shoemaker hails from Almont, Michigan. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant upon graduation from West Point in 1946. Early troop assignments included Platoon Leader and Company Commander in Germany from which he went on to serve in Korea. General Shoemaker also served numerous tours in Vietnam and excelled through several echelons of Command.

His hard work did not go unrecognized. General Shoemaker rose to the highest levels of the military and was promoted to four star general and led the U.S. Army Forces (FORSCOM). This command consists of more than 750,000 soldiers, nearly 90 percent of the Army's combat power, and provides expeditionary, campaign-capable land forces to combatant commanders. Under his steady leadership, FORSCOM held fast and true to its motto as ''Freedom's Guardian.''

Life after retirement for Gen. Shoemaker continues to be one of humble service that feeds his passion to help his fellow man. Gen. Shoemaker has served eight years as the County Commissioner for Bell County, three years as the Heart O' Texas council for the Boy Scouts, and served on the Board of United Way for Texas. Today, Gen. Shoemakers days are filled with regular attendance at extra-curricular activities in the Killeen-Fort Hood area.

When I reflect on the life and service of Gen. Shoemaker, I am reminded of an oft quoted passage by J. M. Barrie, ''the life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story, and writes another; and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what he vowed to make it.'' I have little doubt Gen. Shoemaker will find any discrepancies when he compares his diaries.

TRIBUTE TO EAGLE SCOUT CARL DEAN CARR

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Carl Dean Carr of Boy Scout Troop 40 in Des Moines, Iowa, for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the prestigious Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained for more than a century.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. For his project, Carl worked with the FOCUS program at Hoyt Middle School in Des Moines. FOCUS is a collaborative program between Des Moines Public Schools and Broadlawns Medical Center. They provide academic and counseling services for at-risk students between 3rd and 8th grade. Carl led a group of students that created signs with self-talk statements for a coping area in the school. Students are able to utilize this area when they are having a tough day so they can compose themselves and rejoin the classroom. The work ethic Carl has shown in his Eagle Project and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself and assisting his community.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent Carl and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in congratulating him on reaching the rank of Eagle Scout, and I wish him nothing but continued success in his future education and career.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF KEVIN MASON

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. HURT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, Representative BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and I submit these remarks to commemorate the life of Kevin Anderson Mason, who passed away October 1, 2015 at age 44.

Mr. Mason—a native of Altavista, Virginia who resided with his family in Clovis, New Mexico—was working in Afghanistan as a civilian contractor. On the evening of October 1, 2015, shortly after taking off from the Jalalabad Airfield in Afghanistan, a terrible tragedy occurred when a C–130J crashed, killing six United States airmen and five civilian contractors, including Mr. Mason.

Mr. Mason was a 1990 graduate of Altavista High School and honorably served in the

United States Air Force for ten years. He will forever be remembered by his classmates, teammates, and members of the Altavista community as a warm, welcoming, kind-hearted man. Mr. Mason was a star member of Altavista High School's basketball team, and school principal Ty Gafford and coach Dean Hubbard remember him fondly as a cornerstone of the Altavista community. He left behind a wife of nineteen years, Tammy, who he met while stationed at Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis, New Mexico, and their three sons, KJ, Brandon, and Devin, all of whom currently reside in Clovis.

We are forever grateful for Mr. Mason's years of service in the U.S. Air Force and his continued service and sacrifice in defending our nation. Our thoughts and prayers are with the entire Mason family, the Altavista and Clovis communities that mourn his loss, and with all of the families who lost loved ones in this tragic incident.

HONORING GIDEON R. BRADY

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gideon R. Brady from St. James, Missouri for his achievements as a cadet in the Civil Air Patrol. Gideon is set to receive the General Billy Mitchell Award for his service, one of the most prestigious honors that a cadet can earn. This award is only achieved after passing comprehensive leadership and aerospace exams, as well as a strenuous physical fitness test.

Gideon began his service in the Civil Air Patrol in 2013 with a deep interest in aerospace and rockets. An emphasis on service runs in Gideon's family, as his father Terry is a Chaplain in the Civil Air Patrol and proudly guides him as he progresses through the ranks.

Gideon has proven himself to be an exemplary cadet and it is my pleasure to recognize him before the United States House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO THE CORNING CENTER FOR THE FINE ARTS

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Corning Center for the Fine Arts (CCFA) as they celebrate their 10th anniversary bringing art and culture to southwest Iowa.

CCFA, housed in a renovated and repurposed building in Corning, opened its doors on Sept 30, 2005. Its studio and gallery were modeled to create an attractive environment for its artist in residence program and has two renovated apartments above for those artists. Since 2006, the art center has been home to 16 artists that have come from the United States and abroad. CCFA also holds annual student art shows to encourage young people to explore their talents.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent the Corning Center for the Fine Arts and its hard working employees and volunteers in the United States Congress. I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating them on their 10th anniversary and wishing them nothing but continued success.

HONORING SERGEANT MAJOR GUADALUPE LOPEZ, U.S. ARMY, RETIRED

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished service in both the military and civilian life of Sergeant Major Guadalupe Lopez, U.S. Army, Retired. SGM Lopez has served with distinction as a guardian of this great nation for over 26 years. Today SGM Lopez continues his service to the country he loves in many capacities in the Killeen—Fort Hood community.

SGM Lopez entered the U.S. Army in September 1954. While he served in a multitude of capacities, his fondest memories are of the tour he served in Vietnam. SGM Lopez spent most of his time planning tactical operations against the enemy on the front lines. While in Vietnam, SGM Lopez was awarded the Bronze Star for his heroic actions on Nov 20, 1969 when his helicopter came under heavy fire.

SGM Lopez retired in March of 1980. While the days of a regimented life in uniform have passed, he still finds ways to serve his fellow soldiers. SGM Lopez served as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of America Post Commander for four years. Today SGM Lopez serves as a member of the Ft. Hood Retiree Council, a position assumed in 2008.

SGM Lopez is also well known for his work as the co-chairman of the Killeen Veteran's Day Parade and the Memorial Day Ceremony held at the Central Texas Veteran's Cemetery since 2007. While the long list of accomplishments and service rendered to his fellow soldiers is too lengthy to be enumerated here, I will use SGM Lopez' own words to convey the sense of dedication he has to his friends and veterans: "We are soldiers for life; we hung up only the suit, we're still connected."

I commend SGM Lopez for his selfless service to his nation and to the United States Army. His leadership has positively impacted soldiers and families that he has served. May we all strive to live a life full of service such as his.

TAKING ACTION ON EUROPE'S WORST REFUGEE CRISIS SINCE WORLD WAR II

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday I convened a Helsinki Commission hearing to scrutinize the European refugee crisis and help determine the most effective ways in which the U.S., the European Union, and the OSCE can and should respond.

The Syrian displacement crisis that has consumed seven countries in the Middle East has become the biggest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. At least 250,000 people have been killed in Syria's civil war, many of them civilians.

The security forces of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad's security forces have been responsible for many of these killings, targeting neighborhoods with barrel bombs and shooting civilians point-blank. ISIS has committed genocide, mass atrocities, and war crimes, against Christians and other minorities, and likewise targeted, brutalized and killed Shia and Sunni Muslims who reject its ideology and brutality.

Fleeing for safety, more than four million Syrians are refugees, the largest refugee population in the world, and another 7.6 million Syrians are displaced inside their home country.

Syria's neighbors—Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, and Egypt—are hosting most of these refugees. Before the Syria crisis, these countries struggled with high rates of unemployment, strained public services, and a range of other domestic challenges. Since the conflict began, Syrian refugees have become a quarter of Lebanon's population, and Iraq, which has been beset by ISIS and sectarian conflict, is hosting almost 250,000 refugees from Syria.

Until this past summer, few Syrian refugees went beyond countries that border their homeland. Syrian refugees and migrants from a range of countries have since come to Europe in such large numbers, and so quickly, that many European countries, especially front-line entry points like Greece, transit countries like Serbia, and destination countries like Germany, have been challenged to respond.

The UN High Commission for Refugees, UNHCR, reports that more than 635,000 refugees and migrants have arrived in Europe by sea in 2015. Fifty three percent of these people are from Syria, sixteen percent from Afghanistan, six percent from Eritrea, and five percent from Iraq. Notably, only fourteen percent of them are women, twenty percent are children, and the remaining sixty five percent are men.

The European crisis requires a response that is European, national, and international, and the United States is essential to it. There must be effective coordination and communication directly between countries as well as through and with entities like the OSCE and European Union. Individual countries also must have the flexibility to respond best to the particular circumstances in their own countries.

The response must address "push" factors, like economic challenges and aid short-falls in countries like Syria's neighbors that have been hosting refugees. It must also address "pull" factors, like decisions individual European countries have made that have attracted refugees.

There is real human need and desperation. Refugees are entrusting themselves to smugglers and where there is human smuggling there is a higher risk of human trafficking. I am especially concerned about the risk of abuse, exploitation, and enslavement, of women and children. Already we are hearing reports that some European countries are failing to protect women and girls from sexual assault and forced prostitution. The lack of separate bathroom facilities for males and females, rooms

that can be locked, and other basic measures, enable such attacks. There is no excuse for such failures and everything must be done to ensure that women and children are safe.

There is also the real threat that terrorist groups like ISIS will infiltrate these massive movements of people to kill civilians in Europe and beyond. I am deeply concerned that the screening at many European borders is inadequate and putting lives at risk. All of us must be responsive to the humanitarian needs without compromising one iota on security. European response plans should include specifics about strengthening security screening throughout the European region.

During the conflict in Kosovo, I travelled to Stenkovec refugee camp in Macedonia and was at the McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey to welcome some of the 4,400 people brought from there to the United States. A refugee—Agron Abdullahu—was apprehended and sent to jail in 2008 for supplying guns and ammunition to the ''Fort Dix 5''—a group of terrorists who were also sent to prison for plotting to kill American soldiers at the Fort Dix military installation.

Given Secretary Kerry's announcement in September that the United States intends to resettle at least 85,000 refugees in fiscal year 2016, including at least 10,000 Syrians, and at least 100,000 refugees in fiscal year 2017, the United States and Europe must be on high alert to weed out terrorists from real refugees. Because religious and ethnic minorities often have additional risks and vulnerabilities even as refugees, they should be prioritized for resettlement.

Tuesday's hearing examined the ''who'' is arriving, the ''why'' they are coming to Europe, and the ''what'' has been done and should be done in response. European governments, entities like the OSCE and the EU, and civil society all have critical roles to play.

The United States has been the leading donor to the humanitarian crisis inside Syria and refugee crisis in the region. We also have the largest refugee admissions program in the world. However, according to Tuesday's testimony from Shelly Pitterman, Regional Representative for the UN High Commission for Refugees, ''The current inter-agency Syrian Regional Refugee and Resilience (3RP) plan for 2015 is only 41 percent funded, which has meant cuts in food aid for thousands of refugees.''

Globally, he warned, ''The humanitarian system is financially broke. We are no longer able to meet even the absolute minimum requirements of core protection and lifesaving assistance to preserve the human dignity of the people we care for. The current funding level for the 33 UN appeals to provide humanitarian assistance to 82 million people around the world is only 42 percent. UNHCR expects to receive just 47 percent of the funding we need this year.''

At the hearing, Sean Callahan, Chief Operating Officer of Catholic Relief Services, said, ''As global leaders in the international humanitarian and refugee response, the U.S. and Europe must heed Pope Francis' call and find new ways to alleviate the suffering and protect the vulnerable.'' I could not agree more. In the 20th and 21th centuries, the United States and Europe have come together to address the great challenges of our time and this is an opportunity to do so again.

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, October 22, 2015 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

OCTOBER 27

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States military strategy in the Middle East.

SD–G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement's proposed Stream Protection Rule.

SD–366

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the Internal Revenue Service's response to Committee recommendations contained in its August 5, 2015 report.

SD–215

Committee on Foreign Relations

To receive a closed briefing on the Administration's response to the Syrian conflict.

SVC–217

1:30 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency to examine ongoing challenges at the Secret Service and their government-wide implications.

HVC–210

OCTOBER 28

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the United States role and strategy in the Middle East.

SD–419

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the state of rural banking, focusing on challenges and consequences.

SD–538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Jessica Rosenworcel, of the District of Columbia, to be a Member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of five years from July 1, 2015.

SR–253

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development

To hold hearings to examine realizing the potential of the Department of Energy national laboratories.

SD–138

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security

To hold hearings to examine retirement plan options for small businesses.

SH–216

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the state of our nation's biodefense.

SD–342

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine Department of Veterans Affairs mental health, focusing on ensuring access to care.

SR–418

3:30 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Peter William Bodde, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to Libya, Marc Jonathan Sievers, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, Elisabeth I. Millard, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan, and Kenneth Damian Ward, of Virginia, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as United States Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, all of the Department of State, and John Morton, of Massachusetts, to be Executive Vice President of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

SD–419

OCTOBER 29

10 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., of Virginia, to be an Under Secretary of State (Political Affairs).

SD–419

CORRECTION

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S7367–S7426

Measures Introduced: Seven bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 2187–2193, and S. Res. 291. **Page S7413**

Measures Reported:

Special Report entitled ''Legislative and Oversight Activities During the 113th Congress by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs''. (S. Rept. No. 114–156) **Page S7413**

Measures Passed:

Superstorm Sandy Relief and Disaster Loan Program Improvement Act: Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 208, to improve the disaster assistance programs of the Small Business Administration, and the bill was then passed, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S7406–07**

Vitter Amendment No. 2747, relating to recovery improvements for small entities after disasters. **Page S7407**

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 774, to strengthen enforcement mechanisms to stop illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, to amend the Tuna Conventions Act of 1950 to implement the Antigua Convention, and the bill was then passed. **Page S7407**

Honoring the Lives of the "El Faro" Crew Members: Senate agreed to S. Res. 291, honoring the lives of the 33 crew members aboard the *El Faro*. **Page S7425**

Commemorating the Discovery of the Polio Vaccine: Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 108, commemorating the discovery of the polio vaccine and supporting efforts to eradicate the disease, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S7425**

Measures Considered:

Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of S. 754, to improve cybersecurity in the United States through enhanced sharing of information about cybersecurity threats, after taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S7374–S7406, S7407–08**

Pending:

Burr/Feinstein Amendment No. 2716, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S7374**

Burr (for Cotton) Modified Amendment No. 2581 (to Amendment No. 2716), to exempt from the capability and process within the Department of Homeland Security communication between a private entity and the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the United States Secret Service regarding cybersecurity threats. **Pages S7374, S7381**

Feinstein (for Coons) Modified Amendment No. 2552 (to Amendment No. 2716), to modify section 5 to require DHS to review all cyber threat indicators and countermeasures in order to remove certain personal information. **Page S7374**

Burr (for Flake/Franken) Amendment No. 2582 (to Amendment No. 2716), to terminate the provisions of the Act after six years. **Pages S7374, S7404–05**

Feinstein (for Franken) Further Modified Amendment No. 2612 (to Amendment No. 2716), to improve the definitions of cybersecurity threat and cyber threat indicator. **Pages S7374, S7381**

Burr (for Heller) Modified Amendment No. 2548 (to Amendment No. 2716), to protect information that is reasonably believed to be personal information or information that identifies a specific person. **Page S7374**

Feinstein (for Leahy) Modified Amendment No. 2587 (to Amendment No. 2716), to strike the FOIA exemption. **Page S7374**

Burr (for Paul) Modified Amendment No. 2564 (to Amendment No. 2716), to prohibit liability immunity to applying to private entities that break user or privacy agreements with customers. **Page S7374**

Feinstein (for Mikulski/Cardin) Amendment No. 2557 (to Amendment No. 2716), to provide

amounts necessary for accelerated cybersecurity in response to data breaches. **Page S7374**

Feinstein (for Whitehouse/Graham) Modified Amendment No. 2626 (to Amendment No. 2716), to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect Americans from cybercrime. **Pages S7374, S7388–98**

Feinstein (for Wyden) Modified Amendment No. 2621 (to Amendment No. 2716), to improve the requirements relating to removal of personal information from cyber threat indicators before sharing. **Page S7374**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing that if cloture is invoked on Burr/Feinstein Amendment No. 2716 (listed above), Senate vote on or in relation to Burr (for Paul) Modified Amendment No. 2564 (to Amendment No. 2716) (listed above), with ten minutes divided in the usual form prior to the vote. **Page S7407**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 10 a.m., on Thursday, October 22, 2015, with the time until 11 a.m. equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees; and that the filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to both Burr/Feinstein Amendment No. 2716, and the bill be at 10:30 a.m., on Thursday, October 22, 2015. **Pages S7425–26**

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 originally declared in Executive Order 13413 of October 27, 2006, with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. (PM–29) **Page S7411**

Nominations—Agreement: A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that at 1:45 p.m., on Thursday, October 22, 2015, Senate begin consideration of the nominations of Julie Furuta-Toy, of Wyoming, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, Dennis B. Hankins, of Minnesota, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea, Harry K. Thomas, Jr., of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Robert Porter Jackson, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana; that Senate vote, without intervening action or debate, on confirmation of the nominations; and that no further motions be in order to the nominations. **Page S7408**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Linda I. Etim, of Wisconsin, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation for a term expiring September 22, 2021.

Lisa M. Fairfax, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for a term expiring June 5, 2020.

Hester Maria Peirce, of Ohio, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the remainder of the term expiring June 5, 2016.

Jean Elizabeth Manes, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador.

Scot Alan Marciel, of California, to be Ambassador to the Union of Burma.

Linda Swartz Taglialatela, of New York, to be Ambassador to Barbados, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. **Page S7426**

Messages from the House: **Page S7411**

Measures Referred: **Page S7411**

Measures Read the First Time: **Pages S7411, S7425**

Executive Communications: **Pages S7411–13**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S7413–14**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S7414–15**

Additional Statements: **Pages S7409–10**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S7415–25**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S7425**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 7:01 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Thursday, October 22, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S7426.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

AGRICULTURE BIOTECHNOLOGY

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee concluded a hearing to examine agriculture biotechnology, focusing on Federal regulation and stakeholder perspectives, after receiving testimony from Michael Gregoire, Associate Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture; William Jordan, Deputy Director, Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency; Susan Mayne, Director, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services; Joanna Lidback, The Farm at

Wheeler Mountain, Barton, Vermont, on behalf of Agri-Mark, Inc. and the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives; Daryl E. Thomas, Herr Foods Inc., Nottingham, Pennsylvania; Gary Hirshberg, Just Label It, Concord, New Hampshire; Gregory Jaffe, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Washington, D.C.; and Ronald Kleinman, MassGeneral Hospital for Children, Boston, Massachusetts.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies concluded a hearing to examine a review of rural development in 21st century America, after receiving testimony from Lisa Mensah, Under Secretary for Rural Development, Brandon McBride, Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Sam Rikkers, Acting Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, and Tony Hernandez, Administrator, Rural Housing Service, all of the Department of Agriculture; William Simpson, National Rural Water Association, Washington, D.C.; Stuart Lowry, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, Hays, Kansas, on behalf of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association; Brian Boisvert, Wilson Communications, Wilson, Kansas, on behalf of NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association; and Tony Chrisman, Chrisman Development Inc., Enterprise, Oregon.

FUTURE OF DEFENSE REFORM

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the future of defense reform, after receiving testimony from Robert M. Gates, former Secretary of Defense.

REFORMING THE FEDERAL BUDGET PROCESS

Committee on the Budget: Committee concluded a hearing to examine reforming the Federal budget process, focusing on the need for action, after receiving testimony from Michael A. Peterson, Peter G. Peterson Foundation, New York, New York; and Douglas Holtz-Eakin, former Director, Congressional Budget Office, American Action Forum, and Deborah Weinstein, Coalition on Human Needs, both of Washington, D.C.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGULATIONS OVERSIGHT

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Subcommittee on Superfund, Waste Management, and Regulatory Oversight concluded an oversight hearing to examine regulatory impact analyses for Environmental Protection Agency regulations, after receiving testimony from Diana Furchtgott-Roth, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, William L. Kovacs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and Sam Batkins, American Action Forum, all of Washington, D.C.; Mary B. Rice, American Thoracic Society, Boston, Massachusetts; and Rena Steinzor, University of Maryland Carey School of Law, Baltimore.

MIGRATION FROM CENTRAL AMERICA

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine ongoing migration from Central America, focusing on fiscal year 2015 apprehensions and how improved evaluation efforts could enhance agency programs to reduce migration, after receiving testimony from Kimberly Gianopoulos, Director, International Affairs and Trade, Government Accountability Office; Chris Cabrera, Border Patrol Agent, Rio Grande Valley Sector, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, on behalf of the National Border Patrol Council; Kevin Casas-Zamora, Inter-American Dialogue Peter D. Bell Rule of Law Program, and Duncan Wood, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Mexico Institute, both of Washington, D.C.; and the Most Reverend Mark J. Seitz, Diocese of El Paso, El Paso, Texas, on behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1419, to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1436, to require the Secretary of the Interior to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1443, to amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources;

S. 1761, to take certain Federal land located in Lassen County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Susanville Indian Rancheria;

S. 1822, to take certain Federal land located in Tuolumne County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians, with an amendment; and

H.R. 387, to provide for certain land to be taken into trust for the benefit of Morongo Band of Mission Indians.

ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine the Government Accountability Office report on Indian energy development, after receiving testimony from Lawrence S. Roberts, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Indian Affairs; Frank Rusco, Director, Natural Resources and Environment, Government Accountability Office; James M. Olguin, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Ignacio, Colorado; Grant Stafne, Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation, Poplar, Montana; and Cameron Cuch, Crescent Point Energy U.S. Corporation, Denver, Colorado.

NOMINATIONS

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Gary Richard Brown, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, Rebecca Goodgame Ebinger, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Iowa, and Leonard Terry Strand, of South Dakota, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Iowa, who were both introduced by Senator Ernst, and Mark A. Young, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, who was introduced by Senator Boxer, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

COMPUTER TECH SUPPORT SCAMS

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine when computer tech support becomes a scam, after receiving testimony from Lois Greisman, Associate Director of the Division of Marketing Practices, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission; David Finn, Microsoft Digital Crimes Unit, Redmond, Washington; Lew Polivick, Legal Services of Southern Missouri, Charleston; and Frank Schiller, Peaks Island, Maine.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 21 public bills, H.R. 3776–3796; and 2 resolutions, H. Res. 484–485 were introduced. **Pages H7088–90**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H7090–91**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 1384, to amend title 38, United States Code, to recognize the service in the reserve components of certain persons by honoring them with status as veterans under law (H. Rept. 114–302); and

H. Res. 483, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3762) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016 (H. Rept. 114–303). **Page H7088**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Duncan (TN) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H7031**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:49 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H7036**

Unanimous consent agreement: Agreed by unanimous consent that the question of adopting a motion to recommit on H.R. 10 or H.R. 692 may be subject to postponement as though under clause 8 of rule 20. **Pages H7041–47**

Default Prevention Act: The House passed H.R. 692, to ensure the payment of interest and principal of the debt of the United States, by a yea-and-nay vote of 235 yeas to 194 nays, Roll No. 557. **Pages H7041–47, H7053–60**

H. Res. 480, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 10) and (H.R. 692) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 245 ayes to 182 noes, Roll No. 554, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 241 yeas to 181 nays, Roll No. 553. **Pages H7041, H7051–52**

Quarterly Financial Report Reauthorization Act: The House agreed to take from the Speaker's table and concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 3116, to extend by 15 years the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to conduct the quarterly financial report program. **Pages H7060–61**

SOAR Reauthorization Act: The House passed H.R. 10, to reauthorize the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, by a yea-and-nay vote of 240 yeas to 191 nays, Roll No. 559. **Pages H7061–79**

Rejected the Scott (VA) motion to recommit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 185 yeas to 242 nays, Roll No. 558. **Pages H7077–78**

Pursuant to the Rule, the amendments recommended by the Committee on Oversight and

Government Reform now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. **Page H7070**

Agreed to:

Chaffetz amendment (No. 1 printed in H. Rept. 114–300) that makes small, technical changes to the bill. **Page H7073**

Rejected:

Norton amendment (No. 2 printed in H. Rept. 114–300) that sought to restore the requirement that the voucher program be evaluated using the strongest possible research design; would limit voucher students to no more than 50% of a school's total enrollment. **Page H7073**

H. Res. 480, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 10) and (H.R. 692) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 245 ayes to 182 noes, Roll No. 554, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 241 yeas to 181 nays, Roll No. 553. **Pages H7051–52**

National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2015—Rule for consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 481, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1937) to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to more efficiently develop domestic sources of the minerals and mineral materials of strategic and critical importance to United States economic and national security and manufacturing competitiveness, by a recorded vote of 244 ayes to 185 noes, Roll No. 556, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 243 yeas to 184 nays, Roll No. 555. Consideration is expected to resume tomorrow, October 22nd. **Pages H7047–50, H7052–53**

Consideration of Presidential Veto Message: Agreed by unanimous consent that if a veto message on H.R. 1735 is laid before the House, then after the message is read and the objections of the President are spread at large upon the Journal, further consideration of the veto message and the bill shall be postponed until the legislative day of November 5, 2015, and that on that legislative day, the House shall proceed to the constitutional question of reconsideration and dispose of such question without intervening motion. **Page H7079**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

Amending title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs): S. 1362, to amend title XI of the Social Security Act to clarify waiver authority regarding programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly (PACE programs). **Pages H7079–80**

Presidential Message: Read a message from the President wherein he notified Congress that the national emergency declared with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the related measures blocking the property of certain persons contributing to the conflict in that country, are to continue in effect beyond October 27, 2015—referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed (H. Doc. 114–69). **Page H7080**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H7041.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Five yea-and-nay votes and two recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7051, H7051–52, H7052–53, H7053, H7077, H7077–78 and H7078–79. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Committee Meetings

FOREIGN SUBSIDIES: JEOPARDIZING FREE TRADE AND HARMING AMERICAN FARMERS

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Foreign Subsidies: Jeopardizing Free Trade and Harming American Farmers". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXAMINING DOD SECURITY COOPERATION: WHEN IT WORKS AND WHEN IT DOESN'T

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled "Examining DOD Security Cooperation: When It Works and When It Doesn't". Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

UPDATE ON THE F–35 JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER PROGRAM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a heating entitled "Update on the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter Program". Testimony was heard from Lieutenant General Christopher C. Bogdan, USAF, Program Executive Officer, F–35 Joint Program Office; and Major General Jeffrey L. Harrigian, USAF, Director, F–35 Integration Office.

PROTECTING AMERICA'S WORKERS: REVIEWING MINE SAFETY POLICIES WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Subcommittee on Workforce Protections held a hearing entitled "Protecting America's Workers: Reviewing

Mine Safety Policies with Stakeholders''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXAMINING WAYS TO IMPROVE VEHICLE AND ROADWAY SAFETY

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade held a hearing entitled ''Examining Ways to Improve Vehicle and Roadway Safety''. Testimony was heard from Mark Rosekind, Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; Maneesha Mithal, Associate Director, Division of Privacy and Identity Protection, Federal Trade Commission; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE MEDICARE PART D MEDICATION THERAPY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Medicare Part D Medication Therapy Management Program''. Testimony was heard from Tim Gronniger, Director of Delivery System Reform, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS TO REDUCE REGULATORY BURDENS ON MAIN STREET JOB CREATORS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit held a hearing entitled ''Examining Legislative Proposals to Reduce Regulatory Burdens on Main Street Job Creators''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE FUTURE OF HOUSING IN AMERICA: FEDERAL HOUSING REFORMS THAT CREATE HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance held a hearing entitled ''The Future of Housing in America: Federal Housing Reforms that Create Housing Opportunity''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

BURMA'S CHALLENGE: DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, PEACE, AND THE PLIGHT OF THE ROHINGYA

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing entitled ''Burma's Challenge: Democracy, Human Rights, Peace, and the Plight of the Rohingya''. Testimony was heard from Daniel R. Russel, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State; Jonathan Stivers, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia, U.S. Agency for International Development; and public witnesses.

WORLDWIDE THREATS AND HOMELAND SECURITY CHALLENGES

Committee on Homeland Security: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Worldwide Threats and Homeland Security Challenges''. Testimony was heard from Jeh C. Johnson, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security; Nicholas J. Rasmussen, Director, National Counterterrorism Center, Office of the Director of National Intelligence; and James B. Comey, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on House Administration: Full Committee held a markup on a committee resolution amending the Committee's regulations, and for other purposes. The committee resolution was ordered reported, without amendment.

SECURE CREDENTIALS ISSUED BY THE GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Secure Credentials Issued by the Government Publishing Office''. Testimony was heard from Davita Vance-Cooks, Director, Government Publishing Office; Michael A. Raponi, Inspector General, Government Publishing Office; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING LAW ENFORCEMENT USE OF CELL PHONE TRACKING DEVICES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Information Technology held a hearing entitled ''Examining Law Enforcement Use of Cell Phone Tracking Devices''. Testimony was heard from Elana Tyrangiel, Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Policy, Department of Justice; and Seth Stodder, Assistant Secretary, Threat Prevention and Security Policy, Department of Homeland Security.

RESTORING AMERICANS' HEALTHCARE FREEDOM RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2015

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 3762, the ''Restoring Americans' Healthcare Freedom Reconciliation Act of 2015''. The committee granted, by record vote of 9–2, a closed rule for H.R. 3762. The rule provides two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Budget or their respective designees. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. The rule provides that the amendment printed in the Rules Committee report shall be considered as adopted and the bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended. The rule

provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. In section 2, the rule waives clause 6(a) of rule XIII (requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Rules Committee) against any resolution reported from the Rules Committee through the legislative day of October 23, 2015. Finally, in section 3, the rule provides that it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of October 22, 2015, or October 23, 2015 for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules and that the Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or her designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section. Testimony was heard from Chairman Price of Georgia and Representatives Van Hollen, Yarmuth, and Lummis.

CYBERSECURITY FOR POWER SYSTEMS

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Subcommittee on Energy; and Subcommittee on Research and Technology, held a joint hearing entitled ''Cybersecurity for Power Systems''. Testimony was heard from Brent Stacey, Associate Lab Director for National and Homeland Science and Technology, Idaho National Lab; Greg Wilshusen, Director of Information Security Issues, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

THE EMV DEADLINE AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES: PART II

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The EMV Deadline and What It Means for Small Businesses: Part II''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

ABANDONED MINES IN THE UNITED STATES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GOOD SAMARITAN CLEANUPS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment held a hearing entitled ''Abandoned Mines in the United States and Opportunities for Good Samaritan Cleanups''. Testimony was heard from Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator for the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Environmental Protection Agency; and public witnesses.

BUSINESS MEETING; AN EXAMINATION OF THE VA OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL'S FINAL REPORT ON THE INAPPROPRIATE USE OF POSITION AND THE MISUSE OF THE RELOCATION PROGRAM AND INCENTIVES

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a business meeting on a motion to issue subpoenas to employees of Department of Veterans Affairs, to compel them to appear and provide testimony to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the Inspector General's final report, entitled ''Inappropriate Use of Position and the Misuse of the Relocation Program and Incentives''; and a hearing entitled ''An Examination of the VA Office of Inspector General's Final Report on the Inappropriate Use of Position and the Misuse of the Relocation Program and Incentives''. The motion to issue a subpoena was agreed to. Testimony was heard from Linda Halliday, Deputy Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, Department of Veterans Affairs.

Joint Meetings

RUSSIAN VIOLATIONS OF THE RULE OF LAW

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission concluded a hearing to examine three case studies on Russian violations of the rule of law, focusing on how the United States should respond, after receiving testimony from Vladimir Kara-Murza, Open Russia Movement, Moscow, Russia; Tim Osborne, GML Ltd., London, United Kingdom; and Alan Larson, former Under Secretary of State for Economics, Covington and Burling LLP, and Stephen Rademaker, former Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Arms Control and the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, Podesta Group, both of Washington, D.C.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine global challenges, United States national security strategy, and defense organization, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: to hold hearings to examine Puerto Rico, focusing on the economy, debt, and options for Congress, 10 a.m., SD–366.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine improving pay flexibility in the Federal workforce, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: business meeting to consider S. 2123, to reform sentencing laws and correctional institutions, and the nominations of Brian R. Martinotti, and Julien Xavier Neals, both to be a United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, Robert F. Rossiter, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska, and Edward L. Stanton III, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Tennessee, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, hearing entitled ''Countering Adversarial Propaganda: Charting an Effective Course in the Contested Information Environment'', 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy, hearing entitled ''Technical Assistance for Rural Water Systems: S. 611, the Grassroots Rural and Small Community Water Systems Assistance Act'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy and Power, hearing entitled ''EPA's CO_2 Regulations for New and Existing Power Plants: Legal Perspectives'', 2 p.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Future of Housing in America: 50 Years of HUD and Its Impact on Federal Housing Policy'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Words Have Consequences: Palestinian Authority Incitement to Violence''; markup on H. Res. 293, expressing concern over anti-Israel and anti-Semitic incitement within the Palestinian Authority, 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, hearing entitled ''Russian Engagement in the Western Hemisphere'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, hearing entitled ''North Korea: Back on the State Sponsor of Terrorism List?'', 2 p.m., 2255 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''Africa's Great Lakes Region: A Security, Political, and Humanitarian Challenge'', 2 p.m., 2200 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, hearing entitled ''Ready and Resilient?: Examining Federal Emergency Preparedness and Response Capabilities'', 10 a.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, hearing on H.R. 3094, the ''Gulf States Red Snapper Management Authority Act'', 2 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''EPA's 2015 Ozone Standard: Concerns Over Science and Implementation'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 3763, the ''Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015''; and other matters cleared for consideration, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Evaluating VA Primary Care Delivery, Workload, and Cost'', 10 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, hearing entitled ''A Review of VA's VetSuccess on Campus Program'', 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Select Committee on Benghazi, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Hearing 4'', regarding testimony of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, 10 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Thursday, October 22

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of S. 754, Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act. The filing deadline for all second-degree amendments to both Burr/Feinstein Amendment No. 2716, and the bill is at 10:30 a.m.

At 11 a.m., Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on Burr/Feinstein Amendment No. 2716. If cloture is invoked on Burr/Feinstein Amendment No. 2716, there will then be ten minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on or in relation to Burr (for Paul) Modified Amendment No. 2564 (to Amendment No. 2716).

At 1:45 p.m., Senate will begin consideration of the nominations of Julie Furuta-Toy, of Wyoming, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, Dennis B. Hankins, of Minnesota, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Guinea, Harry K. Thomas, Jr., of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Zimbabwe, and Robert Porter Jackson, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ghana, with 1 roll call vote on confirmation expected, and voice votes expected on confirmation of the other nominees.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Thursday, October 22

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 1937—National Strategic and Critical Minerals Production Act of 2015 (Subject to a Rule).

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