United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015 No. 171

House of Representatives

The House met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 19, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL K. SIMPSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

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

On this final day of session before our Nation celebrates Thanksgiving, we give You thanks for all the blessings we enjoy.

The problems facing the Nation, the concerns of its citizens will not be settled with simplistic solutions. The light of truth is sought in every corner of darkness, yet we stand humbly before You, admitting our limitations.

Lord, give the Members of the people's House the ability to listen intently to differing opinions and respond creatively. May their faith in You be strong enough to stretch every self-interest to the broader vision of the common good, expecting Your intervention in ordered routine, and Your radical twist to basic intent.

Thus may all seek Your wisdom to guide this government and this Nation now and forever.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. LANCE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

SAFETY OF AMERICAN FAMILIES

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the first value of American leadership is the safety and security of our citizens.

While it is important to support those fleeing conflicts across the globe, the CIA Director's recent statements on the distinct possibility of additional attacks and the national security implications surrounding Syrian refugees at this point are too great to ignore.

The FBI has also indicated that it is next to impossible to appropriately screen refugees. For this reason, I have called upon the President to place a hold on admitting refugees into the country.

Additionally, I have joined with members of the Pennsylvania congressional delegation in requesting that Governor Tom Wolf also place a moratorium on accepting refugees into the Commonwealth.

The House today will consider legislation that suspends refugee admissions until we assure that adequate screening security for threats is in place.

We must not take any chances that could put our country at risk. This is the first in many steps that will provide Americans security, while also supporting our long-term humanitarian tradition in this country.

I encourage my colleagues to support the SAFE Act that will be on the floor later this morning.

JAPANESE INTERNMENT AND REFUGEES

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, 70 years ago my parents and grandparents were

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stripped of their possessions and placed in Japanese American internment camps. They were not guilty of espionage. They did not commit treason. They simply looked like our enemy, and that cost my family their freedom.

Yesterday the mayor of Roanoke, Virginia, suggested that this country's treatment of Japanese Americans during the 1940s is a model for how we should address today's global refugee crisis.

It does not take courage to condemn such disgraceful comments, nor does it take wisdom to say our World War II policies were a product of fear and hysteria.

What takes wisdom is recognizing that history is now repeating itself. What takes courage is sending a message to the world that America will protect innocent people regardless of their nationality or religion.

That is what my mother and father deserved 70 years ago, and that is what these refugees deserve today.

LOCAL PRIORITIZATION OF LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

(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, yesterday the Committee on Natural Resources considered a bill that restores the original intent of the Land and Water Conservation Fund: support of State and local projects.

The LWCF State program has supported many recreation facilities across the country, including in my district, such as a municipal pool in Susanville, boat launches on the Sacramento River, and city parks and playgrounds in Chico, California.

However, for every worthwhile local investment of $20,000 or $30,000, this administration now disproportionately spends millions on land acquisition for the Forest Service, which already can't manage what it owns.

Sixty-one percent so far of the program during its existence has gone for this sort of land acquisition. That is not local. The result is catastrophic fires across the West each year with nonmanaged forest lands.

Mr. Speaker, Chairman BISHOP's bill will rectify this problem and send more funding to the State and local projects that need it and help end the destructive cycle of the Federal Government purchasing and owning land it doesn't manage, only to have it burn.

I urge all my colleagues to support this measure when it comes up.

THE REPUBLICAN SYRIAN REFUGEE BILL

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern and opposition to the Republican Syrian refugee bill.

This restrictive and misguided legislation would immediately shut down the current refugee resettlement and cripple our refugee programs for the future.

I represent Orange County, California, one of the historically known areas of resettling refugees from all around the world. We are ready. We are ready.

Once this administration has taken a look at the backgrounds, has done the extensive research that they do with respect to somebody's background, we are ready to help resettle these refugees.

Refusing to resettle any Syrian refugees would inadvertently empower Daesh and boost their recruitment abilities among vulnerable populations struggling to survive. We cannot let Daesh push us to succumb to fear and to prejudice.

These Syrian refugees are fleeing the same violence that we have seen in Paris and Beirut and Baghdad this last week. Three-quarters of them are women and children. A quarter of them are over 60 years of age. Refugees are not the enemy.

So remember the words on our Statue of Liberty: ''Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.''

QUOTES TO REMEMBER

(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, as the world faces mass killings by ISIS, Daesh, of Russian, Lebanese, and French citizens, as Daesh has announced plans to target Washington and Rome and New York, we need to review how we got here and together change course.

President George W. Bush on July 12, 2007, declared: ''To begin withdrawing before our commanders tell us we are ready would be dangerous for Iraq, for the region, and for the United States. It would mean surrendering the future of Iraq to al Qaeda. It would mean that we'd be risking mass killings on a horrific scale. It would mean we allow the terrorists to establish a safe haven in Iraq to replace the one they lost in Afghanistan.''

President Barack Obama on December 14, 2011, claimed: ''Everything that American troops have done in Iraq . . . all of it has led to this moment of success. We're leaving behind a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant Iraq.''

I agree with former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani that the President's failed policies created the development of Daesh, leading to the Syrian refugee crisis, resulting in children drowning at sea. The President should change course.

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

CRS REPORTS SHOULD BE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, this week Americans for Tax Reform joins the chorus of advocacy and good government groups calling for Congressional Research Service reports to be available to the public.

In its letter of support, Americans for Tax Reform said that opening CRS reports to the public is a commonsense proposal that will increase transparency, give taxpayers greater access to important information, and enrich public knowledge.

The taxpayer advocacy group pointed out that the rules casting CRS reports into secrecy are outdated and unnecessary, and these reports belong in the public domain.

U.S. taxpayers support the work of the Congressional Research Service to the tune of more than $100 million a year. It is fiscally responsible and good public policy to allow educators, students, members of the news media, and everyday citizens access to these taxpayer-financed reports.

I urge my colleagues to join Congressman MIKE QUIGLEY and me in our bipartisan support of H. Res. 34, which will open CRS information to the public. These reports are paid for by taxpayer funds. Taxpayers should get to see them.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Samaritan's Purse, an organization headquartered in Boone, North Carolina, that brings spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world.

This week is the national collection week for the organization's Operation Christmas Child ministry, which puts empty shoe boxes to good use by filling them with gifts for needy children.

In order to participate, one needs to start with a shoe box, then decide whether to pack a box for a girl or a boy, and pick the age category: 2 to 4, 5 to 9, or 10 to 14. Finally, one fills the shoe box with gifts, including fun toys, hygiene items, and school supplies.

This year I packed a shoe box for a girl between the ages of 5 and 9. It is a simple concept that brings so much joy to the children who receive these special packages. I urge everyone to consider participating in this worthy program.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4038, AMERICAN SECURITY AGAINST FOREIGN ENEMIES ACT OF 2015

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 531 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 531

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4038) to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; and (2) one motion to recommit.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), 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. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 531 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I usually begin my statements talking about the technicalities of the rule, who is managing the general debate time, and a recap of the testimony and amendments we received in the Committee on Rules hearing. These are important items to discuss before this body. But today is different. The debates that we will have on this rule and the underlying legislation will be and should be different.

I will be honest. This bill has nothing to do today with job creation. It has nothing to do with reducing regulatory burden or empowering educators to focus on the needs of students rather than the wish list of unions. Those are important issues that we will address in coming weeks. But today is different.

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Today, we face the growing evil in the world and resolve to fight against it, no matter the price. The power of ISIS to kill and destroy has stunned the world and called us to question who we are as individuals, as people of faith, and as a Nation.

It doesn't matter how many press conferences this administration holds, they will not distract from their abdication of responsibility to the security of the United States and the security of its citizens.

The pro-rape, pro-torture, pro-mutilation strategy of Islamic State does not shrink in the face of meaningless words by our Commander in Chief. We are here today because this administration has failed. In the face of unspeakable violence and terror, the White House blinked. And our world is paying the price.

My colleagues across the aisle no doubt plan to deliver moral lectures, as this administration is so fond of, dismissing those who suggest that the Islamic State will use any means possible to bring America to her knees. Before they do, let me remind them the price this country has paid for freedom.

Soil around the world is soaked with the blood of our sons and our daughters who gave it all so that we may be free—as Lincoln said, ''that last full measure of devotion''—and so those who seek refuge can find safety and security in our country.

Despite what the administration wants you to believe, refugees don't seek safe haven because of our welfare benefits. It is because we don't negotiate with terrorists. It is because we recognize our first and greatest responsibility is the life and liberty of those who call America home.

We are a Nation of immigrants. We are a Nation of laws. And we are a Nation with a fundamental responsibility to preserve the rights of our citizens. And those rights include life.

The United States has one of the most generous legal immigration programs in the world, welcoming the hurting and abandoned, the persecuted and destitute. And we will continue to. But we will not welcome terrorists. We will not sacrifice moral courage on the altar of quotas.

This country and the world will be judged by future generations on our response as a Nation and as individuals to the Islamic State and those they have raped, tortured, driven from their homes, and murdered. And I believe we will also be judged on our commitment to the safety of the millions of men, women, and children already living within our borders.

The underlying legislation, H.R. 4038, isn't about who we welcome into our country. It is about keeping out those who pose a threat to our national security.

Last night, the Rules Committee received testimony from the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committee chairmen and minority representatives, as well as receiving amendment testimony from a number of Members on both sides of the aisle, for over 4 hours.

Now, more than ever, those who seek shelter in the United States deserve the assurance that our government is doing everything within its power to protect them from the very evil they fled.

But where is the administration? Perhaps if the Commander in Chief would stop holding press conferences to lecture Republicans and start leading the world in the fight against terrorists, we wouldn't have thousands upon thousands tortured, displaced, and killed.

The White House said ISIS was contained less than 24 hours before 100 people became the latest victims of terrorism on the streets of Paris. And, oh, by the way, before releasing five from Guantanamo that morning. It seems the President was too busy practicing his Turkish for the G–20 Summit remarks to notice the world is crumbling and the Islamic State is growing stronger.

In fact, when the President spoke at the G–20 Summit press conference, here is what he mentioned before addressing the terrorist attacks in Paris: the beauty of Turkey; the hospitality of the Turkish people; his practice of the Turkish language; the need to grow the global economy; the need to create jobs; rising inequality in the world; cyber theft; and oh, yes, global climate talks.

There is no question that we have a political commentator when what our Nation and the world needs is a Commander in Chief.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. First, Mr. Speaker, I don't blame the gentleman of Georgia for not wanting to talk about the rule because, today, we are about to debate the 46th closed rule of this Congress, making this the most closed session of Congress in history. Speaker RYAN promised an open and deliberative process when he took the gavel. He has already reneged on that promise.

Representatives BENNIE THOMPSON and ZOE LOFGREN offered an alternative to today's bill that deserves debate on the House floor, but the Republicans on this Rules Committee prohibited debate under this completely closed process.

The bill that we are about to debate wasn't even introduced until 10:14 p.m. Tuesday night. There have been no hearings—none at all—no markups, and no opportunities for bipartisan input. And, quite frankly, there was not a lot of opportunity for rank-and-file Republicans to have any input on this. Even more stunning, the Judiciary Committee is holding a hearing today—right now—on the very subject we are going to vote on in an hour.

Mr. Speaker, we all understand why people are anxious and concerned. We all watched with horror as the brutal attacks in Paris played out on our TV screens. And our thoughts and our prayers continue to be with the people of Paris, whose courage inspires all of us.

Keeping Americans safe is our top priority. And in the wake of the Paris attacks, that mission has never been more important. But in the days since those terrible attacks, there has been a deeply troubling debate about whether the United States should accept Syrian refugees. In the past week, we have heard far too many of our leaders stirring up fear and far too few talking about the facts.

Mr. Speaker, Americans want an honest and serious debate about how we keep our country safe, but this bill, the so-called American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act, or the American SAFE Act, falls far short.

Instead of debating a bill that might actually strengthen and enhance our refugee resettlement screening process, we are debating a bill that appeals to the worst in us and hurts the very people who are fleeing the violence and chaos ISIS has wrought.

The authors of this bill boast that ''this legislation would put in place the most robust national security vetting process in history for any refugee population.'' But the simple truth is that the United States already has in place the most rigorous screening process for refugee resettlement in the world.

Right now, Mr. Speaker, America's refugee screening process already involves seven different Federal departments and agencies, including the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Beyond that, every refugee from Syria is also subjected to an additional layer of security and scrutiny. This process is so detailed that it takes, on average, about 2 years for each refugee to be fully screened and allowed to enter the United States, under the sponsorship of a local service agency, and be settled here. Two years.

Now, I would think that every Member of this House would feel reassured knowing that such a process is already in place to protect our citizens and our communities. We have already resettled over 1,800 Syrian refugees over the past 4 years in 130 communities across America. In the past year, Massachusetts has resettled 62 Syrian refugees, including 24 in my hometown of Worcester. Of the 2,174 Syrian refugees that we have resettled in the United States since 9/11, not a single one has been arrested or deported on terrorism-related grounds. Not one.

I recognize that there are ways that we can strengthen that process further. The Congress could consult and work with the administration, including Homeland Security, the State Department, the national intelligence agencies, and the FBI, to identify and discuss areas where enhancements can be made. But that is not what the authors of this bill did. And it is clear that it wasn't their intention either.

What H.R. 4038 would actually ''achieve'' is the creation of a so-called process that would shut down all refugee resettlement from Syria and Iraq. It is not meant to make things better. It is meant to make it completely unworkable.

Nothing in this bill actually improves the FBI's or any other intelligence agency's ability to conduct a more effective screening process. If you want to do that, give them more money for more personnel and consult with them directly about how to strengthen the existing screening process. This bill hasn't done that.

Right now, of the more than 1,800 Syrian refugees resettled in the United States since 2012, half are children, a quarter are adults over the age of 60, and none have been involved in anything remotely tied to terrorism or violent activity.

Mr. Speaker, America is at a critical crossroads. It is moments like this that define who we are as a Nation. This bill, along with the deeply troubling rhetoric that surrounds it, would only perpetuate the politics of fear and intolerance. Americans are better than that. And now, more than ever, we must stay true to our values.

Our enemies want to divide us. We must remain strong and united in the face of this evil. We must not abandon the clear-eyed compassion that has made America the shining city on the hill for more than two centuries, giving hope to so many generations before us in search of a better life for themselves and for their children.

In July, I traveled to Gaziantep, Turkey, near the Syrian border, with a congressional delegation led by Senator TIM KAINE of Virginia. While there, we heard directly from government leaders, local NGOs, and charities on the front lines helping the countless Syrian refugees who have lost their homes and many of their friends and family. They are desperate to escape the violence and are part of the world's worst refugee crisis since World War II. We cannot shrink from this moment when strong American leadership is needed.

One of the most important reminders of the legacy we must live up to is the Statue of Liberty. For more than 100 years, it has stood as a promise for better life for the ''huddled masses yearning to breathe free.'' We cannot turn our backs on the values at the heart of our identity as Americans. To do this would cede a victory to the terrorists. Yet the fear, anger, prejudice, and isolationism that are driving the current debate on Syrian refugees remind me of some of the darkest and ugliest chapters of modern American history.

Many Americans—some in this Chamber—still remember the moment in our Nation's history when we turned away ships filled with Jewish refugees desperate to escape Nazi Germany and imprisoned our fellow citizens of Japanese heritage in internment camps. Do we really want to return to these kinds of destructive and hateful policies? Is that really who we are today?

I am so proud of America's leadership in providing $4.5 billion in aid to Syrian refugees in the region—more than any other country. I am also proud that the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement places a priority on accepting widows with children and highly vulnerable individuals, especially the elderly and the infirm.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4038 would shut down our resettlement program altogether. That is what it wants to do, and that is what it intends to do.

The refugees eligible for resettlement in the United States are not the refugees in Europe. The refugees coming into the United States through our resettlement program have been living in refugee camps for months—often years—under unimaginably harsh conditions.

A woman and her 3-year-old little girl whose home in Syria was reduced to rubble by barrel bombs and whose husband has been killed will be denied the opportunity to go through the rigorous screening process to find a new home in America.

An elderly woman who has lost everything and is barely alive now in a refugee camp will be denied a home in America, even if she has some distant relatives already in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, where is our humanity? None of the Syrian refugees who have already made it through our screening process and have been resettled in the United States fit the description of the terrorists I have heard described over and over again last night in the Rules Committee. Those ugly distortions of the people we are resettling only emphasize how out of touch with reality this debate has gotten.

Mr. Speaker, if we really want to help make America more safe and more secure in the wake of the Paris attacks, then we should put more money in the omnibus appropriations bill for the FBI, DHS, and for our local law enforcement agencies so that they can continue focusing on criminal and homegrown as well as possible foreign individuals and networks that might engage in violence against our citizens.

And, while we are at it, we should also increase the funding for the State Department, HHS, the UNHCR, and the NGOs that provide humanitarian aid abroad and resettlement support to refugee families here in America. But let us stop wasting our time with a bill that is going nowhere and fails to offer the serious approach we need to keep America safe and address this crisis.

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I was sort of amazed—it took almost probably 7 or 8 minutes—but we came to the real heart of the problem: just throw money at it. If you don't fix a problem, just throw money at it. When you are showing no leadership, I guess I would throw a diversionary tactic out there and do that as well.

What I am having trouble understanding is also what has been said by many speakers this morning, Mr. Speaker, and that is that true refugees are not the problem. They can still apply. Nothing in this bill keeps that rigorous process from them applying and going through that process. We are simply adding a certification step.

Now, undoubtedly, that is a little cumbersome for our Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security because he has this problem: he says it is cumbersome for him to certify each Syrian refugee personally.

There are issues here. Is it just hugely cumbersome and not the most effective use of the Secretary's time? I am sorry; you are the Secretary of Homeland Security in this country. Your job is to keep us protected. However that may play out, get the resources and do what you are supposed to be doing.

It is not like the example of keeping a young mother with kids from going through the process. There is nothing in this bill that does that. That is a distraction.

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I will talk about the rule. The rule is straightforward. Vote for the rule in just a few minutes. Vote with the side of those protecting America. Make sure that we are protected. That is a simple choice this morning.

That is what this rule does. It gets us to a bill that allows us to put an extra level of security and an extra level of certification so this administration cannot just continue to do what they are doing.

I was stunned just a few moments ago when I heard from my friend that this appeals to the worst in the U.S.

This appeals to the worst in the U.S.? Protecting America and trying to find ways to do that appeals to the worst of us?

That, to me, is derogatory to every man and woman who serves in our military, who goes and fights for freedom not only here but abroad. You are telling me to add a level of protection to those who live within our borders is appealing to the base of who we are?

That is not true. Deflect how you want to. Talk about this bill. Vote ''no'' if you want to. Go on the side of saying, you know, we have got it pretty good right now. Those that have come haven't done anything.

I would rather see a proactive approach. I would rather see something that is very reflective of the world's times. When we do that, then we are fulfilling our role. That is the best of America, not the worst.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose this rule. This bill, H.R. 4038, was rushed to the floor with no hearings, no opportunities for amendments, none of the things that Speaker RYAN promised us about an open process, a bottom-up process.

Now, I agree that preventing dangerous actors from entering the United States is paramount, and I also agree that we must be strong in our resolve to confront and defeat terrorism wherever it comes from. But I submitted an amendment to this bill which would have excluded women and children from the extra and potentially onerous process this bill would enact for refugee vetting.

Refugees from this region already undergo a far more rigorous screening process than anybody else seeking admission to this country. The process takes, on average, between 18 and 24 months—and longer, in many cases—before a refugee sets foot on U.S. soil. Surely this process is sufficient for women and children, widows and orphans of terrorism who are particularly vulnerable during conflicts while fleeing, who come from refugee camps.

It means that this bill is particularly punitive for them if it means they have additional wait time. Imposing that kind of additional wait time while going through unnecessary bureaucratic steps to vet those low-risk individuals makes no sense.

Speaker RYAN, I oppose this rule because you are not living up to your promise. We ought to have debate. We ought to have hearings, and you ought to allow amendments like this one that would make an exception for widows and orphans.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just say, if the gentleman agrees that we need to enforce and have strong protections to make sure that we are not attacked, then my recommendation would be vote ''yes'' on the rule and vote ''yes'' on the bill. It is a pretty simple choice here. Or you can go back and explain to most of the people in your district who agree that we need to protect our country—it is something across our country, from coast to coast, that says this is something that is worth doing, and I think we need to look at that.

I do want to hit this hard in just a moment. There are times—and especially when you come to a decision like this—when we understand how we got here and that it was put together by six chairmen who, over the weekend and this past week after the tragic result of last Friday night in Paris, have put together this first step in legislation to deal with this, and there will be other steps coming. But to characterize this as something that basically has not been considered—there are committees, the Judiciary Committee on which I serve, the Homeland Security Committee, and others, who have been looking at this issue for a long time.

This is something that has come together, and it gives us an immediate first step, and it makes a very clear choice.

Do you want to add a layer of protection to protect the American people or not? If you don't want to, vote ''no.'' If you don't want to do that, vote ''no.'' Vote ''no'' on the rule. Vote ''no'' on the bill. Talk about the process. Whine about whatever you want. But this is a clear choice. The bill is protection or not.

The other issue that we need to really just assess here is, when we look at what we are doing, the question is about leadership, and the question is about how are we going to protect those. It doesn't shut it down.

Also, it was just mentioned just a little bit ago that there was a hearing right now. The implication was that the hearing had something to do with this bill. Let's just be very clear. The hearing is about the Syrian refugee issue as a whole, not this bill. We are not taking away from that. This is an issue and a hearing that had been planned. It is happening. Those are other discussions that will be coming forward.

So let's at least make sure that we are giving the right implications on what is going on on the Hill right now.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for clarifying that point, which now means that there are zero hearings on this bill and no markup. It doesn't make me feel very good about this process.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I have lived in Paterson, New Jersey, all my life, which has a large Syrian American population. In fact, when I came back from the service, I joined the American Legion. It was the John Raad Post, which was a Syrian American military organization. These are hardworking people here.

The advantage of what we are doing, and over the past 4 years since the beginning of the Syrian war, the civil war, is that we are connecting refugees with Syrian American families.

There are no harder working people in this country than Syrian Americans. Know the history of it. They didn't come here last week.

So here is the chart. This is what you need to go through to get a refugee into the United States of America. I hope you looked at the chart. I hope you have examined every step, the 14 steps. Let's not get into one side wants to secure America more than the other side.

I served in the Armed Forces. I was on the beginning of the Select Committee on Homeland Security. I don't

like anybody telling me: You guys tried to do that in 2005, and you lost in 2006. Stay away from it.

No one party is privy to protecting this country. We all want that. But we are not going to sacrifice what we, as Americans, are. We are not going to do this.

When women and children who have nothing on their back—nothing—and 2 or 3 years, they could finally come to the gate of the greatest country in the world—yeah, you may smile over there, but I am very serious about what I am saying. This is a very serious moment in our history.

I want to protect America. I want to be strong. I don't agree with all the President's Syrian policies, but I think that we are doing harm to ourselves and sending the wrong message.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia). The time of the gentleman has expired.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is reminded to address his remarks to the Chair.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to salute the Speaker of the House, and here is why I want to salute him. He defused the religious connotations when this was first brought up. He did that yesterday, and I salute him.

Imagine, to have one line for Christian Syrians and another line for Muslim Syrians. What are we reduced to here? What message does that send to the rest of the world? You tell me. It is shameful.

So I thank him for that.

I don't impugn anybody on the other side. I don't question their motives. I don't think that this is a good idea.

The commitment we have to public safety can be upheld even as we provide refuge to some of the world's most vulnerable people. When you sleep tonight, think about the world's most vulnerable people, and we can still keep America safe.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I appreciate the gentleman's words. I agree with him. No party claims a right of both as one protects, one doesn't. But I will say this: Both of us have the same commitment to raising our hand and saying we do protect. Both parties have that in common.

And as someone who has served, myself, and been in a war zone in Iraq and understands what this is about, I appreciate the gentleman's feelings. My problem is this: Go to your district. As was said just a few moments ago, they felt better about no hearings. My question is, go to your district and ask your district this question, Mr. Speaker: Would you rather have a hearing, or would you rather do something to protect them?

Would you rather have hearings or go and do something to protect, and then come back, as we have done hearings, and work moving forward?

This is a process that should be together. I am really, frankly, amazed that we are not together on this because, at this point, it does nothing—I repeat, does nothing—to shut the process down. It simply adds a layer of protection.

It doesn't shut it down. It doesn't defame our humanitarian effort around world in which we lead the way in both money and resources, and it still allows that mother with those kids to apply and go through the process.

We are simply saying, let's pause a moment and make sure that it is not just the mother with the kids, that there is not somebody else abusing the system, there is not somebody else hiding through the system that wants to come into this country and do us harm.

Let's frame this in very simple terms. It is a very simple bill. It is only four pages. When we understand that, we can continue.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am stunned to just listen to the gentleman from Georgia basically tell us that you can have either a bill or you can have regular order, but you can't have both.

This is the greatest deliberative body on the planet. We are supposed to discuss issues. We are supposed to debate issues. Committees are supposed to do their work and report that, then, to the Rules Committee to come to the floor. But to suggest that you have a choice here, you can't have both, is ridiculous.

The Speaker of the House promised regular order. He has reneged on that promise. It is outrageous, especially on a bill like this, that we cannot have amendments; that even the committees of jurisdiction can't even do their job. It is an outrage. It is shameful. How can you defend that kind of process?

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the gentleman from Massachusetts because I think it is important for my colleagues to understand that, when you talk about process, you talk about responding in the right way to crisis.

Let me be very clear. The inquiry that my friends on the other side of the aisle are making is correct, to find out how we can ensure the safety and security of the American people.

I sit on the Homeland Security Committee and, like my friend from New Jersey, from the very beginning, the tragedy of 9/11.

I am the ranking member on the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee. There is no way that I would stand here and jeopardize the security of the American people.

Let me also say, I represent the Catholic diocese, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Services, Interfaith Ministries in my district, and I would ask my colleague on the other side of the aisle to query them about whether or not they support this legislation.

There are people who understand the burdensomeness and the wrongness of the direction in which we are going.

Is it appropriate to inquire and have a report to Congress to ensure that there are strictures in dealing with those coming to this country from Syria or anywhere else? Yes, it is. But is it ridiculous to ensure or to insist that this 5-year-old little girl must be individually certified by the FBI, the DNI, Counterterrorism, and the CIA, and a long litany of others? That is what we are saying.

First of all, there were 23,000 who were recommended by the United Nations, Syrians, to come into the United States. The Department of Homeland Security selected only 7,000 to interview. In that 7,000, only 2,000 have gone through the process through an 18- to 20-month period.

We are saying to the American people, if you want to get rid of ISIS, take the fight to ISIS. That is what we are doing with our allies, to destroy and eliminate ISIS. But to be able to say to our allies around the world that we are putting a stop sign on our refugees from Syria that look like mothers and fathers and old people is absolutely absurd.

The inquiry is correct; the process is wrong. Let us not distort this to the American people and tell them an untruth, that one side of the aisle is against the security and the other side is not.

Take the fight to the caliphate.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. I yield the gentlewoman 15 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. This is an improper approach. You cannot certify a 5-year-old girl from Syria. She will never get in.

The process is extensive, it is definite, it is secure, and we are securing the American people. Let's work together, as my friend on the other side of the aisle has said, and do it right.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Also, I just want to say that it shouldn't have been shocking. There was nothing in part of what I said, that you have to have regular order or a bill. I am simply saying, here is the process it went through that we have had here.

That is a false dichotomy, Mr. Speaker. It is not true. I never said you couldn't have regular order and have a bill. You have both. In this case, you have a bill.

□ 1015

The bill says in very plain and simple terms—4 pages—here is what it does, and that is where we go at it. To continue to say that it does other stuff that it doesn't do is simply wrong. We are just simply saying: We are giving another layer of protection. Take that layer of protection. Let's continue to have our hearings, let's continue to

have our debate, and we will be bringing others because we are already taking the fight—and that is another issue that we need to have. It is time to call the radical Islamic terrorists what they are, thugs in this world, rapists, torturers, and murderers. They have no regard for religion and no regard for themselves. They are simply plain thugs.

If we want to talk about what we are fighting, then let's put it in those terms. Let's put it in those terms. I prefer that we have an extra measure of protection keeping those folks out while we take the fight to them because I believe, as the Air Force that I serve and the military we have, the fight is coming to them, and the thugs will not win. We are just going to put an extra measure of protection here to make sure they don't come in here while maintaining the integrity of our program.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, those of us on our side have no problem with taking the fight to the thugs. What we have a problem with is taking the fight to orphans, widows, young children, and senior citizens who are fleeing war and terror. To turn our backs on those individuals, to basically shut this process down—and that is what this would do. By the way, the authors of the bill admitted that last night in the Rules Committee. This is not going to stop the refugee resettlement process in its place. But to do that goes against the very best traditions and values of this country.

We are better than that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for yielding and for his leadership on these critical issues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule, H. Res. 531, and also to the bill, H.R. 4038, the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015. Foreign enemies—refugees.

We all watched with horror as unconscionable violence unfolded in Paris over the weekend, but also in Egypt, in Lebanon, and in Nigeria. So let me just first say that my thoughts and prayers go out to all of those who have been affected by all of these tragedies.

But it would be a grave mistake to use these attacks as a pretense to close our doors to the families that are fleeing ISIL in their own countries. The overwhelming majority, of course, are women and children. Just as the unfortunate attacks of 911 required us to step up and lead, we are at that moment again where Members of Congress need to lead.

This counterproductive bill would immediately shut down the resettlement of refugees from countries such as Syria and Iraq while significantly slowing down—yes, shutting down—our resettlement process in the future.

But, of course, as Members of Congress, our first goal is keeping our country safe. We all are committed to that, and we do that each and every day. But preventing these people suffering the violence of war—the violence of war—sends the wrong signal first to our allies; to our own country. And really, this is not consistent with our national security goals. Simply put, closing our doors to these refugees would really be a betrayal of our Nation's most fundamental values.

Mr. Speaker, the United States already has the lengthiest and most robust screening procedures in the world. Any refugees seeking to come to the United States go through a screening process that takes 18 to 24 months before they can even set foot on United States soil.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman from California an additional 1 minute.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, our screening process has already involved multiple Federal intelligence, security, and law enforcement agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center, and the FBI. These agencies subject those seeking refuge in the United States to safeguards, such as biometric and biographic checks. Syrian refugees are already subject to additional forms of security screening.

Mr. Speaker, it is worth noting—it has been said before, and I will say it again—that of the 2,174 Syrian refugees admitted to the United States since September 11, 2001, not a single one has been arrested or deported on terrorism-related grounds. I am proud that Oakland—in my congressional district—has resettled more Syrian refugees than any other East Bay area city in California. Rather than working to shut out those seeking refugee in our country, we should instead be working toward ensuring a regionally led, comprehensive, economic, political, and diplomatic solution to the conflicts that have led to the worst refugee crisis since World War II.

Mr. Speaker, this would stop the flow of refugees and give them a chance to live in their own country free of war and violence. I urge my colleagues to reject this rule and this unnecessary bill.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I find it a great privilege to stand here and really not believe that a bill that protects the interests of Americans I find never is unnecessary. In fact, I find it needed at this point.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO).

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Georgia for engaging in this debate. I know it sometimes seems to be a lonely job, especially when you are right, you are correct, and you are putting the best interests of the American people ahead of partisan politics. So I applaud you, and I applaud all my colleagues who are going to support this underlying rule and move on to support the final bill.

I heard a comment while I was following the debate, and someone said that Speaker RYAN has reneged on his promises.

Mr. Speaker, if anybody has reneged on their promises, I believe it is the President of the United States of America. As Commander in Chief, he has the ultimate responsibility to lead our troops. But also his number one constitutional responsibility is the common defense of this Nation against all enemies, both domestic and foreign. But he has made America weaker. He has made our military weaker. The international community, our friends, no longer trust us, and our enemies no longer fear us. So if anybody has reneged on their responsibilities, it is the President of the United States.

Just now, Mr. Speaker, we started to basically really try to cut off the flow of money to ISIS and to the Islamic radicals. For over 2 years, we have been telling them to go after the oil revenues. That is where they are making their money. They are making it because they are smuggling oil out of the country and selling it on the black market, and they are making billions of dollars a year. Just now, we decide, well, we are going to go after the oil tankers that carry the oil so they can make the money, so they can buy weapons, and then they can basically export terrorism all around the world.

Twenty-five years ago, I remember pretty much this month I was activated for the Persian Gulf War. One thing I do remember is we bombed the hell out of our enemies before we sent our men and women in uniform with boots on the ground in there. And pretty much, as we all know, within a week, the Iraq war was over with.

So, Mr. Speaker, it baffles the mind why we are waiting for the last moment to actually cut off the revenues that are funding this global jihad and this radical Islam. But, like my colleague from Georgia and those who are going to support this rule and support the bill, we understand our constitutional responsibilities.

Our number one responsibility is the common defense of this Nation at home and abroad. That means taking care of people in our congressional districts, taking care of people in our State, and taking care of the American people. So you are either with us or against us on this.

I just want to urge my colleagues to support the underlying rule, support the bill, and let's start taking care of Americans, and the rest will take care of itself.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question.

If we do, I will offer an amendment to the rule that would simply allow us to debate and vote on a reasonable alternative in addition to the Republican bill that we are considering today. This record-breaking closed rule shuts down both Republicans and Democrats, makes it impossible for them to be able to participate in the legislative process, and prevents us from considering reasonable, commonsense alternatives. If we are truly interested in actually enhancing the security of the United States and protecting the American people, maybe we ought to come together and behave like adults and work together to come up with a solution that actually works.

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 Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter that was signed by 81 NGOs that work in the field of humanitarian relief and refugee resettlement in support of the refugee resettlement program and the Syrian refugee resettlement program.

NOVEMBER 17, 2015.

DEAR SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE: As refugee and immigration law experts, humanitarian aid organizations, faith, labor and civil and human rights groups, we write to express our support for the U.S. refugee resettlement program. The world is witnessing the largest refugee crisis since World War II. More than 4 million Syrians have fled from their home country fleeing conflict and violence, and 6.5 million are displaced internally.

At a time when the world needs humanitarian leadership, some are now calling for the suspension of the U.S. refugee resettlement program or the imposition of restrictions on funding for Syrians and other groups of refugees. We oppose these proposals and believe they would jeopardize the United States' moral leadership in the world.

Syrian refugees are fleeing exactly the kind of terror that unfolded on the streets of Paris. They have suffered violence just like this for almost five years. Most have lost loved ones to persecution and violence, in addition to having had their country, their community, and everything they own brutally taken from them.

Refugees are the most thoroughly vetted group of people who come to the United States. Security screenings are rigorous and involve the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, the Department of Defense and multiple intelligence agencies. Department of Homeland Security officials interview each refugee to determine whether they meet the refugee definition and whether they are admissible to the United States. Refugees undergo a series of biometric and investigatory background checks, including collection and analysis of personal data, fingerprints, photographs, and other background information, all of which is checked against government databases. The entire process typically takes more than two years and often much more before the refugee would arrive in the U.S. In addition the Administration is already taking steps, with its existing authority, to increase the capacity of its security and screening procedures for refugees. There is no need for Congress to impose additional restrictions or security measures.

The United States decides which refugees to resettle. Because so few refugees in the world are resettled, the U.S. often chooses the most vulnerable, including refugees who cannot remain safely where they are and families with children who cannot receive the medical care they need to survive.

To turn our back on refugees would be to betray our nation's core values. It would send a demoralizing and dangerous message to the world that the United States makes judgments about people based on the country they come from and their religion. This feeds into extremist propaganda and makes us all less safe. We call upon Congress to demonstrate leadership by speaking out against the scapegoating of any group during this time of crisis and to ensure that our nation's humanitarian efforts are robust.

The United States is a welcoming country with a diverse society and our resettlement program must continue to reflect this.

We can welcome refugees while ensuring our own security. Refugees have enriched communities across our country and have been part of the American fabric for generations. Historically our nation has responded to every major war or conflict and has resettled refugees from Africa, South East Asia, Eastern Europe as well as the Middle-East. Closing the door to refugees would be disastrous for not only the refugees themselves, but their family members in the United States who are waiting for them to arrive, and our reputation in the world.

Sincerely,

The Advocates for Human Rights, Alliance for Citizenship, American Civil Liberties Union, American Immigration Lawyers Association, American Jewish Committee (AJC), American Refugee Committee, America's Voice Education Fund, Anti-Defamation League, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), Asian Americans Advancing Justice—AAJC, Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies.

CARE USA, Center for Applied Linguistics, Center for Gender & Refugee Studies, Center for New Community, Center for Victims of Torture, Centro de los Derechos de Inmigrante, Inc., Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Refugee & Immigration Ministries, Church World Service, Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach, Concern Worldwide (US) Inc., Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Council on American-Islamic Relations.

The Episcopal Church, Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc., Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Farmworker Justice, Franciscan Action Network, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Habonim Dror North America, HIAS, Human Rights First, InterAction, International Catholic Migration Commission, International Refugee Assistance Project, International Rescue Committee.

Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States, National Advocacy Office, Jesuit Refugee Service/USA, Jewish Council for Public Affairs, Jewish Labor Committee, Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, Mercy-USA for Aid and Development, Mi Familia Vota, Muslim Public Affairs Council, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, National Council of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA).

National Council of Jewish Women, National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC), National Immigration Forum, National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, OCA—Asian Pacific American Advocates, OneAmerica, ORAM—Organization for Refuge, Asylum & Migration, Oxfam America, Peace Action West, Presbyterian Church USA, Refugees International.

Save the Children, South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT), Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC), STAND: The Student-Led Movement to End Mass Atrocities, SustainUS: U.S. Youth for Justice, Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), Syria Relief Development, Tahirih Justice Center, T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights.

Union for Reform Judaism, Unitarian Universalist Association, United to End Genocide, United Farm Workers, United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, UURISE—Unitarian Universalist Refugee and Immigrant Services and Education, Inc., Win Without War, Women's Refugee Commission, Workmen's Circle, World Relief.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I also include in the RECORD a statement by the Catholic Bishops that say that the U.S. should welcome Syrian refugees into the United States.

[From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Nov. 17, 2015]

BISHOPS' MIGRATION CHAIR: U.S. SHOULD WELCOME SYRIAN REFUGEES, WORK FOR PEACE

BALTIMORE.—Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, Chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Migration, issued a statement on Syrian refugees during the Bishops' annual General Assembly in Baltimore Nov. 17.

Full text of the statement follows:

STATEMENT ON SYRIAN REFUGEES AND THE ATTACKS IN PARIS

On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, I offer my deepest condolences to the families of the victims of the November 13 attacks in Paris, France and to the French people. I add my voice to all those condemning these attacks and my support to all who are working to ensure such attacks do not occur again—both in France and around the world.

I am disturbed, however, by calls from both federal and state officials for an end to the resettlement of Syrian refugees in the United States. These refugees are fleeing terror themselves—violence like we have witnessed in Paris. They are extremely vulnerable families, women, and children who are fleeing for their lives. We cannot and should not blame them for the actions of a terrorist organization.

Moreover, refugees to this country must pass security checks and multiple interviews before entering the United States—more than any arrival to the United States. It can take up to two years for a refugee to pass through the whole vetting process. We can look at strengthening the already stringent screening program, but we should continue to welcome those in desperate need.

Instead of using this tragedy to scapegoat all refugees, I call upon our public officials to work together to end the Syrian conflict peacefully so the close to 4 million Syrian refugees can return to their country and rebuild their homes. Until that goal is achieved, we must work with the world community to provide safe haven to vulnerable and deserving refugees who are simply attempting to survive. As a great nation, the United States must show leadership during this crisis and bring nations together to protect those in danger and bring an end to the conflicts in the Middle East.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I include en bloc in the RECORD a whole bunch of other materials.

[From Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, Nov. 17, 2015]

REFORM MOVEMENT REJECTS CALLS FOR NEW LIMITS ON SYRIAN REFUGEES

WASHINGTON, D.C.—In response to calls for new limits on Syrian refugees in the wake of the recent attacks in Paris, Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner, Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, issued the following statement:

The recent attacks in Paris have horrified and pained us deeply, as they have all people of goodwill around the world. Our hearts ache for all those directly impacted by these acts of terror. We pray for healing of those who were injured and comfort for the families of all who were lost.

These attacks echo the kind of terrible violence that the Syrian people have lived with for the past several years, buffeted between the brutality of President Assad and the barbarism of ISIS. As such, now is the time to ensure the U.S. refugee system remains open to those fleeing Syria and who wish to contribute to and strengthen our nation. Calls to impose new limits on Syrian refugees, to impose a religious test on refugees, or to close our doors altogether ignore the reality that the lengthy and rigorous vetting of refugee applications helps ensure our national security while upholding our historic role as a place of refuge.

We cannot allow the violence wrought by ISIS and its allies to overshadow our values as Americans and as Reform Jews. As Jewish tradition teaches, ''and each shall sit under their vine and fig tree, and none shall make them afraid'' (Micah 4:4). We can ensure our security and fulfill our highest aspirations as a nation rooted in compassion and commitment to religious liberty. We call on members of Congress to oppose any effort to limit the acceptance of Syrian refugees, just as we urge public officials and figures across the U.S. to reject divisive and inflammatory statements that do not reflect our history as a nation founded by descendants of those who fled persecution in search of freedom.

In these trying times, we cannot lose sight of our values and what we stand for. To repair the brokenness in our world, we must stand united with those who reject violence and divisiveness and instead support those who uphold healing, safety and security for all.

RANKING MEMBERS SCHIFF, THOMPSON AND LOFGREN JOINT STATEMENT ON SYRIAN REFUGEE BILL ON HOUSE FLOOR TOMORROW

[For Immediate Release—Wednesday, November 18, 2015]

WASHINGTON, DC.—Today, Rep. Adam Schiff (D–CA), Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D–MS), Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, and Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D–CA), Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, released the following statement:

''For many Americans, the horrendous loss of life and scenes of chaos of the Paris terrorist attacks harkened back to our own experience in the wake of September 11th. Our top priority is and will always remain the safety of the American people. And it is in these times that the core values of our nation are tested. Welcoming refugees who are fleeing persecution and war is the humane—and American—thing to do. However, some in Congress intend to use this tragedy to shut down the U.S. refugee program, turning our backs on victims fleeing the horrors of ISIS and the Assad regime.

''We must constantly re-evaluate and refine our refugee screening to find ways to strengthen the existing system and ensure that we are maintaining the most rigorous vetting system in the world. Refugees, and refugees from this region specifically, already undergo a far more rigorous screening process than anyone else seeking admission to this country, including background checks, national security vetting, biometric identifiers, and interviews. The process takes on average between 18 to 24 months, and longer in many cases, before a refugee steps foot on U.S. soil. The House Republican legislation would immediately shut down all refugee resettlement from Syria and Iraq—possibly for many years—and severely handicap future refugee resettlement around the world.

''Our commitment to refugees and the security of the American people are not mutually exclusive. We believe that turning our backs on those escaping persecution, many of them religious minorities and victims of terrorism, runs counter to the proud and generous heritage of the United States—a country of immigrants—that has always helped those in need in the most trying times.''

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 4038—AMERICAN SAFE ACT OF 2015

(Rep. McCaul, R–TX, and Rep. Hudson, R–NC)

The Administration's highest priority is to ensure the safety and security of the American people. That is why refugees of all nationalities, including Syrians and Iraqis, considered for admission to the United States undergo the most rigorous and thorough security screening of anyone admitted into the United States. This legislation would introduce unnecessary and impractical requirements that would unacceptably hamper our efforts to assist some of the most vulnerable people in the world, many of whom are victims of terrorism, and would undermine our partners in the Middle East and Europe in addressing the Syrian refugee crisis. The Administration therefore strongly opposes H.R. 4038.

The current screening process involves multiple Federal intelligence, security, and law enforcement agencies, including the National Counterterrorism Center, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS), State, and Defense, all aimed at ensuring that those admitted do not pose a threat to our country. These safeguards include biometric (fingerprint) and biographic checks, medical screenings, and a lengthy interview by specially trained DHS officers who scrutinize the applicant's explanation of individual circumstances to assess whether the applicant meets statutory requirements to qualify as a refugee and that he or she does not present security concerns to the United States. Mindful of the particular conditions of the Syria crisis, Syrian refugees—who have had their lives uprooted by conflict and continue to live amid conditions so harsh that many set out on dangerous, often deadly, journeys seeking new places of refuge—go through additional forms of security screening, including a thorough pre-interview analysis of each individual's refugee application. Additionally, DHS interviewers receive extensive, Syria-specific training before meeting with refugee applicants. Of the 2,174 Syrian refugees admitted to the United States since September 11, 2001, not a single one has been arrested or deported on terrorism-related grounds.

The certification requirement at the core of H.R. 4038 is untenable and would provide no meaningful additional security for the American people, instead serving only to create significant delays and obstacles in the fulfillment of a vital program that satisfies both humanitarian and national security objectives. No refugee is approved for travel to the United States under the current system until the full array of required security vetting measures have been completed. Thus, the substantive result sought through this draft legislation is already embedded into the program. The Administration recognizes the importance of a strong, evolving security screening in our refugee admissions program and devotes considerable resources to continually improving the Nation's robust security screening protocols. The measures called for in this bill would divert resources from these efforts.

Given the lives at stake and the critical importance to our partners in the Middle East and Europe of American leadership in addressing the Syrian refugee crisis, if the President were presented with H.R. 4038, he would veto the bill.

[From U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants]

SECURITY SCREENING OF REFUGEES ADMITTED TO THE UNITED STATES: A DETAILED, RIGOROUS PROCESS

Resettlement is considered a durable solution for refugees who cannot return to their countries of origin or integrate into the current country that is hosting them. Resettlement to a country like the U.S. presents a life-saving alternative for a very small number of refugees around the world (less than one half of one percent). Refugees seeking resettlement in the United States must pass through a number of steps aimed at ensuring that they will not pose a security risk to the United States.

STEP 1

Refugee Status: In most cases the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) determines that the individual qualifies as a refugee under international law. A refugee is someone who has fled from his or her home country and cannot return because he or she has a well-founded fear of persecution based on religion, race, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group.

STEP 2

Referral to the United States: A refugee that meets one of the criteria for resettlement in the United States is referred to the U.S. government by UNHCR, a U.S. Embassy, or a trained Non-Governmental Organization.

STEP 3

Resettlement Support Center: A Resettlement Support Center (RSC), contracted by the U.S. Department of State, compiles the refugee's personal data and background information for the security clearance process and to present to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for an in-person interview.

STEP 4

Security Clearance Process: With information collected by the RSC, a number of security checks are conducted. The State Department runs the names of all refugees referred to the United States for resettlement through a standard CLASS (Consular Lookout and Support System) name check. In addition, enhanced interagency security checks were phased in beginning in 2008 and applied to all refugee applicants by 2010.

STEP 5

Security Clearance Process: Certain refugees undergo an additional security review called a Security Advisory Opinion (SAO).

These cases require a positive SAO clearance from a number of U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies in order to continue the resettlement process. When required, this step runs concurrently with Step 4.

STEP 6

Security Clearance Process: Refugees who meet the minimum age requirement have their fingerprints and photograph taken by a trained U.S. government employee, usually on the same day as their DHS interview. The fingerprints are then checked against various U.S. government databases and information on any matches is reviewed by DHS.

STEP 7

In-person Interview: All refugee applicants are interviewed by an officer from DHS's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). A trained officer will travel to the country of asylum* to conduct a detailed, face-to-face interview with each refugee applicant being considered for resettlement. Based on the information in the refugee's case file and on the interview, the DHS officer will determine if the individual qualifies as a refugee and is admissible under U.S. law.

STEP 8

DHS Approval: If the USCIS officer finds that the individual qualifies as a refugee and meets other U.S. admission criteria, the officer will conditionally approve the refugee's application for resettlement and submit it to the U.S. Department of State for final processing. Conditional approvals become final once the results of all security checks (Steps 4, 5, and 6) have been received and cleared.

STEP 9

Medical Screening: All refugee applicants approved for resettlement in the U.S. are required to undergo medical screening conducted by the International Organization for Migration or a physician designated by the U.S. Embassy.

STEP 10

Matching Refugees with a Sponsor Agency: Every refugee is assigned to a Voluntary Agency in the U.S., such as the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI). USCRI will place refugees with a local partner agency or office that will assist refugees upon their arrival in the U.S.

STEP 11

Cultural Orientation: In addition, refugees approved for resettlement are offered cultural orientation while waiting for final processing, to prepare them for their journey to and initial resettlement in the United States.

STEP 12

Security Clearance Process: Prior to departure to the U.S., a second interagency check is conducted for most refugees to check for any new information. Refugees must clear this check in order to depart to the U.S.

STEP 13

Admission to the United States: Upon arrival at one of five U.S. airports designated as ports of entry for refugee admissions, a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer will review the refugee documentation and conduct additional security checks to ensure that the arriving refugee is the same person who was screened and approved for admission to the United States.

*Note that under limited circumstances, refugee applicants may be interviewed in their home country rather than in a country of asylum.

[From Human Rights First, Nov. 2015]

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT—SECURITY SCREENING INFORMATION

Refugees to the United States are more stringently screened and vetted than any other group allowed to enter the country.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees first registers refugees, interviews them, takes biometric data and background information. These refugees overwhelmingly women and children have been Ewing in Jordan, Turkey or other frontline refugee-hosting countries for years, struggling to survive. UNHCR has data from its regular interactions with these refugees over the years. Resettlement helps support the stability of nations that are key U.S. allies, as they are straining under the pressure of hosting so many refugees. Only those who pass the U.N. assessment are referred to the United States for resettlement. At least 18,000 have already been through the U.S. process and are awaiting U.S. government consideration and review.

The U.S. government then conducts its own extremely rigorous screening process, including health checks, repeated biometric checks, several layers of biographical and background screening, and in-person interviews by specially-trained officers. Multiple agencies are involved, including the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center, the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center, the Department of Defense and U.S. intelligence agencies. DNS has added an additional country-specific layer of review for Syrian refugee applications, which includes extra screening for national security risks.

Secretary Jeh Johnson outlined this process in Congressional testimony in October 2015: ''With regard to the current refugee crisis, the U.S. is committed to providing refuge to some of the world's most vulnerable people, while carefully screening refugees for security concerns before admitting them to the United States. The reality is that, with improvements to the process we have made over time, refugees are subject to the highest level of security checks. DHS works in concert with the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the National Counterterrorism Center, and the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center for the screening and vetting of refugees. The U.S. Government conducts both biographic and biometric checks on refugee applications, including security vetting that takes place at multiple junctures in the application process, and even just before arrival to account for changes in intelligence. All refugees admitted to the United States, including those from Syria, will be subject to this stringent security screening. Acting on my direction, USCIS has developed additional protocols to aid in the identification of security concerns with regard to the Syrian population, and the entire Department, along with the interagency, is committed to continual improvement of overall security vetting, as new techniques or sources of information are identified.''

More specifically, the U.S. refugee vetting process for Syrian refugees includes the following elements as outlined by Department of Homeland Security officials.

Department of Homeland Security Interviews: Refugees are interviewed by DHS-USCIS officers to determine whether or not they can be approved for resettlement to the United States. These interviews are conducted while refugees are still abroad.

Consular Lookout and Watch List Check: Biographic checks are conducted against the State Department's Consular Lookout and Support System (CLASS)—which includes watch list information.

Security Advisory Opinions from Intelligence and Other Agencies: DHS seeks Security Advisory Opinions (SAOs) from law enforcement and intelligence communities for cases that meet certain criteria.

National Counterterrorism Center Checks with Intelligence Agency Support: Interagency checks, known as ''IAC's,'' are conducted with the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) for all refugee applicants within a designated age range, regardless of nationality. In addition, expanded intelligence community support was added to the IAC process in July 2010, and recurrent vetting was added in 2015 so that any intervening derogatory information that is identified after the initial check has cleared but before the applicant has traveled to the United States will be provided to DHS.

DHS and FBI BlometrIc Checks: Fingerprints are screened against the vast biometric holdings of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Next Generation Identification system, and are screened and enrolled in DHS's Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT). Through IDENT, the applicant's fingerprints are screened not only against watch fist information, but also for previous immigration encounters in the United States and overseas—including cases in which the applicant previously applied for a visa at a U.S. embassy.

Department of Defense Biometric Screening: Biometric screening is also conducted through the Department of Defense (DOD) Automated Biometric Identification System (ABIS). ABIS contains a variety of records, including fingerprint records captured in Iraq. ABIS screening has been expanded to refugee applicants of all nationalities who fall within the prescribed age ranges.

Enhanced Review for Syrian Cases: In addition to the many biometric and biographic checks conducted, DHS–USCIS has instituted additional review of Syrian refugee applications. Before being scheduled for interview by a DHS-USCIS officer (while the refugee is still abroad), Syrian cases are reviewed at DHS-USCIS headquarters. All cases that meet certain criteria are referred to the DHS-USCIS Fraud Detection and National Security Directorate (FDNS) for additional review and research. FDNS conducts open-source and classified research on referred cases and synthesizes an assessment for use by the interviewing officer. This information provides case-specific context relating to country conditions and regional activity, and is used by the interviewing officer to inform lines of inquiry related to the applicant's eligibility and credibility. DHS-USCIS reports that FDNS engages with law enforcement and intelligence community members for assistance with identity verification and acquisition of additional information.

Additional Screening Checks on Entry: When they travel to the United States, refugees are subject to screening conducted by DHSU.S. Customs and Border Protection's National Targeting Center-Passenger and the Transportation Security Administration's Secure Flight program prior to their admission to the United States, as is the case with all individuals traveling to the United States regardless of immigration program.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Wall Street Journal in a video outlines the steps a refugee must go through to reach the United States.

The New Yorlc Times in an interactive map shows where Syrian refugees currently reside.

David Miliband: ''There are many ways to come to the United States. Comparatively the refugee resettlement program is the most difficult short of swimming the Atlantic.''

Fran Townsend: ''There are no easy answers in Syria, but it's time to stop acting as if the problems there are too hard or too complicated. While we cannot right the wrong of the current poky failure, it is still possible to act now to both alleviate the consequent suffering and mitigate the potential future.''

Governor Nikki Haley: ''These are people who have protected our troops, these are people who have been persecuted for being Christian . . . these are people who we took in because they were unsafe where they were.''

Finally, states cannot unilaterally block resettlement. Governors do not have the legal authority to determine who lives in their states. When refugees are legally admitted to the United States they have the right to move freely throughout the country.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I do want to say one thing. It strikes me, as we are having this debate here, that I can't help but take note of their response in France toward the Syrian refugees. Yesterday, French President Francois Hollande promised to honor his commitment to take in tens of thousands of refugees, welcoming 30,000 refugees over the next 2 years. That is 6,000 more than he committed to in September. He also announced $53.3 million to develop housing for refugees. We have all invoked the terrible tragedy that happened in France. Let's follow France's example and be a secure shelter for those most in need.

As I listen to the debate here, one of the troubling things to me is that there doesn't ever seem to be a tragedy that my friends on the other side of the aisle don't want to exploit for political gain, and I think today is no exception. A horrendous terrorist attack happened in Paris, an attack that has shocked the entire world. This is being used as an excuse to pass what I consider an ugly bill because this would shut down a refugee resettlement for Syrians and Iraqis.

This bill is aimed at fueling fear rather than protecting the American people. We have an exhaustive screening process for refugees already in place. It takes years for a refugee from Syria to be able to be admitted to the United States—years. Can we improve the system? Absolutely. But the opportunity to do that requires us to consult with one another and to put the results ahead of political gain. But that is not what happened. We had a bill before the Rules Committee that never went through committee, that never was marked up, the content of which was not shared with the Democrats, and a lot of Republicans were locked out of the process. Here we are with a political document more than something that is going to do anything to help these people fleeing violence or help enhance our security. Now, that might be a nice sound bite in your next campaign, but it is an awful thing to do to a group of people fleeing war and terror.

Who are these people? They are, as the President stated, widows and orphans mostly. They are old people trying to be reunited with distant family members in the United States. They are people who are fleeing for their lives and who are fleeing the worst terror imaginable. That used to mean something in this Chamber. We used to care about these things in a bipartisan way. Apparently, no more.

This Congress is losing its humanity. Here is the deal: we are behaving in a way that I think reinforces what the terrorists are trying to communicate to the rest of the world, which is that somehow we don't care about people from certain parts of the world or we don't care about people who happen to be Muslim. We have had a lot of people on the other side of the aisle who have talked about we ought to have a religious test here and very little condemnation in response to that from my friends on the other side of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, last night in the Rules Committee, my Republican friends said that all we are doing is responding to public opinion. Our job is to be more than just a political weathervane. We have an obligation to make sure that we state the facts—the real facts. We have an obligation to tell the truth. We have an obligation to help put issues in perspective. And, in short, we have an obligation to lead on issues like this and not be so jittery to pursue policies that we all know are wrong.

So we are here with a bill that my friends say is so important that there could be no hearings and no markup on, a bill that is so important that there could be no consultation on, a bill that is so important that nobody can offer an amendment on, and we have a bill that is coming before us in an absolutely closed process.

Let me just close by expressing my deep frustration with this place and how it is being run. For some time now, I have watched as my Republican friends have regularly turned their backs on the most vulnerable populations. There is no more vulnerable population—no more vulnerable group of people on this planet—than refugees fleeing god-awful war and terror. Yet, today, they are being thrown under the bus for political gain. They are being demonized. They are being characterized as terrorists. Young children, 3-year-old girls, widowed mothers, and grandmothers are being demonized as terrorists.

□ 1030

And for what? The American people, I think, expect more from us. What we are doing here today is not about protecting the American people. It is not about helping people fleeing war and violence. This is political. That makes what is happening here today not only disappointing but, I would say, disgusting.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I share many times the frustration my friend from Massachusetts has about this place. When I look at what is going on today, my frustration, frankly, on the floor here has probably grown, considering that we talk about everything else except what the bill actually does. We throw up every picture of everything.

I am not sure at what point today—and I can go back through my remarks. I am not sure where I ever disparaged a refugee, ever said that the inhumanity and suffering that is going on because of a bunch of thugs called the Islamic State, that these folks do not need to have a place to go or humanitarian help, which America has led on from the beginning. It is easy to say that.

As the gentleman is fond of saying, Mr. Speaker, it makes political points. Well, the same is true for him and true for our folks across the aisle. It makes political points for them. The problem is it is not in the bill. The problem is it is adding an extra layer.

There has been discussion here today about the political whims. Look, I believe that what is happening right now is a test of two things: thermometers and thermostats.

This administration is a pretty good thermometer. They will look out and tell you what they believe the temperature is, and they react to the world opinion.

I believe today the Republican majority is acting as a thermostat and moving the temperature and moving the awareness. Because I do not believe that an event could be ignored if it is not being used. It is saying there is a warning sign. It is like a warning sign on your vehicle. You can ignore it, and when it breaks down, you wonder what happened; or you can say, here is a warning sign, here is what is going on in the world.

All we are asking for is certification from our highest officials in security to say these folks have another level of check so that we can ensure our homeland is protected.

One attack on American soil is too many. The Islamic State has been clear in their desire to bring America to her knees. The underlying legislation won't change that. But as the chairman of the Judiciary Committee stated last night, it will put this administration on notice that Congress will not be silent.

We will take up the national security mantle that this White House has so carelessly disregarded. In the weeks ahead, you can expect this body to bring forward additional legislation reforming both our refugee and visa waiver programs.

There is no loophole or vulnerability that ISIS won't seek to use to kill and destroy, and there is no loophole or vulnerability the House Republicans aren't committed and determined to fix, and I desperately ask my friends across the aisle to join us.

Our Nation is a beacon of freedom and hope, and no force of evil will ever change that. No terrorist will ever cause Republicans in this body to shy away from our duty to our citizens or our duty to the world, and for that I believe both sides need to come together.

The President stated ISIS is the JV. I believe the families and loved ones of the recent attacks on an airplane in Paris would not say that, in fact, would say otherwise.

The administration's refusal to look the Islamic State in the eye and declare with a resounding voice that they will be defeated is devastating, but it isn't the end. Where this White House has failed, Congress will succeed. We will work tirelessly to restore the faith and trust of the American people. We will replace political posturing with policy priorities dealing with our national security, as opposed to those of a more liberal strategy that we have heard today.

Look, I know my friends across the aisle share the same heart. We grieve the lives lost. We grieve for those who are caught up in war and caught up in the devastating attacks by a group of people who, frankly—ISIS—have no soul. They are blank. Because if you are agreeable to do the atrocities that they are doing, you just have no part in a civilized world. You have no part in being acknowledged except for the animals that you are.

I recognize they are in an impossible position of choosing either the safety of their constituents or the political strategy of the President—I understand that—across the aisle.

My hope is that today—today—will be different, that we don't take the easy ''no'' vote, that we will have the moral courage to make the decision that says ''no'' to terrorism and ''yes'' to the American people, a vote that will ensure that our country remains a safe haven for those the rest of the world has abandoned.

Again, let me repeat this again, because it has been said. I guess if we say it enough, we believe it to be true.

This does not stop the program. It simply says that, until we can certify, we are going to make sure that there is an extra level of protection for the people. It does not shut the program down.

A vote in support of this rule and for H.R. 4038 is what we need. And after we bow our heads in thanks next week, filled with gratitude for those who have gone before, we will return with renewed commitment to further reforms.

Evil will not win. ISIS will not win. With the steadfast spirit and courage of conviction of those who came before, those who gave their lives, we will not let the torch of freedom go out on our watch, and we will continue to fight for those in our country, for their safety, our sons and daughters, as we continue this fight.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition to the rule governing debate on this bill and the underlying bill H.R. 4038, the ''American Security Against Enemies Act of 2015'' (America SAFE Act).

This bill represents a rush to judgement.

It has been rushed to the floor without the regular order deliberative process promised by the House Leadership.

H.R. 4038 was introduced on Tuesday, November 17, 2015, in violation of House Rules, without consideration or review by the House oversight committees.

Today, November 19, 2015 it is on the floor for debate and votes.

This bill does not further the national security interest of our country—in fact it harms those interests.

The United States does have an urgent need to deal with the humanitarian crisis that is unfolding in the wake of ISIS/ISIL aggression in Syria and Iraq.

There are 60 million displaced persons because of the war.

The Syrian/Iraqi conflict has claimed over 240,000 lives.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is written as if no process exists for vetting Iraqi or Syrian refugees.

In fact a very rigorous process is in place that has been honed over the past several years by intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

They have established and perfected an intense form of screening for Syrians called the ''Syrian Enhanced Review.''

The American SAFE Act requires a FBI background check for every refugee from Iraq and Syria who applies for asylum in the United States, when a much better process is in place that requires the intelligence agencies and the Department of Defense to vet applicants.

This bill provides that no refugee from Iraq or Syria can be granted asylum in the United States unless the Director of the FBI, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence each make an independent determination and concur unanimously that the applicant for asylum poses no threat to the national security of the United States.

The FBI is a domestic law enforcement agency—they have an international presence, but their focus is domestic.

The agencies with an international focus such as the State Department, DoD, and intelligence agencies under the leadership of DHS are the experts.

The House process for the consideration and deliberation of legislation is intended to prevent bad bills from coming to the floor for a vote.

This bill was drafted in haste—in application it would require a 5 year old child who is Syrian to have to get the FBI, DHS, DoD, and DNI to agree that she poses no threat to the United States or its people.

This bill is doing damage to our nation's foreign policy interest by sending a signal to our allies, who are doing much more than the United States is doing to relieve the suffering of Syrian refugees, while also facing the threat of terrorism every day.

Mr. Speaker, let me commend Homeland Security Committee Chairman MCCAUL, the lead sponsor of the bill before us, with whom I have worked closely and reached agreement on many matters critical to the security of our homeland.

Homeland Security Committee Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member THOMPSON and Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Immigration Ranking Member LOFGREN are dedicated public servants whose actions are always motivated by their commitment to keep our nation safe and secure.

This bill is purported by supporters as not stopping the refugee process for Iraq and Syria.

The bill in its language does stop the process—some like to call it a pause, but is a dead stop in the processing of applications from Iraqi and Syrian refugees.

They have not read the bill or they do not understand the consequences of the language that requires certification by the FBI, DHS, DoD, and DNI that a refugee poses no threat'' in the legislation if they believe that this bill would not end the refugee process for Iraqi and Syrian applicants.

The bill calls for 100% certification by the FBI, DHS, DoD, and DNI that no refugee is a threat.

No professional security or law enforcement professional will give anyone a 100% guarantee about anything.

They will not provide a 100% guarantee because they believe that something or someone is a threat—they will not provide a guarantee because it is grossly unprofessional to do so and we should never ask them to do this.

On its face H.R. 4038 would end any hope of asylum in the United States for any refugee from Iraq or Syria.

The U.S. screening process in place is focused upon applications from women with children, orphans, the seriously ill and the elderly.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4038 is not necessary at this time because our nation already has in place the world's most rigorous screening process for refugees seeking asylum.

Mr. Speaker, there are other alternatives to the draconian approach of H.R. 4038, takes such as the bill introduced by Ranking Members THOMPSON and LOFGREN.

The President is another solution for those who seek reassurance that every precaution is being taken—he is in a position to certify to the Congress and the American people that the process is prudent and careful in its actions regarding refugees seeking entrance into the United States.

It is helpful to recount briefly the critical elements of that screening process.

Every applicant for asylum must:

1. register with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

2. provide background information, including what caused him or her to flee their home country (a ready means of comparing information provided by more than one million refugees to further verify the validity of the information provided);

3. meet one of five legal qualifications: threat of violence based on race, religion or faith or national origin; political beliefs; or membership in a targeted social group.

4. undergo a rigorous background check during which investigators fact-check the refugee's biography to ensure consistency with published or documented reports of events such as bombings or other violence;

5. be subjected to biometric tests conducted by the Department of Defense, in conjunction with other federal agencies (the U.S. military has an extensive biometric data base on Iraqis from its time in Iraq); and

6. sit for intensive in-person interviews, which may take months or years before they are conducted.

If, during the screening process, a person from Syria gives responses that raise red flags he or she is selected for more intense examination by U.S. intelligence agencies.

The process for those refugees from the conflict area who have entered the United States began with the High Commissioner for Refugees who referred 22,000 applicants to the United States for consideration.

The United States through its process only allowed 7,000 for further consideration for admittance and in its final decision permitted

2,000 individuals to be cleared for entrance into the country.

The demographic breakdown of those Syrians who have been approved for refugee status to come to the United States is as follows: children, 50%; persons over the age of 60, 25%; combat age males, 2%.

H.R. 4038 has come to the floor too fast for such a serious decision and without considering the arduous process that is in place to screen all refugees, not just those from Iraq and Syria.

The last thing a terrorist would want is to be a refugee—living in the harsh environment of a refugee camp for two years.

Refugees are the victims of terrorists—ISIS/ISIL does not love them—they want to murder every last one of them, because they will not bow to them.

This rule for this bill troubles me because it has been constructed on tools that allow Congress to act during times of crisis or emergencies.

Mr. Speaker a 2-year process does not pose any emergency by any definition that can be devised.

I cannot support this bill, but I an committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find common ground.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 531 OFFERED BY MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

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. 4079) to require that supplemental certifications and identity verifications be completed prior to the admission of refugees. 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 the Judiciary. 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. 4079.

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. COLLINS of Georgia. 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. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 243, nays 182, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 638]

YEAS—243

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
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
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
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NAYS—182

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
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
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
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
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
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
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)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

DeFazio
Ellison
Gowdy
Hinojosa
Ruppersberger
Takai
Watson Coleman
Williams

□ 1103

Ms. BROWNLEY of California changed her vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

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. McGOVERN. 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 242, noes 183, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 639]

AYES—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 (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
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
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
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
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—183

Adams
Aguilar
Ashford
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brooks (AL)
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
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
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
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
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)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

Cohen
DeFazio
Ellison
Hinojosa
Ruppersberger
Takai
Watson Coleman
Williams

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1111

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.

FED OVERSIGHT REFORM AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) to amend the Federal Reserve Act to establish requirements for policy rules and blackout periods of the Federal Open Market Committee, to establish requirements for certain activities of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and to amend title 31, United States Code, to reform the manner in which the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System is audited, and for other purposes, will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

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

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

Ms. MATSUI. I am opposed to it in its current form.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Matsui moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3189 to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Page 43, line 25, strike the quotation marks and final period and insert after such line the following:

''(H) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN COMPANIES.—The Board shall seek to ensure that any company convicted of any felony or misdemeanor or that has been made subject to any judicial or administrative decree or order arising out of misconduct that harms the financial health of seniors is prohibited from receiving a loan or other financial assistance under this paragraph, if the Board determines such prohibition is in the nation's economic interest.''.

Ms. MATSUI (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 gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

□ 1115

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill which would not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill would immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the motion to recommit to H.R. 3189, which will ensure that seniors will be protected from losing their hard-earned benefits to deceitful financial companies found to engage in harmful activity. Financial companies that put earnings ahead of the needs of our seniors should not be allowed to participate in any emergency lending program or facility established by the Federal Reserve.

While Republicans try to put their special interest friends first, the Democratic motion to recommit would ensure that financial companies found to engage in activity that harms seniors' financial health and stability are prevented from participating in any emergency lending program or facility established by the Federal Reserve.

Our motion to recommit would stop rewarding unsavory financial institutions that abuse the trust and harm the financial health of America's seniors.

America's seniors, who have spent their lives working to provide for their families, deserve to retire with dignity and live without fear of being stripped of financial security due to the actions of predatory financial institutions. Yet, House Republicans are willing to grant these shady financial companies access to emergency resources established by the Federal Reserve.

We need to adopt this motion to recommit to send a strong signal to predatory financial entities across this country that putting profits ahead of people will not be rewarded by the U.S. Government.

I am co-chair of the Democratic Congressional Task Force on Seniors, and I am committed to protecting the well-being of older Americans and ensuring that those who work hard and play by the rules receive a dignified and secure retirement.

In addition to protecting hard-earned benefits like Social Security and Medicare, we also need to ensure that vulnerable seniors are not the subject of predatory lending that further puts them at risk for economic security.

According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, older Americans are particularly vulnerable to bad actors who seek to defraud them, take advantage of their hard-earned retirement savings, or push them into taking on financial products or services—like a reverse mortgage—that they may not want or need.

Roughly 1 million older Americans lose an estimated $2.6 billion annually as a result of financial abuse according to a MetLife study entitled, ''Broken Trust: Elders, Family and Finances.'' This is unacceptable.

As older Americans age, we have an obligation to ensure that they are not an easy target for financial companies peddling predatory financial products and services.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to vote in favor of this motion to recommit. By voting for this motion to recommit, Members can make clear whose side they are on, whether it be in favor of protecting our vulnerable seniors or in favor of protecting dishonest financial companies that seek to do them harm.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion.

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I find the motion to recommit to be most ironic. For the Members who were here for the debate on the underlying FORM Act yesterday, all we heard from the other side of the aisle is you cannot direct the Federal Reserve to do anything; you are imposing upon their independence. And yet we have a motion to recommit that does exactly what they argued against yesterday. That is irony number one, Mr. Speaker.

The second irony about the motion to recommit is nothing has hurt seniors more than having 7 years straight of zero percent interest rates. It is seniors who know that when you are young you work for your money, and when you are old you expect your money to work for you. Their money is not working for them because we have had 7 years of artificially low interest rates. Real interest rates of zero.

If we want to help our seniors, what we need is a monetary policy that is more predictable, that is more rules based, which is exactly what the FORM Act does. The American people want a healthier economy. They want a government that is transparent and accountable to them, and that includes the Federal Reserve. They cannot continue to cloak their prudential regulatory policies behind their monetary policies. We don't need our central bankers to become our central planners, but we need a monetary policy that works for seniors.

For a healthier economy, for a government that is transparent and accountable to ''we, the people,'' we need to vote down the motion to recommit. Vote for the FORM Act.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 182, noes 242, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 640]

AYES—182

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
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
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
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean

Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
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)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—242

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
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
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
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
O'Rourke
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
Russell
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
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—9

DeFazio
Ellison
Hinojosa
Roskam
Royce
Ruppersberger
Takai
Watson Coleman
Williams

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1128

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 241, noes 185, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 641]

AYES—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
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
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Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Dold
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett
Gibbs
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)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
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
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Palazzo
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Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
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Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Russell
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
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Trott
Turner
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Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
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Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Westmoreland
Whitfield
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
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gibson
Graham
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
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King (NY)
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
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Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
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Norcross
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Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rigell
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
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
Stefanik
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—7

DeFazio	Ruppersberger	Williams
Ellison	Takai	
Hinojosa	Watson Coleman	

□ 1135

Mr. POLIS changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMERICAN SECURITY AGAINST FOREIGN ENEMIES ACT OF 2015

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 531, I call up the bill (H.R. 4038) to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL). Pursuant to House Resolution 531, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4038

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 ''American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015'' or as the ''American SAFE Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REVIEW OF REFUGEES TO IDENTIFY SECURITY THREATS TO THE UNITED STATES.

(a) BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION.—In addition to the screening conducted by the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation shall take all actions necessary to ensure that each covered alien receives a thorough background investigation prior to admission as a refugee. A covered alien may not be admitted as a refugee until the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation certifies to the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Director of National Intelligence that each covered alien has received a background investigation that is sufficient to determine whether the covered alien is a threat to the security of the United States.

(b) CERTIFICATION BY UNANIMOUS CONCURRENCE.—A covered alien may only be admitted to the United States after the Secretary of Homeland Security, with the unanimous concurrence of the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Director of National Intelligence, certifies to the appropriate Congressional Committees that the covered alien is not a threat to the security of the United States.

(c) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW OF CERTIFICATIONS.—The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall conduct a risk-based review of all certifications made under subsection (b) each year and shall provide an annual report detailing the findings to the appropriate Congressional Committees.

(d) MONTHLY REPORT.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate Congressional Committees a monthly report on the total number of applications for admission with regard to which a certification under subsection (b) was made and the number of covered aliens with regard to whom such a certification was not made for the month preceding the date of the report. The report shall include, for each covered alien with regard to whom a certification was not made, the concurrence or nonconcurrence of each person whose concurrence was required by subsection (b).

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) COVERED ALIEN.—The term ''covered alien'' means any alien applying for admission to the United States as a refugee who—

(A) is a national or resident of Iraq or Syria;

(B) has no nationality and whose last habitual residence was in Iraq or Syria; or

(C) has been present in Iraq or Syria at any time on or after March 1, 2011.

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE.—The term ''appropriate Congressional Committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(B) the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(G) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives;

(H) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives;

(I) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives;

(J) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(K) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(L) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. 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 materials on H.R. 4038, currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 4038, the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015.

Just one example of a terrorist taking advantage of the United States' generous immigration policy in order to perpetrate attacks on Americans is too many. Unfortunately, there are too many examples to count. Most notable, of course, are the attacks on September 11, 2001, perpetrated by 19 foreign nationals who were admitted to the U.S. through our legal immigration system.

The U.S. Government has the ultimate responsibility to protect its citizens. As such, if U.S. immigration policy allows foreign nationals who want to do us harm access to U.S. soil, then the immigration policy must be reviewed and amended.

We are faced with such a situation right now. There is a very real possibility that a terrorist, particularly one from, or claiming to be from, Syria or Iraq, will attempt to gain access to the United States as a refugee. In fact, ISIS is making no secret of their plans to have their members infiltrate groups of Syrian refugees. We should take ISIS at its word.

Of course, our hope is that such an individual would be screened out through the refugee vetting process. Unfortunately, we have heard time and time again from top counterterrorism and intelligence officials that the current vetting process cannot prevent such an individual from receiving refugee status.

In fact, just late last month, FBI Director James Comey told the Judiciary Committee that with a conflict zone like Syria, where there is ''dramatically'' less information available to use during the vetting process, he could not ''offer anybody an absolute assurance that there is no risk associated with'' admitting Syrian nationals as refugees.

He told another House committee that ''we can only query against that which we have collected. And so if someone has never made a ripple in the pond in Syria in a way that would get their identity or their interest reflected in our database, we can query our database until the cows come home but . . . nothing will show up because we have no record on that person.''

The administration's foreign policy inaction in Syria, and failure to take seriously the ISIS threat, are responsible for the flood of Syrians currently leaving their country. Of course, we all remember when the President told us that ISIS was the JV team. That JV team just murdered 120 innocent people in Paris, including at least one American. And the Paris JV team included at least one terrorist who was registered as a refugee from Syria.

H.R. 4038 requires certification by the FBI Director that the security vetting process is sufficient to prevent an individual who is a security threat from being admitted as a refugee. The bill also requires that the DHS Secretary, FBI Director, and Director of National Intelligence certify to Congress that each refugee is not a security threat prior to his or her admission to the United States.

In addition, H.R. 4038 requires the DHS Inspector General to review such certifications annually and report its findings to Congress. The certification procedures apply to aliens who are nationals of Iraq or Syria, those who have no nationality and whose last habitual residence was in Iraq or Syria, or who have been present in those countries at any time on or after March 1, 2011.

H.R. 4038 puts the administration on notice that their lax attitude toward this issue will no longer be tolerated. And it puts the administration on notice that Congress is not yet finished reforming refugee policy.

In fact, our committee has been hard at work long before the Paris attacks working on legislation to make necessary security-related and other changes to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. We look forward to moving that legislation through the House.

H.R. 4038 is not meant to be the sole solution to the security problems we face in vetting Syrian and other refugees, but it is an important first step. I look forward to Congress taking additional action to ensure America's safety.

I thank the gentleman from Texas and the gentleman from North Carolina for the work they have done on this bill. I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

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

Mr. Speaker and Members, the so-called American SAFE Act purports to make us safer. But as the administration has so correctly observed, this measure would provide no meaningful additional security for the American people. Worse yet, it would effectively deny refugee status for Syrians and Iraqis who are themselves victims of terrorism in their own homelands.

□ 1145

H.R. 4038 is a terribly flawed and inhumane bill for many reasons. To begin with, while ensuring the safety of all Americans should be our top priority, H.R. 4038 does nothing to achieve this goal.

This measure sets unreasonable clearance standards that the Department of Homeland Security simply cannot meet. Refugees seeking to come to our shores are already subject to the highest level of vetting, more than any other traveler or immigrant to the United States.

This extensive screening process is performed by the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, in conjunction with the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other law enforcement and intelligence agencies. The process utilizes methodical and exhaustive background checks that often take up to 24 months, on average, to complete, and even longer, in some cases.

We must keep in mind that our Nation was founded by immigrants and has historically welcomed refugees when there is suffering around the globe. Whether it is an earthquake in Haiti, a tsunami in Asia, or 4 years of civil war in Syria, with no end in sight, the world looks always to the United States. We provide protections for refugees and asylum seekers, especially women and children.

Nevertheless, in the wake of the September 11 attacks on our shores and the tragic November 13 terrorist attacks in Paris, we must be vigilant, particularly in the midst of a global refugee crisis.

H.R. 4038, however, is an extreme over-reaction to these latest security concerns. Rather than shutting our doors to these desperate men and women and children who are risking their lives to escape death and torture in their own homelands, we should work to utilize our immense resources and good intentions of our citizens to welcome them.

Finally, Congress needs to do its part by properly funding refugee resettlement as well as funding our Federal agencies so they have the necessary personnel and programs to complete security checks that we already have in place. Instead of slamming our doors to the world's most vulnerable, we should be considering legislation to strengthen and expand refugee programs.

Unfortunately, the bill before us today is not a serious effort to legislate, and it will not make us safer. It is a knee-jerk reaction, as evidenced by the fact that this measure was introduced just 2 days ago, and has not been the subject of a single hearing or any meaningful review by our committee.

Rather than betraying our values, we must continue to focus on the most effective tools to keep us safe, while also providing refuge for the world's most vulnerable.

Accordingly, I urge all of my colleagues to oppose H.R. 4038.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, and the chief sponsor of this bill.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I want to first thank the gentleman from Virginia, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for his work on this legislation.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the American Safe Act.

Let me be clear. We are a nation at war. The world was reminded last week that Islamic terrorists are seeking to harm our people, destroy our way of life, and undermine the foundational principles of the free world.

Sadly, with the news that at least one of these terrorists may have infiltrated Europe posing as a Syrian refugee, the Paris attacks appear to confirm our worst fears, that, of the thousands of foreign fighters who have gone to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS, some would be deployed to bring terror back to the West.

The world is now looking at America for leadership and for a clear-eyed understanding of the threat.

ISIS is not ''contained,'' as the President says. ISIS is expanding globally and is plotting aggressively. The group is now responsible for more than 60 terrorist plots against Western targets, including 18 in the United States.

Here in the homeland, we have arrested more than one ISIS supporter a week in the past year, and the FBI says it has nearly 1,000 ISIS-related investigations in all 50 States.

Today, we must take decisive action to show the American people that we are doing all that we can to protect our country. We must listen to the words of our enemies.

ISIS has vowed, in their words, to exploit the refugee process, to sneak operatives, to infiltrate the West, and they appear to have already done that, to attack our allies.

For nearly a year, intelligence and law enforcement agencies have warned Congress, both publicly and privately, that they are alarmed by intelligence collection gaps and our ability to weed out terrorists from the refugee process.

FBI Director Comey testified before my committee and stated: ''We can query our databases until the cows come home, but nothing will show up because we have no record of them.''

Homeland Security Secretary Johnson said: ''We know that organizations like ISIS might like to exploit this program.''

This is an administration official's words, not mine.

This legislation would add two important layers to our defenses, creating the most robust national security screening process in American history for any refugee population.

The American SAFE Act also strikes an important balance between security and our humanitarian responsibilities. It sets up roadblocks to keep terrorists from entering the United States, while also allowing legitimate refugees who are not a threat to be resettled appropriately.

Let us not forget, this legislation is the first in a series of steps we must take to defend the homeland, but ultimately, to win this war, we must take the fight to the enemy.

Last week, the streets of Paris could just have easily been the streets of New York or Chicago or Houston or Los Angeles.

But as I have said before, our long-term message to these terrorists must be clear. You may have fired the first shot in the struggle but, rest assured, America will fire the last.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), one who has worked harder on this issue than anyone I know.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, all of us watched with horror the events in Paris. November 13 was France's September 11.

And all of us have paused to consider what further should be done to make sure that America is safe because our first obligation, as Members of Congress, is to make sure that America is safe.

So, as we watch the refugees from the Middle East pouring into Europe, concern has been expressed—and I think correctly—who are these people

hidden among the many helpless victims? Are there those who would pose a threat?

It is worth noting that our process for refugees is completely different. No one gets into the United States unless they have been completely vetted. This process starts with the U.N. referring only those people who are vulnerable, who have been tortured, who have been victimized, who are helpless women and children, for screening by us.

We have a process that includes soliciting information from the DEA, from the intelligence agencies, from the FBI, and the like. All of those agencies have a veto. If there is a problem, they veto the admission. The process takes 2 years or more, and a very small number of people actually are admitted.

Of the 2,000 or so Syrian refugees who have been admitted to the United States, the overwhelming majority are children and widows who have been victims of torture, who have seen their husbands beheaded.

The bill before us, as has been described by the Speaker and the author, would stop the refugee program. They call it a pause. They would stop it because it completely restructures the very elaborate system that we have.

By putting the FBI as the lead agency, they would have to hire agents, send them over. It would be a pause. That is what they have described. We think it would take a couple of years to start up.

Now, why is that a bad idea?

ISIS is our enemy, and we need to fight them, and we need to defeat them. But we are fighting on two levels; one, military, but also, this is a fight of values.

America stands for freedom. We are the beacon of light, of democracy, of freedom in the world. And part of that value of America is allowing people who are escaping monsters like ISIS to be able to become Americans like us.

We need to screen and make sure that we are completely safe. But if we stop that program, we give ISIS a win.

Please defeat this bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON), the chief cosponsor of the legislation.

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, America is a compassionate country. We are a good country. We have a long history of accepting refugees, people fleeing oppression and violence.

But we also have an obligation to the American people. As we welcome people into this country who are seeking asylum, we owe it to the American people to know who these people are. And when you have got a terrorist group like ISIS, who has said that they will exploit this refugee crisis to infiltrate America—this is an organization that has said their goal is to come to America and kill Americans—I take them at their word.

The number one responsibility of this body is to protect the American people. It is not me saying that we have challenges with the current vetting process; it is experts from President Obama's administration.

I draw your attention to the first quote here from Jeh Johnson: ''It is true that we are not going to know a whole lot about the Syrians that come forth in this process.'' That is definitely a challenge. That is the Secretary of Homeland Security.

I draw your attention to the next quote from Director James Comey of the FBI: ''We can only query against that which we have collected, and so if someone has not made a ripple in the pond in Syria in a way that would get their identity or their interest reflected in our databases, we can query our data until the cows come home, but nothing will show up because we have no record of that person.''

This is not me saying that. This is not Republicans saying that. These are officials in President Obama's administration saying that the current process is broken, that we are bringing in these refugees that we cannot properly vet.

So our legislation simply says: Let's stop this flow unless and until the law enforcement experts that President Obama has appointed, the FBI Director, the Secretary of Homeland Security, can vouch for the fact that we have a process in place that they are comfortable with.

How radical is that?

This is common sense, and that is why our polls show that as many as 75 percent of the American people support this measure.

□ 1200

Mr. Speaker, I know the President has issued a veto threat, but I hope that today in this House we can come together, Republicans and Democrats, and respond to the will of the American people and do our primary job to keep them safe so we can have a bipartisan vote that doesn't say no refugees, it doesn't say stop Syrian refugees, and it doesn't say don't ever let them in again. It says pause the program unless and until the law enforcement experts are comfortable that we have got a process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY), the chairman of the Immigration and Border Security Subcommittee, and ask unanimous consent that he be able to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), a distinguished member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this irresponsible bill that would effectively block the settlement of Syrian refugees in the United States for years.

The shocking and tragic events in Paris have touched people all over the world and strengthened our resolve to defeat the terrorists who are responsible for these heinous acts, for bombing a Russian airliner, and for carrying out deadly bombings in Beirut. But defeating terrorism should not mean slamming the door in the faces of those who are fleeing the terrorists. That is why I am appalled by the actions of this House and by some of the words of my colleagues today.

Mr. Speaker, the United States has always been and should always be a place of refuge. Remember, the Syrian refugees are running away from ISIS. They are running away from war, from terror. The are its victims. To stop thousands of desperate people who are fleeing unspeakable violence is unconscionable. We might as well take down the Statute of Liberty.

Countries with much smaller populations like Lebanon and Turkey have agreed to take 1 million refugees or more. Even France just announced they are increasing the number of Syrian refugees they are accepting. We in the United States are talking about a mere 10,000. These refugees are subject to an extensive vetting process which can take up to 24 months.

But the real danger America faces is that ISIS, through its propaganda, can radicalize people already here and inspire them to attack the United States from within. In Paris we saw that several of the attackers were European nationals who could enter the United States without being vetted, so it is ridiculous to assert that by denying access to refugees, we would be making America safer.

We face a choice that will echo through history. In 1924, a racist, xenophobic, and anti-Semitic Congress passed legislation slamming the door shut on Jewish, Italian, Greek, and Eastern European immigrants. The Almanac of American Politics said that, if it weren't for the 1924 Immigration Act, perhaps 2 million of the 6 million Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust would have been living safely in the United States instead.

Back then we shut our doors to people in desperate need. We must not do so again. We must not let ourselves be guided by irrational fear. We have a moral obligation and, for those who care, a religious obligation to extend a hand to those in need.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank those who have worked on the bill, Congressman RICHARD HUDSON, Chairman MIKE MCCAUL, a number of other committee chairmen, Chairman GOODLATTE, and others.

Mr. Speaker, this is not an issue that comes before us just because of action that happened recently—a horrific action. Mr. Speaker, our duty is to protect the American people. Without security, we cannot have freedom. Without security, we cannot help others abroad.

The American people are generous, and we want to help those in the world suffering from terrorism and civil war. The fact that America gives far more in foreign aid than any other country in the world is a testament to our generosity. In 2014, we gave over $6.5 billion in humanitarian foreign aid alone. That doesn't even count the millions of dollars that privately have been offered by American people.

But, Mr. Speaker, being generous does not mean we have to have a weak screening process for refugees, especially for those coming from Iraq and Syria where we know people are there who seek to do us harm and are looking to exploit a weak process. It is wrong to condemn a strong screening process using the language of charity and morality.

When we allow refugees into this country, we must be guided by one single principle: If you are a terrorist or you are a threat to our country, you are not getting in, period. The bill before us increases the standards to keep those who want to do us harm out.

But America is not saying ''no'' to refugees. America always stands as a beacon of hope for everyone fleeing oppression and terror. Nothing will stop us from protecting the innocent while continuing our fight against evil. Instead, this bill puts a pause on our refugee program until we are certain that nobody being allowed in poses a threat to the American people.

To those who do not even want to consider increasing accountability in our refugee process—and to the President, who announced that he wants to veto this bill—let me tell you this: It is against the values of our Nation and the values of a free society to give terrorists the opening they are looking for to come into our country and harm the American people, and we have an obligation to stop that from happening. In the debate we are having on the refugee crisis, we should not lose sight of the root of the problem. The real problem is ISIL and our lack of strategy to destroy them.

It astounds me that the President refuses to face reality and admit that his strategy is failing. ISIL controls territory the size of Maryland. Attacks in Paris, Beirut, and Egypt show that ISIL is not contained to Iraq and Syria. Every day ISIL continues to exist is another day they can train, recruit, and radicalize more people to continue their war on the civilized world and threaten the safety of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, this danger is real, and nothing can replace a winning strategy. Here in the House, we will not accept half measures. We are committed to keeping America safe. That is why I ask all in the House to support this bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), a distinguished member of the House Judiciary Committee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I have been on the Homeland Security Committee since the heinous and vile acts of 9/11. I have often said that I was at Ground Zero, and I had the misery of seeing the recovery that was still occurring at that time. I take no backseat to the concern and love for this Nation, as I know that neither do my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

But, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is divided in a simple premise: no to refugees, stop the refugee program, turn your back on children, women, and old people broken and bent. This side is saying that America's values can parallel the love, respect, and commitment to the national security of this Nation.

ISIL is determined to divide this bipolar world; divide it between Muslims who share the distorted and profane interpretation and those who live every day under the sun who love freedom. We do not define the faith by those who kill us and maim us. As President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said: ''The only thing we have to fear is fear itself''—nameless, unreasoning, and unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert, retreat, and advance.

This is the extensive, extensive review that only a small number of Syrians go through that are able to get in this country from refugee camps. That is the only place they come from. This is the extensive one.

I say to the President, certify it now.

But what this legislation does is requires that the 5-year-old Syrian girl that has lived most of her life in a Jordanian camp must be certified by four or five individuals who are already in the process of the certification.

There are 60 million individuals who are displaced across the globe now. Twenty percent of them are Syrians fleeing the conflict that has taken 240,000 lives. Right now the FBI has 50 terrorist cells being investigated. They cannot count them as Syrian refugees.

This is the wrong direction. Let us follow our values, Mr. Speaker. Vote that bill down and bring refugees who are already certified. This bill is unnecessary. It stops the refugee program. Where is our mercy?

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS), the chairman of the Appropriations Committee.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today first to reaffirm our solidarity with the people of France, our brethren in Beirut, and the families of the victims of Metrojet Flight 9268 who perished over the skies of the Sinai. The senseless and unspeakable violence, the blind fanaticism, the utter and irrational hatred for human life by ISIS, together they present a threat not just to national and global security, but also to the fundamental values that constitute the very fiber of civilization.

Mr. Speaker, ISIS must be stopped. The violence must end. And the United States must do more—more to stamp out this evil, more to eradicate the threats posed here and abroad, and more to ensure that Americans can tuck in their children at night with a feeling of security that they will be waking up tomorrow morning for school free from fear. That is why we must support the SAFE Act. It is thoughtful, and it will further one of our principal national security priorities—keeping Americans safe—as we work to eliminate the threat posed by ISIS.

The instability in Syria and the surrounding region has continued unabated for more than 4 years, and we have witnessed an indescribable humanitarian crisis because of the brutality of the Assad regime and radical Islamic groups such as ISIS.

In the wake of the Paris tragedy, we must step back and review the procedures in place for admitting refugees resulting from this conflict coming into our country. We can and must implement a system that assists the victims of the tragedy but that also prioritizes American security first.

H.R. 4038 will ensure that no refugee from Iraq or Syria steps foot on U.S. soil without the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI Director, and the highest intelligence officer certifying that each refugee is not a security threat to the U.S. The Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and the Director of National Intelligence must unanimously certify that a person seeking refuge in this country does not represent a security threat. This is an unprecedented vetting process to ensure dangerous people do not slip through the cracks.

I urge your support, all in this Chamber, so we can provide our military and intelligence personnel with the best possible chance for success as they work to keep us safe.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support for the bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), ranking member on the Homeland Security Committee.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the generosity from my colleague from Michigan on the time.

Mr. Speaker, we live in uncertain and dangerous times with ever-evolving terrorist threats. The brutality that ISIL has inflicted on innocent people is both chilling and demands action.

As Members of Congress, we have a responsibility to do all we can to protect our citizens. In the wake of the

Paris attacks, questions have been raised about the screening system that the U.S. utilizes and whether it can be exploited by terrorists.

□ 1215

In light of those questions, Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Department of Homeland Security former Secretary Janet Napolitano and former Secretary Michael Chertoff supporting the current system of vetting refugees.

NOVEMBER 19, 2015.

Hon. BARACK OBAMA,
President of the United States,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Following the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, substantial progress has been made in protecting our nation's homeland. The ongoing efforts by our national security experts have provided tools and resources to make a coordinated attack like the one in Paris last week much more difficult to achieve here at home. As a nation, we have strengthened security at our air, land, and sea ports; we have strengthened the ability to monitor the travel of bad actors and detect fraud in our visa process; we have strengthened partnerships with state and local law enforcement across the nation to ensure that they are prepared; and we have engaged with minority and ethnic communities to prevent homegrown radicalization.

As former Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, it is our view that the American people are safer due to these efforts, but the Paris attacks remind us that we must remain ever-vigilant in this effort and that the highest priority of our government is to keep American's safe. It is our view that we can achieve this mission in a manner that is consistent with American values of openness and inclusiveness. With respect to refugees seeking to resettle here, it is our view that we can admit the most vulnerable of these refugees into this country safely as long as we do not compromise the already established protections. The process for any refugee seeking entry to the United States requires the highest level of scrutiny from a law enforcement and national security perspective. The process takes place while the refugees are still overseas, and it is lengthy and deliberate—taking an average of 18–24 months with no waiver of any steps. First, we consider only the most vulnerable—particularly survivors of violence and torture, those with severe medical conditions, and women and children—for potential admittance to the U.S. Once a candidate is selected they are subjected to biographic and biometric security reviews based on the latest intelligence from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI's Terrorist Screening Center, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense. If they pass these national security checks, they will then be personally interviewed by specially trained DHS personnel to ensure they are qualified for admittance. They are then subjected to recurrent vetting up to the final point of departure and a final interview at the border before being admitted into the U.S.

The process that is currently in place is thorough and robust and, so long as it is fully implemented and not diluted, it will allow us to safely admit the most vulnerable refugees while protecting the American people. Fortunately, these goals are not mutually exclusive.

Sincerely,

JANET NAPOLITANO,
Former Secretary (2009–2013), Department of Homeland Security.

MICHAEL CHERTOFF,
Former Secretary (2005–2009), Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in recent days, however, we have seen a number of Governors, including the Governor of my home State, choose fear over facts. If they had done their research, they would have learned that our program is an extensive 13-step process.

It starts with a referral from the United Nations of a prescreened person within its refugee camps, requires the Department of Homeland Security to do in-person interviews, and subjects each applicant to recurring vetting against the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, FBI, Department of Defense, and intelligence community terrorist and criminal databases. No excuses, Mr. Speaker. If any one of those reviews pops up with a problem, that person can't be considered for the refugee program—no excuses.

Unlike in Europe, where migrants crossed into countries that had little opportunity to vet them, no alien is allowed onto U.S. soil until all the checks are completed to DHS' satisfaction. As has already been said by my colleague, ZOE LOFGREN, it takes about 18 to 24 months to process an applicant for refugee status.

Now, that processing is thorough, Mr. Speaker, and it is complete. But there has been a reference to a stolen passport in the Paris situation. That person, if they had applied for the refugee program, would have had to go through the same process of vetting that would have required at least 18 to 24 months. So the thought that that person could just get on a plane and get here to this country is actually not accurate, and that is my effort to perfect the record.

Our system of vetting is a multi-layered, multi-agency approach where the FBI has veto authority on any applicant seeking refugee status. While no system is risk free, the protections in place in the American system are rigorous, robust, and extensive.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, yesterday a witness that the majority invited to appear before our committee, Matthew Olsen, the former Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, told our committee that no refugee program in the world is as extensive as what we do in the United States.

Yet, here we are today considering H.R. 4038, a bill that would upend the current system, which was developed by security personnel with one thought in mind: to protect the homeland. And these security personnel have done a wonderful job.

To the knowledge of all of us, none of the refugees that we are talking about from Syria or Iraq who came through this system have done anything but been model citizens since they have been here. Just for the record, there were 23,000 people that applied for refugee status from these two countries. Of those 23,000, about 7,000 were actually interviewed. Of those 7,000, only 2,000 were admitted.

So, Mr. Speaker, our system is robust. It works and it speaks to our values as Americans. I am proud to say that people who are abused, people who are oppressed, can still look to this country, follow the rules. If those rules are properly applied, they can look to America as somewhere they can call home, because most of those individuals applying for refugee status can't go home.

Once again, I call on Members to embrace facts over fear, Mr. Speaker, and vote against H.R. 4038.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from South Carolina for the time.

Mr. Speaker, ISIS is at war with the United States. The question is: Is America at war with ISIS? I am not so sure, since we don't have a strategy to defeat ISIS, other than if we are attacked, shelter in place, hunker down, get more security guards around the Capitol, use the tunnels rather than walk outside. That is what we were told after the Paris attacks, Mr. Speaker.

This legislation is really simple. It has at its core the idea to protect American citizens. It has nothing to do with refugees as far as whether we accept refugees. Our country accepts refugees. We always have. That is clear. It is not the issue of refugees. It is the issue of letting ISIS terrorists get into the country to kill us, Mr. Speaker.

Our own security that the gentleman from Mississippi kept talking about tells us we cannot vet Syrian refugees. The FBI Director says that. We can't do it. We are not capable of doing it. One of the reasons is many of these folks have no identity. So we can't do a background check on somebody who has no identity.

This legislation says let's take some safeguards. Before we bring in these specific refugees, let's make sure that the people in charge of security certify that this person is not a threat. They can't do it right now. Even the FBI Director says they can't certify. We owe that to the American public. This legislation does that.

The gentleman from Mississippi is correct that 31 Governors of the States say: Wait a minute. Not so fast. Find out who these people are.

I think the Governors of the States get it right. They ought to have the ability, I think, to decide whether people should come to their State or not only after a security check.

So this legislation is a step to protect America, one of the things we are supposed to do. The legislation is coming up quickly. Why? Because it is an

immediate threat. We have got refugees being bombed over in Syria. If we are going to take them in, let's at least have a plan to protect not only us, but those refugees.

That plan is in this legislation. It seems to me it would be irresponsible not to pass the legislation to require a certification of everybody that comes into America so that America could be safe because that is our responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, this bill is nothing but a PR piece that could have been written by Joseph Goebbels, who said, If you can make people afraid, you can make them do anything. What you are seeing here is the Republican's attempt to panic the American people that there is not a system in place.

Let me tell you about this system that is there. Mr. THOMPSON from Mississippi said what is really there. I helped a woman who for 2 years was a translator for American troops in Iraq. She was so good she saved lots of people's lives. She was so good that the enemy put a mark on her and said they were going to kill her. So she had to go into hiding.

It took her from January 2007 until September 2007 to get the papers and the witnesses and all the information necessary to get her into the United States. Somebody who had put her life on the line for us, our soldiers, it took 9 months to get her in. Then her mother and her brothers and sisters, who were 16 and 12 and 9, it took them 2 years to get into this country.

We have a robust system that is working. This bill is PR bologna. We ought to vote ''no.'' It sends the wrong message. It says only White Christians can come into this country.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), the chairman of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for all of his work to make our Nation more secure.

Mr. Speaker, I do rise in support today of the safety and security of the American people. As Members of Congress, we have no more sacred responsibility. Thus, I rise in support of the American SAFE Act.

Now, I join all Americans and all the people of the world in standing with the people of Paris. We are so sobered as to what happened to their homeland, but we are also sobered by the challenge and the grave responsibility to thwart the same evil from coming to our homeland.

The Director of the FBI testified before Congress just last month that a number of people who were of serious concern were able to slip through screenings of Iraqi refugees. That is what the Director of the FBI said. This disturbing information, Mr. Speaker, obviously raises very serious red flags about lapses in the security within our current refugee vetting system.

Again, it is why I support and I encourage all Members to support the American SAFE Act of 2015. It would effectively hit the pause button on the refugee program, not the stop, but the pause button.

It is simple legislation. It simply requires more rigid standards so that the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence would positively certify that each refugee from Iraq and Syria does not pose a security threat to us, to our homeland, to our families. Otherwise, they will not be permitted to set down on American soil. It is simple. It is common sense. It is needed.

Mr. Speaker, our hearts also go out to the millions of refugees forced to flee their homes and save their lives. There is no other country in the world—no other country in the world—that has been more generous with their time and treasure to refugees than the United States of America.

But today is not the day to share our territory, not until and unless these people can be properly vetted to ensure they don't threaten our families.

Mr. Speaker, hopefully, the world has awakened that there is a very real threat that ISIS poses. It is not the JV team. They are not contained. What happened in Paris was not merely a setback.

I urge my colleagues to take the responsibility to secure our homeland seriously. This will be the first of what I know will be many steps that this Chamber will take to address the growing threats that are posed to our families and our country.

I thank the sponsor of the legislation for bringing it to the floor. I urge all my colleagues to adopt it.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), our leader.

□ 1230

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his great service to our country in promoting our values and strengthening our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor in a very prayerful way today because we were all horrified at what happened in Paris, at what happened in Beirut, at what happened to the Russian airliner, to name a few recent incidences.

We recognize that that is horrible and that we have to protect the American people from it. To do so, we must be strong, but our strength must also spring from our prayerfulness for those who lost their lives or for those whose security was threatened physically, emotionally, and in every other way.

In our country, we have a relationship with France. They were our earliest friends. That is why in this Chamber of the House of Representatives, any visitor can see there are only two paintings. One is of our great patriarch, George Washington, our hero, our Founding Father.

The other painting in this Chamber is of the Marquis de Lafayette. It is in recognition of the friendship that the French Government extended to the Colonies in our war for independence.

Just imagine George Washington and Lafayette, a long, long friendship. So, while we are concerned about violence wherever it exists in the world, when Paris was hit in such a vicious way, in some ways, it hit home for us, not that the other lives were not equally as important.

As we come to the floor to talk about what we do next, we take an oath of office—every one of us—to protect and to support the American people and the Constitution of the United States. Keeping the American people safe is our first responsibility. It is the oath we take. If the American people aren't safe, what else really matters?

We understand the concern, the fear, in the country when an act of terrorism strikes. In fact, that is the goal of terrorists: to instill fear, to instill terror. We cannot let them succeed; so, we have to take the measures necessary to protect the American people and to be very strong in how we do it.

That is why I have a problem with the bill that is on the floor today. It is because I think we have a much stronger, better option to protect the American people, and that is in the form of the Thompson-Lofgren legislation.

Unlike in the Republican bill, the Democratic alternative applies tough scrutiny to all potential refugees, not just to Syrians and Iraqis, as the Republican bill is limited to.

The Thompson-Lofgren Secure Refugee Process Act would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to verify the identities of all refugee applicants. Any application that contains insufficient, conflicting, or unreliable information would be denied from day one.

The bill also requires that at least five Federal agencies—the Department of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of National Intelligence—check all refugee applications against their records. Any application that indicates a national security or a criminal threat would be denied—all. Not Iraq-Syria—all.

Two former Secretaries of Homeland Security—Secretary Janet Napolitano and Secretary Michael Chertoff—have written about the process that is in existence now and which the Thompson-Lofgren legislation respects. The process that is currently in place is thorough and robust, and so long as it is fully implemented and not diluted, it will allow us to safely admit the most vulnerable refugees while protecting the American people. Fortunately,

they say, these goals are not mutually exclusive.

There are other things that we could be doing in a bipartisan way, and I would have hoped that that would have been a place we could have gone with this. One of them relates to closing loopholes in the Visa Waiver Program.

Today our colleagues on the Senate side are putting forth their principles, which state: ''If an ISIS recruit attempts to travel to the United States on a fraudulent paper passport issued by a country that participates in the Visa Waiver Program, that individual would avoid biometric screening and an in-person interview.''

How could we allow this loophole to exist if we are truly addressing this challenge in a comprehensive way?

If the Republicans want to make the Nation safer in the face of terror, there is another clear area in which we should act, and that is we should be voting on Republican Congressman PETER KING's bill in order to close the appalling loophole.

It is outrageous that a person who is on the terrorism watch list—listen to this. If someone is on the terrorist watch list, he could walk into a gun store and buy a gun. His bill is called the Denying Firearms and Explosives to Dangerous Terrorists Act.

The visa waiver.

Close the terrorist gun loophole.

According to the GAO, over the last 11 years, more than 2,000 suspects on the FBI's terrorist watch list bought weapons in the United States. Did you know that?

Ninety-one percent of all suspected terrorists who tried to buy guns in the United States walked away with the weapons they wanted over the time period with just 190 rejected despite their having ominous histories. Listen, 5 to 1, 10 to 1, they were able to get these guns.

Why can't we talk about guns when we talk about danger to the American people?

It is outrageous that we would be slamming the door to mothers and children while we still allow people on the terrorist watch list to walk in the door of a gun store and buy a gun.

With regard to those mothers and children, I join with labor, civil, human rights, and faith groups from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, from the Episcopalians, the Lutherans, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the evangelicals, and Jewish groups. I join them in saying that the Republican bill before the House today fails to meet our values and fails to strengthen the security of the American people.

Families in Syria and Iraq are desperately trying to escape ISIS' gruesome campaign of torture, rape, violence, and terror of the Assad regime. The Republican bill before the House today severely handicaps the refugee settlement in the future in our country. It slams that door again on desperate mothers and children who are fleeing ISIS' unspeakable violence.

As Leith Anderson, President of the National Association of Evangelicals, said: ''Of course we want to keep terrorists out of our country, but let's not punish the victims of ISIS for the sins of ISIS.''

Did you know this? Here are the facts.

Since 2001—just in the last few years—only about 2,200 Syrians have been admitted to the United States. Half are children, and 25 percent are seniors. All faced an 18- to 24-month-long screening process.

As the Refugee Council and its coalition of more than 80 faith, humanitarian, and human rights groups point out in their letter to Congress: ''Because so few refugees in the world are resettled, the United States often chooses the most vulnerable, including refugees who cannot remain safely where they are and families with children who cannot receive the medical care they need to survive.''

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the Refugee Council's letter with all of the cosigners.

REFUGEE COUNCIL USA,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of Refugee Council USA (RCUSA), a coalition of 20 non-governmental organizations committed to refugee protection and welcome, I write to you today to urge you to protect Syrian and Iraqi refugees and the integrity of the United States refugee resettlement program by voting NO on H.R. 4038—The American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act 2015.

Since 1975, the United States has resettled more than 3 million refugees from around the world, including 169,000 from Bosnia and more than 100,000 from Iraq. Three quarters of a million of those refugees entered the U.S. since 2001. During that time, there have been no recorded terrorist acts in the United States by a refugee. That should come as little surprise. Refugees are, by definition, people fleeing from persecution—not persecutors themselves.

H.R. 4038 creates a bureaucratic review process that could take years to implement and would effectively shut down refugee resettlement. The bill requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to ''certify'' whether an individual refugee is a threat or not after ''concurrence'' with the Directors of the FBI and DNI. The bill does not provide guidance on what the process for certification will be. This process will have to be created and agreed upon by three heads of agencies. Establishing such a process could take years, and in the meantime, refugees who could be resettled would languish in camps and dangerous situations, Syrian Americans would not be able to reunite with their family members, and there would be very real ramifications for international refugee protection and U.S. foreign policy interests in the region.

The process, once established, would add months or years to the security screening process, which is already the lengthiest and most robust in the world, routinely taking between 18 and 36 months. Obtaining the concurrence of three heads of federal agencies for EACH REFUGEE would take years and effectively put an end to the refugee resettlement program. For reasons of security and safety, security and medical clearances are only valid for limited periods of time. During the certification process, these clearances will expire. This will mean that refugees will be caught in an un-ending loop of security clearances that will never end.

The bill requires reporting to thirteen congressional committees on each refugee that is considered for resettlement. This is unreasonably burdensome and will further delay the admission of refugees, cause security clearances to expire, and effectively end the program.

Refugees are already the most vetted non-citizens in our country. All refugees undergo thorough and rigorous security screenings prior to arriving in the United States, including but not limited to multiple biographic and identity investigations; FBI biometric checks of applicants' fingerprints and photographs; in-depth, in-person interviews by well-trained Department of Homeland Security officers; medical screenings; investigations by the National Counterterrorism Center; and other checks by U.S. domestic and international intelligence agencies. Supervisory review of all decisions; random case assignment; inter-agency national security teams; trained document experts; forensic testing of documents; and interpreter monitoring are in place to maintain the security of the refugee resettlement program. Due to technological advances, Syrian refugees are also undergoing iris scans to confirm their identity through the process.

The bill is a waste of resources. Funds used to establish and run this certification process would be better used in conducting actual security reviews of refugees and others who are vetted by these agencies.

The bill is a pretext and requires differential treatment of refugees from Syria and Iraq without providing a justification for the additional verification. It is a disguised attempt to stop refugees from two countries long beset by internal conflict, including refugees who have been in neither Syria nor Iraq for four years. Differential treatment, with no clear justification, amounts to discrimination on the basis of nationality without rational basis.

No terrorist attacks in the US have been committed by refugees. The few non-citizens who have caused harm have come to the US as tourists or through other means. This bill will tell the world that the US has no interest in being part of the global solution to protect the victims of the violence in Syria and Iraq. It will keep US citizen family members of these refugees from reuniting with their loved ones who are in danger. This bill does nothing to keep the country safe, is a waste of tax dollars, and is an attack on refugees and immigrants—both those who are seeking safety and those who are already here.

For these reasons we ask that you vote ''no'' on H.R. 4038. We also want to draw your attention to the attached letter signed yesterday by 81 national organizations in support of Syrian refugees.

We appreciate your support in protecting the refugees.

Sincerely,

MELANIE NEZER,
Chair, Refugee Council USA.

Ms. PELOSI. As it is the proud American tradition, we can both ensure the security of our country and welcome desperate women, children, and seniors who are facing ISIS' brutality. As my colleague who spoke before me just said, our hearts go out to the refugees, but our hand of friendship does not. And it could.

We could do this in a bipartisan way. If we betray our values as a country and slam the door in the faces of those innocent victims of terror, we do not strengthen our security. We weaken ourselves in the fight against ISIS' savage ideology.

As the Refugee Council USA and its coalition wrote to Congress—and this is very important—''it would send a demoralizing and dangerous message to the world that the United States makes judgments about people based on the country they come from and their religion. This feeds into extremist propaganda and makes us all less safe.''

I talked about the French to begin with. It was interesting to me to hear President Hollande as he spoke to thousands of people in the wake of the tragedy. What he said in some of his remarks at various venues was that France would be welcoming 30,000 refugees from Syria in the period ahead. With all that they have suffered, with the immediacy of the tragedy, with the emotion of the moment, they are still doing the right thing.

The Republican bill before us does not make us safer, and it does not reflect our values. It does not have my support.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. ASHFORD).

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, in my view, H.R. 4038 is, in fact, a commonsense approach to addressing the legitimate security concerns that my constituents and the American people have expressed to me and are expressing today.

In the wake of the horrific attacks in Paris—in my view, it is a game-changer—we must and are obligated to reassess our existing procedures—and that is all this bill does—for admitting and monitoring refugees from countries associated with ISIS. I cannot sit back and ignore the concerns of my constituents and the American public.

This legislation does not shut down the refugee asylum process. If it did, I wouldn't support it. We are simply asking the administration to reassure us that those coming to the United States do not pose a threat to the American people. We should not accept anything less from our Federal Government.

I am very proud of our American legacy of being a welcoming nation, and I have devoted much of my professional life to that concept and idea. This legislation, in my view, does not diminish that legacy. Rather, this legislation will protect that legacy into the future and will reassure Americans that we are working to protect them.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I think it is without question that we have the strongest, the most stringent, and the toughest refugee system in the entire world. I don't think anybody can dispute that. Yet, we are still humanitarians with regard to what our system is.

This bill is called the American SAFE Act, but where our greatest danger lies is when rhetoric is given for ISIS to utilize in order to recruit American citizens—those of us who are here to radicalize them—and then they can go to a gun shop and buy an assault weapon.

□ 1245

If we truly want to make sure that America is safe, we should make sure that no homegrown or radicalized person here has access to an assault weapon. We should have a bill.

We want every American to be safe, as I hear my colleagues talking. I am with you. How do we make them safe? Make sure that nobody, refugee or otherwise, has the ability to come to our Nation and put their hands on an assault weapon that can harm our people. That is what will keep America safe. Working together with the most stringent refugee system is what we need to do.

This is just something to try to keep people from coming in who are running away from rape, from violence, from persecution. Young children and women who are widows overwhelmingly are the individuals of the 2,000 that have been led in here.

Let's keep America safe. Let's keep assault weapons out of our land.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4038. This legislation will give us a pause to ensure that a benevolent safe haven in America is not used by terrorists to murder a large number of Americans. After the slaughter in Paris, it behooves us to take a close look to see to it that Americans will not be put in jeopardy by an irresponsible refugee policy or by flaws in our own system that already exist.

We can be proud that our country has a tradition of assisting suffering refugees, but we will not be consistent with that by putting Americans in jeopardy.

What could we do that might make the system better, improve the system, protect more Americans? If we pause for a moment, we might come up with some ideas. For example, let me be the first on the floor of the House to advocate that all people coming here, especially from the Middle East, be given polygraph tests. Let's give them a lie detector test to find out who they are. This shouldn't be an option for our embassies. It should be a requirement for our embassies to give such polygraph tests.

Finally, we have heard several references to the Jews being sent back in 1938 to Nazi Germany. Well, the Jews had been targeted for genocide. It was wrong, it was horrible, and it was immoral for us to send them back and not recognize they had been targeted for genocide.

Well, today the Christians in the Middle East are targeted for genocide. I hear over here: Oh, no, you are not going to let anybody in but Christians. No. Christians should get the priority the same way those Jews should have been given the priority in 1938 because, today, Christians are targeted for genocide in the Middle East. So we do not want to make the same mistake that sent the Jews back in 1938 to Hitler's death camps. Let's not make the same mistake and send Christians back because we won't give them priority because it might make some people upset with us.

I call for, number one, my colleagues to join us and save the Christians from genocide; and number two, let's make our system better so Americans are not put in jeopardy by the benevolence of our own people.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we want to vote for a bill to reflect the angst of our constituents. If you read this bill, you can't vote for it. It forces our three security leaders—the Director of the FBI, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Secretary of Homeland Security—to personally review, vote on, and certify each and every individual refugee file.

We admitted 187 Syrian refugees last month. If our security leaders just spend 2 hours on each file, it will consume all of their working hours. ISIS cannot simultaneously and permanently incapacitate our security leaders. This bill does.

Now, some will say that our security leaders just won't look at any of the files, that this is an underhanded way for Congress to halt all refugees without taking responsibility, but our security leaders are human. They are going to look at the picture of Aylan Kurdi—that 3-year-old boy on the Turkish beach—and our security leaders will know that if they just invest a couple of hours in personally reviewing a file, they can save a human life. If they just spend another 2 hours, they can save another human life. Our security leaders will be full-time refugee evaluators.

This bill is not a pause bill. This is a permanent bill which permanently incapacitates our security agencies. Read the bill. Vote ''no.''

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO).

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from South Carolina for the time.

Mr. Speaker, we are under attack. Across the globe and here at home, we are being targeted. We are at war. The enemy has brought war to us. And make no mistake about it, this enemy is radical Muslim extremism.

Last week in Paris, we saw a brutal reminder of just how dedicated our enemy is in fighting this war against us. We must fight back, and we must do more. The United States of America must do more.

The President of the United States, on the very day ISIS attacked Paris, argued that ISIS had been contained. He was wrong. Last year, the President called ISIS the JV team. He was wrong. The President has been wrong on ISIS

from the very beginning, and he is wrong now. Where is the strategy? Where is the willpower? Where is the leadership?

Two years ago, Secretary of State John Kerry testified in front of the House Armed Services Committee about the need to arm Syrian rebels. I questioned this decision because we had no way of vetting these rebels. I told Secretary Kerry at the time: ''America is just not buying what you are selling.'' Two years later, the administration has shut down the arming of Syrian rebels because it was completely ineffective.

Now, the administration wants to bring in 10,000 Syrian refugees to the United States, refugees who even the Director of the FBI says cannot be fully vetted. We cannot allow this to happen

Mr. Speaker, today we are going to pass a strong piece of legislation to protect the American people. The SAFE Act will ensure the highest level of scrutiny is placed on every single Syrian refugee and effectively stop this program until we can ensure Americans are protected. I believe we should do more, but this is a powerful first step to stopping dangerous terrorists from reaching our soil.

The President, our Commander in Chief, the one person charged with protecting the U.S. homeland above all others has threatened to veto this bill. I dare him. I dare the President to veto this bill because he is angrier at Republicans than he is terrorists. I dare him to veto this bill because he thinks his strategy is working, despite the devastation in Paris. I dare the President of the United States to tell the citizens of the United States that he is more concerned with Syrian refugees than the safety of the American people. I dare him.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. TED LIEU).

Mr. TED LIEU of California. Mr. Speaker, I am Congressman TED LIEU. I am a veteran, and I oppose the Republican legislation that would upend America's refugee program for Syrians and Iraqis. It is the wrong solution for the wrong problem.

There has not been a single act of terrorism on American soil committed by a refugee. In Paris, those horrific attacks were committed by French and Belgian citizens. Under the Republican rationale, we ought to be banning travel for French and Belgians to America. If that sounds ridiculous, then so is scapegoating Syrian orphans, widows, and senior citizens fleeing persecution.

America is a country born of persecution, forged in liberty's name with equality for all. We are that shining city upon the hill. We are better than this.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from the great State of South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as a Christian, I have compassion and sympathy for the refugees in Syria. In fact, I visited with many of them in a refugee camp in Jordan, a camp that held about 120,000 Syrian refugees.

We are criticized for not having compassion on this issue. Let me tell you, compassion cuts two ways. We should also be cognizant of the compassion we should show our fellow citizens here in America. That compassion is exemplified by using the good sense that God gave us in addressing this national security concern that our Nation faces.

Our compassion should be, too, to make sure to the best of our abilities—and I think that is what this legislation does—is it says we are going to use the best of our abilities that no harm comes to our fellow countrymen. We should do everything we can to make sure that elements of evil are not introduced, due to our compassionate hearts, into the neighborhoods, the towns, the cities, and the States that we represent in this great Nation.

We lock our doors, not because we hate the people on the outside. We lock our doors because we love the people on the inside. This legislation is a great first step to hit pause. Let's get this right for the people we serve in the great Nation that we swear to uphold and defend.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, my Republican friends, unlike the French who had the vision and courage not to scapegoat desperate Syrian refugees fleeing the barbarians that attacked them in Paris, this is a foolish attempt to thwart ISIS terrorists who won't wait 2 years to be vetted.

They would do what the 9/11 hijackers did using the existing visa system. Are we going to pause and certify visas for students, tourists, or workers? Why not?

One really objectionable portion of this bill for me is I have worked for 10 years to try and help the Iraqis who worked with us in Iraq during that war to be able to escape the tender mercies of al Qaeda and others with long memories who are killing and torturing them. This bill pulls the plug on that and condemns them to be left to the terrorists. I think that is reprehensible. These are people who depended upon us, who relied upon us. We have been working in a bipartisan way for 10 years to help them escape to safety, and this bill would slam that door shut. You ought to be ashamed.

Mr. GOWDY. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE).

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this bill is a great way for Congress to appear as if it is acting and achieving something without actually doing anything.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. We have had numerous hearings from the beginning of the year, including yesterday, on this issue specifically.

One of the great challenges Western countries face is the problem of homegrown terrorism. We saw that last week in Paris when the overwhelming majority of those who perpetrated these acts were French nationals and Belgian nationals.

So the big issue we face is: What do we do with those who hold European passports and who can come here easily by getting a plane ticket? What do we do with the problem of homegrown terrorism here in the U.S. among American citizens? Those are the key challenges we face in how we balance our civil liberties, our need for tourism, our need for economic bilateral relations, with our need for security. This bill sadly today does absolutely nothing about that.

So we are going to pass this bill. We are going to pat ourselves on the back. We are going to go home and say we did something when actually we have done nothing to solve the problem and protect the security of the American people.

□ 1300

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA).

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, the safety of our fellow Americans, and America itself, is and must be our number one priority, our number one responsibility here in this Chamber. The people of America have a right to expect—indeed, demand—exactly that.

Our national security screening and background system for refugees is the toughest in the world. That is why so few refugees from Syria have ever been able to receive their clearance to be accepted into this country.

But then Paris, November 13, happened. Terror reigns and fear spreads, including here. We are reminded of 9/11. If I believed that this rushed legislation made our toughest of refugee screening systems work better, I would vote for it. If this rushed legislation only adds another layer of bureaucracy that makes our screening process look tougher and then results in denying women and children who are fleeing the very terrorists we seek to keep out a chance to seek that refuge here in this country, then I cannot support that.

Our tradition and our values open our door, as in the past, to those who fled Europe to start this country in the first place. It is up to us to do this courageously and do it right, not with rushed legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''no'' vote.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN), a member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this bill is here without having gone through committee. It is not our normal process. It is considered an emergency. It is not an emergency. Refugees will not get in this country for 1½ to 2 years from the time they apply.

We could come back and look at the Democratic bill, of which I am a cosponsor, that incorporates Mr. KING's amendment to prevent terrorists or people on the terrorist list from getting guns, and get a Democratic and Republican bill that we might find we could agree on.

Instead, we are doing this for politics, and we are doing it by continuing to use the pinata of President Barack Hussein Obama. This is an attack on the President, who has a responsibility to defend us, and his team is doing it. This doesn't add anything to it. It doesn't make us safer. It is simply a political way to attack the President, and it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I will be voting ''no.''

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time remains for both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The gentleman from South Carolina has 2 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time until such time as my friend from Michigan has closed.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD from today's New York Times Editorial Board, noted today, ''Refugees From War Aren't the Enemy.'' It includes, ''this measure represents election-year pandering to the xenophobia that rears up when threats from abroad arise. People who know these issues—law enforcement and intelligence professionals, immigration officials and humanitarian groups—say that this wrongheaded proposal simply would not protect Americans from 'foreign enemies.' ''

[From the New York Times, Nov. 18, 2015]

REFUGEES FROM WAR AREN'T THE ENEMY

(By The Editorial Board)

The House is expected to vote Thursday on H.R. 4038, the American Security Against Foreign Enemies (SAFE) Act of 2015, which Republican sponsors say ''would put in place the most robust national-security vetting process in history'' for refugees, one that would ''do everything possible to prevent terrorists from reaching our shores.''

Conceived partly in response to the Paris attacks, the bill seeks to ''pause'' admission of Syrian and Iraqi refugees. Though there are real fears of terrorism, this measure represents election-year pandering to the xenophobia that rears up when threats from abroad arise. People who know these issues—law enforcement and intelligence professionals, immigration officials and humanitarian groups—say that this wrongheaded proposal simply would not protect Americans from ''foreign enemies.''

One of the bill's chief sponsors, Representative Michael McCaul of Texas, chairman of the House committee overseeing the Department of Homeland Security, surely knows how federal protocols for admitting refugees work. Yet the bill disregards the complicated current process, which already requires that applicants' histories, family origins, and law enforcement and past travel and immigration records be vetted by national security, intelligence, law enforcement and consular officials. This process can take 18 months to two years for each person.

Among other hurdles, the measure would require that the secretary of homeland security, the director of the F.B.I. and the director of national intelligence personally certify that every refugee from Syria and Iraq seeking resettlement here is not a threat. That's a lot of women, children, and old people.

Moreover, this bill ignores most of what the United States has learned, since 9/11 and before, of how potential terrorists actually reach these shores: such individuals more often already live here, or they come via illegal means. Unlike the refugees in Europe, those seeking resettlement in the United States must apply from abroad. They don't arrive until formally admitted, and about half of those seeking refugee status are approved.

So far, half of the Syrian refugees accepted into the United States, officials say, have been children, and another quarter are over 60 years old. Roughly half are female, and many of those applying from abroad are multigenerational families, often with the primary breadwinner missing. About 2 percent are single males of combat age.

Given these facts, it is fair to say that the people who will be denied resettlement by this bill would be the victims of war, people who have been tortured and threatened by the same jihadists the United States now battles. They are families, they are old people and they are children, who might be given a chance for an education and a future.

This is a frightening time for Europe, and for the United States. Should this bill reach his desk, President Obama is more than likely to veto it because it has little to do with fighting global terror. It is sad that this proposal has been described as a first chance for the new speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, to cooperate with the Senate. This bill doesn't reflect who Americans are, and congressional leaders should have the good sense to realize that.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), a member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I have listened to all of this debate with keen interest, and it is with a sense of great sadness that we were unable to come up with a bipartisan bill today.

I would like to note, however, that a bill was introduced by myself and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that actually is much tougher than the bill before us. It would relate to all refugees in terms of their identity and their excludability—including Nigerians because we are worried about Boko Haram and Somalians because we may be worried about al Shabaab—and that is a tougher approach. I recommend it.

But we also took good ideas from Mr. MCCAUL's bill. It is a good idea to do some sampling on the IG. It is a good idea to have some reporting to the committees. Unfortunately, our bill was not made in order; but it is a stronger bill that incorporates the good ideas from the Republican bill and a smarter approach to deal with the threat.

Mr. GOWDY. I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of opposition to H.R. 4038.

WHITE HOUSE STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 4038—AMERICAN SAFE ACT OF 2015

(Rep. McCaul, R–TX, and Rep. Hudson, R–NC)

The Administration's highest priority is to ensure the safety and security of the American people. That is why refugees of all nationalities, including Syrians and Iraqis, considered for admission to the United States undergo the most rigorous and thorough security screening of anyone admitted into the United States. This legislation would introduce unnecessary and impractical requirements that would unacceptably hamper our efforts to assist some of the most vulnerable people in the world, many of whom are victims of terrorism, and would undermine our partners in the Middle East and Europe in addressing the Syrian refugee crisis. The Administration therefore strongly opposes H.R. 4038.

The current screening process involves multiple Federal intelligence, security, and law enforcement agencies, including the National Counterterrorism Center, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS), State, and Defense, all aimed at ensuring that those admitted do not pose a threat to our country. These safeguards include biometric (fingerprint) and biographic checks, medical screenings, and a lengthy interview by specially trained DHS officers who scrutinize the applicant's explanation of individual circumstances to assess whether the applicant meets statutory requirements to qualify as a refugee and that he or she does not present security concerns to the United States. Mindful of the particular conditions of the Syria crisis, Syrian refugees—who have had their lives uprooted by conflict and continue to live amid conditions so harsh that many set out on dangerous, often deadly, journeys seeking new places of refuge—go through additional forms of security screening, including a thorough pre-interview analysis of each individual's refugee application. Additionally, DHS interviewers receive extensive, Syria-specific training before meeting with refugee applicants. Of the 2,174 Syrian refugees admitted to the United States since September 11, 2001, not a single one has been arrested or deported on terrorism-related grounds.

The certification requirement at the core of H.R. 4038 is untenable and would provide no meaningful additional security for the American people, instead serving only to create significant delays and obstacles in the fulfillment of a vital program that satisfies both humanitarian and national security objectives. No refugee is approved for travel to the United States under the current system until the full array of required security vetting measures have been completed. Thus, the substantive result sought through this draft legislation is already embedded into the program. The Administration recognizes the importance of a strong, evolving security screening in our refugee admissions program and devotes considerable resources to continually improving the Nation's robust security screening protocols. The measures called for in this bill would divert resources from these efforts.

Given the lives at stake and the critical importance to our partners in the Middle East and Europe of American leadership in

addressing the Syrian refugee crisis, if the President were presented with H.R. 4038, he would veto the bill.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: The National Immigration Law Center (NILC) urges you to vote no on H.R. 4308. Our nation's refugee laws and programs already include intense security screening and no legislation is required. Our nation would be turning its back on its most fundamental values if we were to adopt measures that hinder or unnecessarily restrict refugee admissions to the U.S.

Congress does not need to impose new mandates, like H.R. 4038, that would effectively freeze refugee resettlement programs for Syrian, Iraqi or any other refugees. Screening and security measures for refugee admissions are the most robust and thorough in the nation. The agencies directly involved in security screening for refugees are continually reassessing and updating their procedures to keep in line with technology and intelligence resources. The White House has also stated its opposition to H.R. 4038.

Proposals like H.R. 4038—along with others that unnecessarily mandate additional burdens on our refugee resettlement programs—are attempts to demonize refugees who are fleeing some of the most dangerous and devastating conditions in the world and to discredit our nation's long-standing and successful refugee resettlement programs that have welcomed and reunited refugee families from around the world.

We urge you to vote NO on H.R. 4038 which would halt and likely delay for months, years or more the Syrian and Iraqi refugee programs.

Sincerely,

AVIDEH MOUSSAVIAN,
Economic Justice Policy Attorney,
National Immigration Law Center.

REFUGEE COUNCIL USA,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of Refugee Council USA (RCUSA), a coalition of 20 non-governmental organizations committed to refugee protection and welcome, I write to you today to urge you to protect Syrian and Iraqi refugees and the integrity of the United States refugee resettlement program by voting NO on H.R. 4038—The American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act 2015.

Since 1975, the United States has resettled more than 3 million refugees from around the world, including 169,000 from Bosnia and more than 100,000 from Iraq. Three quarters of a million of those refugees entered the U.S. since 2001. During that time, there have been no recorded terrorist acts in the United States by a refugee. That should come as little surprise. Refugees are, by definition, people fleeing from persecution—not persecutors themselves.

H.R. 4038 creates a bureaucratic review process that could take years to implement and would effectively shut down refugee resettlement. The bill requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to ''certify'' whether an individual refugee is a threat or not after ''concurrence'' with the Directors of the FBI and DNI. The bill does not provide guidance on what the process for certification will be. This process will have to be created and agreed upon by three heads of agencies. Establishing such a process could take years, and in the meantime, refugees who could be resettled would languish in camps and dangerous situations, Syrian Americans would not be able to reunite with their family members, and there would be very real ramifications for international refugee protection and U.S. foreign policy interests in the region.

The process, once established, would add months or years to the security screening process, which is already the lengthiest and most robust in the world, routinely taking between 18 and 36 months. Obtaining the concurrence of three heads of federal agencies for each refugee would take years and effectively put an end to the refugee resettlement program. For reasons of security and safety, security and medical clearances are only valid for limited periods of time. During the certification process, these clearances will expire. This will mean that refugees will be caught in an un-ending loop of security clearances that will never end.

The bill requires reporting to thirteen congressional committees on each refugee that is considered for resettlement. This is unreasonably burdensome and will further delay the admission of refugees, cause security clearances to expire, and effectively end the program.

Refugees are already the most vetted non-citizens in our country. All refugees undergo thorough and rigorous security screenings prior to arriving in the United States, including but not limited to multiple biographic and identity investigations; FBI biometric checks of applicants' fingerprints and photographs; in-depth, in-person interviews by well-trained Department of Homeland Security officers; medical screenings; investigations by the National Counterterrorism Center; and other checks by U.S. domestic and international intelligence agencies. Supervisory review of all decisions; random case assignment; inter-agency national security teams; trained document experts; forensic testing of documents; and interpreter monitoring are in place to maintain the security of the refugee resettlement program. Due to technological advances, Syrian refugees are also undergoing iris scans to confirm their identity through the process.

The bill is a waste of resources. Funds used to establish and run this certification process would be better used in conducting actual security reviews of refugees and others who are vetted by these agencies.

The bill is a pretext and requires differential treatment of refugees from Syria and Iraq without providing a justification for the additional verification. It is a disguised attempt to stop refugees from two countries long beset by internal conflict, including refugees who have been in neither Syria nor Iraq for four years. Differential treatment, with no clear justification, amounts to discrimination on the basis of nationality without rational basis.

No terrorist attacks in the US have been committed by refugees. The few non-citizens who have caused harm have come to the US as tourists or through other means. This bill will tell the world that the US has no interest in being part of the global solution to protect the victims of the violence in Syria and Iraq. It will keep US citizen family members of these refugees from reuniting with their loved ones who are in danger. This bill does nothing to keep the country safe, is a waste of tax dollars, and is an attack on refugees and immigrants—both those who are seeking safety and those who are already here.

For these reasons we ask that you vote ''no'' on H.R. 4038. We also want to draw your attention to the attached letter signed yesterday by 81 national organizations in support of Syrian refugees.

We appreciate your support in protecting the refugees.

Sincerely,

MELANIE NEZER,
Chair, Refugee Council USA.

THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS,
Washington, DC, November 19, 2015.

Oppose H.R. 4038's Refugee Policy ''Reforms''.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, we write to express our strong opposition to H.R. 4038, the ''American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015.'' This bill would effectively end the admission of refugees from Syria and Iraq, while doing virtually nothing to improve ''American security against foreign enemies,'' as the name suggests. It is an illogical, poorly considered proposal that is simultaneously far too broad and far too narrow.

Under our current system, refugees resettled in the United States undergo more security vetting than immigrants or visitors who come here through any other channel, and more than refugees who are resettled in any other country in the world. Yet under H.R. 4038, and after we have already resettled 3 million refugees from around the world since 1975 (including 100,000 from Iraq), Congress has just this week concluded that our security screening procedures are insufficient. In their place, H.R. 4038 would institute new screening procedures for Syrian and Iraqi refugees—procedures which are poorly defined, but which would take years to fully implement.

The practical impact of H.R. 4038's onerous new requirements would be to prevent any refugees from either of these two countries from being admitted for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, only five days after the terrorist attacks in Paris, French President Francois Hollande has stated that France will honor its commitment to admit 30,000 refugees from war-torn Syria—three times more than President Obama had proposed to admit.

At the same time that H.R. 4038 would cause us to cede our decades-long moral high ground in protecting refugees, we struggle to comprehend precisely how it would make America safer. If the assumption behind H.R. 4038 is that Iraqi and Syrian citizens somehow pose a greater threat than citizens of other countries, this bill does not affect the admissions of immigrants or nonimmigrant visitors via other legal channels. If the assumption behind the bill is that refugees somehow pose a greater threat than other types of immigrants, this bill only affects refugee admissions from two countries.

We are certainly not suggesting that H.R. 4038 be expanded in any way. But the narrow scope of the bill does make us wonder exactly what the sponsors are hoping to accomplish through its enactment. We should note that few of the terrorists who attacked Paris last week, and none of the hijackers who attacked our country on September 11, 2001, would have been prevented from entering the United States under the provisions of this bill.

Again, we urge you to oppose this bill. If you have any questions, please contact either of us, or Senior Counsel Rob Randhava.

Sincerely,

WADE HENDERSON,
President & CEO.
NANCY ZIRKIN,
Executive Vice President.

[From MoveOn.org, Nov. 18, 2015]

MOVEON RESPONDS TO OBAMA'S VETO THREAT OF HOUSE REFUGEE BILL

(By Brian Stewart)

Anna Galland, executive director of MoveOn.org Civic Action, had the following statement in response to news that President Obama would veto a House bill that

would make it more difficult for vetted refugees to be admitted to the United States:

''We stand strongly with President Obama on this one. MoveOn members will fight vigorously to uphold the principles of welcome and compassion that are engraved on the Statue of Liberty, and against the xenophobic, hateful, and counterproductive rhetoric and proposals we've heard this week from some—primarily Republican—politicians.

''We will work to help defend the United States' essential program for resettling refugees, many of whom are fleeing from threats of terrorism to save their lives and protect their children. We urge Congress, and in particular every Democrat, to show courage and compassion in keeping our doors open to refugees in need—and to opening them wider in this moment of crisis.''

Since Tuesday, more than 115,000 people have signed state- and local-level petitions on MoveOn.org opposing bans on Syrian refugees.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH,
November 19, 2015.

CRCNA STATEMENT TO THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' RECORD ON THE AMERICAN SECURITY AGAINST FOREIGN ENEMIES ACT OF 2015

As Executive Director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, I lament the attacks in Beirut, Baghdad, and Paris on November 12 and 13 and would like to express my grief for the victims and their families.

In the wake of these attacks, anti-refugee sentiment has greatly increased throughout the world. Refugees—who are fleeing from the violence of terrorism—should not be scapegoated for these extreme acts of violence. As Christians, we must speak clearly and loudly: we are called to welcome the stranger, protect the vulnerable, and love fearlessly. We are called to respond with love even amidst our fear.

The world is still facing the largest refugee crisis in recorded history. We must continue to have compassion for the vulnerable individuals fleeing conflict in Syria. Refugees already go through security screenings that can take up to 1,000 days; unnecessary additions to the process would be neither compassionate nor caring.

The Christian Reformed Church has a long history of welcoming the vulnerable and helping to resettle refugees in safe communities. The CRCNA pledges to fully participate in resettling Syrians of all religions during this current crisis as it has done with refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Cuba, Vietnam, and elsewhere.

Sincerely,

DR. STEVE TIMMERMANS,
Executive Director, CRCNA.

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

Re Oppose H.R. 4038, the ''American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015.''

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The American Civil Liberties Union strongly urges you to oppose H.R. 4038, the ''American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015,'' or ''American SAFE Act of 2015'' (H.R. 4038). A vote on the bill is scheduled to take place on Thursday, November 19, 2015. The ACLU urges you to vote NO on H.R. 4038. The ACLU will score this vote.

I. H.R. 4038 creates bureaucratic obstacles to end U.S. acceptance of refugees from Syria and Iraq without any demonstrated public-safety benefit.

H.R. 4038 creates a bureaucratic-review process that likely would effectively shut down resettlement of refugees from Syria and Iraq. The bill mandates new certifications and undefined background investigations for all refugees who are nationals or residents of Iraq or Syria, and many who are not. Under H.R. 4038, all refugees deemed to originate from Iraq or Syria—including anyone who has been in either country at any time in the last four and a half years—may only be admitted to the U.S. after the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence unanimously concur that the refugee has cleared an additional background investigation on top of what the Attorney General this week testified is ''significant and robust'' security screening. There has been no need expressed by federal intelligence or law-enforcement agencies for such an unprecedented clearance process, which could take years to operationalize and does not add any public-safety benefit for the U.S. population. In short, H.R. 4038 would bring the U.S. resettlement process of Syrian and Iraqi refugees to a grinding halt.

II. H.R. 4038 would result in unjustified discrimination against refugees from Syria and Iraq based on their nationality, national origin, and religion.

It is wrong and un-American to condemn groups without reason solely based on their nationality, national origin, religion, or other protected grounds. The proposed certification and background investigation requirements in H.R. 4038 would only apply to refugees deemed to be from Iraq or Syria, and not other countries. The bill sponsors have provided no sufficient reason for additional certification and investigation requirements to justify the differential treatment of refugees from Syria and Iraq, or even defined how that differential treatment would improve current practice. H.R. 4038, therefore, amounts to impermissible discrimination on the basis of nationality and national origin without a rational basis.

The extra certification and investigation requirements in H.R. 4038 would disproportionately harm Muslim refugees seeking protection in the U.S. According to the Refugee Processing Center, 96 percent of Syrian refugees admitted to the U.S. since the Syrian civil war began in 2011 are Muslim, while over 60 percent of Iraqi refugees admitted since the Iraq war began in 2003 are Muslim. Muslim refugees would disproportionately suffer the consequences of this discriminatory bill, as they would be denied entry to the U.S. and forced to languish in refugee camps for years on end.

III. H.R. 4038 is an attack on vulnerable refugees from Syria and Iraq, both those seeking protection and those already residing in the U.S.

Not only is H.R. 4038 an attack against refugees from Syria and Iraq, but it would also harm those refugees' family members who are already in the U.S. and eagerly awaiting to be reunified with their loved ones. This bill would subject those families to an interminable wait and would prolong unnecessary suffering for both the refugees seeking protection and those family members waiting in the U.S. Moreover, the bill's very name, the ''American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act,'' would worsen stigmatization of Syrian and Iraqi refugees—and, more broadly, scapegoat all refugees—fanning the flames of discriminatory exclusion here and abroad.

IV. Conclusion

The ACLU urges the House to vote NO on H.R. 4038. For more information, please contact ACLU Legislative Counsel Joanne Lin.

Sincerely,

KARIN JOHANSON,
Director, Washington Legislative Office.
JOANNE LIN,
Legislative Counsel.
CHRIS RICKERD,
Policy Counsel.

ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE,
November 18, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: Asian Americans Advancing Justice (Advancing Justice) is a national partnership of five nonprofit, nonpartisan organizations that work to advance the human and civil rights of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders through advocacy, public policy, public education, and litigation. We are based in Washington D.C., Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. We write to urge you to vote NO on H.R. 4038, The American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015 (American SAFE Act of 2015).

We are all shocked and saddened by the recent attacks in Paris and elsewhere but now is not the time to close our hearts and our state to people fleeing violence and terror. We must be careful not to act impulsively in response to recent violence and we must be vigilant against enacting policies targeting people based on their national origin or religion. Due to the legacy of the internment of Japanese Americans in WWII and the treatment of Arab, Middle Eastern and South Asian after 9/11, the Asian American community is all too familiar with hasty actions based on discrimination and fear.

Protecting national security and public safety is important to all of us, but we should not let fear and prejudice guide our decisions about whom to welcome to America. The refugee resettlement program is already the most difficult way to enter the United States, routinely taking individuals several years to be processed. All refugees undergo thorough and rigorous security screenings prior to arriving in the United States, including but not limited to multiple biographic and identity investigations; FBI biometric checks; in-depth, in-person interviews by Department of Homeland Security officers; medical screenings; investigations by the National Counterterrorism Center, and other checks by U.S. domestic and international intelligence agencies. In addition, other measures such as mandatory supervisory review of all decisions, random case assignment, and forensic document testing are in place to maintain the security of the refugee resettlement program.

H.R. 4038 creates a bureaucratic review process that could take years to implement and would effectively shut down refugee resettlement. The bill requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to ''certify'' whether an individual refugee is a threat or not after ''concurrence'' with the Directors of the FBI and National Intelligence. The bill does not provide guidance on what the process for certification will be. This process will have to be created and agreed upon by three heads of agencies. Establishing such a process could take years, and in the meantime, refugees who could be resettled would languish in camps and dangerous situations, Syrian Americans would not be able to reunite with their family members, and there would be very real ramifications for international refugee protection and U.S. foreign policy interests in the region.

The process, once established, would add months or years to the security screening process, which is already the lengthiest and most robust in the world, routinely taking between 18 and 36 months. Obtaining the concurrence of three heads of federal agencies for each refugee would take years and effectively put an end to the refugee resettlement program. For reasons of security and safety, security and medical clearances are only valid for limited periods of time.

During the certification process, these clearances will expire. This will mean that refugees will be caught in an un-ending loop of security clearances that will never end.

The bill also requires reporting to more than a dozen congressional committees on each refugee that is considered for resettlement. This is unreasonably burdensome and a waste of resources. Funds used to establish and run this certification process would be better used in conducting actual security reviews of refugees and others who are vetted by these agencies.

This bill is merely a pretext for discriminatory treatment of refugees from Syria and Iraq without providing a justification for the additional verification. America should remain a place of safety for people seeking refuge and peace from around the globe. We strongly urge you to vote no on H.R 4038 and reject similar proposals that would limit or impose unnecessary processes that effectively prevent future refugees from coming to the United States.

If you have questions about our recommendation, please contact Erin Oshiro at Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC. Thank you.

Sincerely,

STEWART KWOH,
President & Executive Director, Advancing Justice, Los Angeles.
CHRISTOPHER PUNONGBAYAN,
Executive Director, Advancing Justice, Asian Law Caucus.
MEE MOUA,
President & Executive Director, Advancing Justice, AAJC.
TUYET LE,
Executive Director, Advancing Justice, Chicago.
HELEN KIM HO,
Executive Director, Advancing Justice, Atlanta.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, our folks back home are understandably frightened, and there is no question that ISIL must be destroyed and that the safety of Americans must be our first priority. But denying refuge to women and children who are fleeing rape and torture and who go through a 2-year vigorous entry process will not make us a safer country.

At a time when we are trying to forge a coalition of international nations, it is self-defeating to send a message of isolation. Our antiterrorism resources must be focused on terrorists, not on innocent human beings seeking shelter from the most unspeakable horrors.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the committee and of the House, instead of slamming our doors to the world's most vulnerable, we should be considering legislation to strengthen and expand refugee programs.

Unfortunately, the bill before us today is not a serious effort to legislate, and it will not make us safer. It is a knee-jerk reaction, as evidenced by the fact that this measure was introduced just 2 days ago and has not been the subject of a single hearing or any meaningful review by our committee.

Rather than betraying our values, we must continue to focus on the most effective tools to keep us safe, while providing refuge for the world's most vulnerable. Accordingly, I plead with, I urge my colleagues to please oppose H.R. 4038.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, it seems commonsensical that when it comes to national security and public safety, we should listen to and rely upon the women and men who are actually experts and have dedicated their lives to public safety and national security.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fact: We don't have sufficient information to appropriately investigate and vet failed nation-states.

This is a fact: ISIS has sworn to bring its war against innocents here.

This is a fact: Administration officials noted ISIS may well use the refugee program to infiltrate our country.

This is also a fact, Mr. Speaker: The margin for error is zero. It is zero. The presumption should always be in favor of national security and public safety because that is the preeminent role of government, and it is our constitutional duty, Mr. Speaker.

So unless and until those we place in charge of our national security and public safety can provide the necessary assurances, we should seek to aid those who need aid where they are.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the President says that we are scared of widows and orphans. That is what passes for debate in this day and age. With all due respect to the President, what we are really afraid of, Mr. Speaker, is a foreign policy that produces so many widows and orphans.

He is the Commander in Chief, Mr. Speaker. His job is to make our homes safer. He could also make the homeland of the refugees safer. He could restore order to the region, and he can defeat that JV team that he once thought he had contained. That would be the very best thing we could do for those who aspire to a better, safer life.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following letters from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and First Focus Campaign for Children.

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION,
Washington, DC, November 19, 2015.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), I write to oppose passage of H.R. 4038, the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015.

As you know, the legislation would suspend the resettlement of refugees from Syrian and Iraq until a procedure could be established whereby the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would certify—with concurrence of the FBI director and the Director of National Intelligence—that each refugee is not a terrorist threat. It also would require that the current or a future Administration report to thirteen congressional committees on each refugee that is considered for resettlement. These requirements would keep many deserving refugees in danger for an extended period of time, at risk of their lives, but would not necessarily make the process a more effective one.

The U.S. Catholic bishops acknowledge and support the right of our government to defend our nation and to ensure that the American people are safe. However, we believe that this legislation is designed to severely limit, if not end, the resettlement of Syrians or Iraqis to the United States, including vulnerable women and children, the elderly, and religious minorities fleeing violence and death, including Christians. It also would impact Iraqis who may have been forced to flee to Syria during the Iraqi war, even those who may have supported our troops.

The current security process for Syrian refugees can take up to 24 months or longer, as refugees go through several interviews and 5 security clearance reviews. Refugees go through more security checks than any arrival to our nation. Since 2001, the United States has resettled 784,000 refugees under this process and there has not been a single terrorist act committed by a refugee admitted into the country.

The U.S. refugee program is an example of a successful private-public partnership which has enjoyed bipartisan support for decades. Presidents from both political parties have supported, and, at times, expanded the program to respond to humanitarian crises originating from global conflicts, including President Gerald R. Ford after the Vietnam War, President Bill Clinton after the Bosnian conflict, and President George W. Bush after the Iraqi War. H.R. 4038 represents a threat to this tradition and to our moral leadership in the world.

Instead of imposing additional bureaucratic processes upon the current stringent security system through the adoption of H.R. 4038, we encourage you to work with the Administration to strengthen it, without suspending the program. I also ask that you work with your colleagues and the Administration to end the Syrian conflict peacefully so the 4 million Syrian refugees can return to their country and rebuild their homes.

Until that goal is achieved we must work with the world community to provide safe haven to vulnerable refugees who are simply attempting to survive. H.R. 4038 abdicates our moral responsibility in this area and must be defeated.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

MOST REVEREND EUSEBIO ELIZONDO,
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle, WA, Chairman.

FIRST FOCUS CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN,
Washington, DC, November 19, 2015.

DEAR MEMBER: On behalf of First Focus Campaign for Children, a national bipartisan advocacy organization dedicated to making children and families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, I write to you today to strongly urge that you oppose the American SAFE Act (H.R. 4038). This bill would immediately prevent all refugees from Syria and Iraq from entering the United States and makes the process for their entry considerably more difficult.

The American SAFE Act creates a much more stringent, discriminatory process for

refugees from Syria and Iraq to gain entry into the United States. These populations would be singled out and could not be admitted until the Director of the FBI, the Secretary of DHS and the Director of the National Intelligence have received a background investigation that is deemed sufficient to determine whether the refugee is a threat. This process is fraught with complications as thousands of refugee children and their families will remain in limbo indefinitely and agencies would have to use significant resources to coordinate investigations and create new criteria for who can be admitted. The United States already has much tougher protections than European nations, evident in the fact that all refugees are screened for 18–24 months before stepping foot in the U.S. and face the highest level security screening of any traveler or immigrant.

Those fleeing from violence in Syria are amongst the most vulnerable in the world. Over 50% of those who have entered the United States are children and a quarter are over the age of 60. By adding an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy to the screening process, the United States would be jeopardizing the lives of thousands of innocent children who have committed no crime other than to be born in a country rife with instability and susceptible to unspeakable acts of terrorism. These children have already experienced a great deal of trauma and creating barriers for safety will only make their situations more desperate.

America has a proud history of providing refuge for those in need, and this bill runs contrary to our most fundamental values of compassion and fairness. Thus, we strongly urge you to oppose HR 4038 as it further undermines the safety of millions of children who are seeking protection from the very terrorism we are seeking to defeat.

Sincerely,

BRUCE LESLEY,
President.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: The National Immigration Law Center (NILC) urges you to vote no on HR 4038. Our nation's refugee laws and programs already include intense security screening and no legislation is required. Our nation would be turning its back on its most fundamental values if we were to adopt measures that hinder or unnecessarily restrict refugee admissions to the U.S.

Congress does not need to impose new mandates, like HR 4038, that would effectively freeze refugee resettlement programs for Syrian, Iraqi or any other refugees. Screening and security measures for refugee admissions are the most robust and thorough in the nation. The agencies directly involved in security screening for refugees are continually reassessing and updating their procedures to keep in line with technology and intelligence resources. The White House has also stated its opposition to HR 4038.

Proposals like HR 4038—along with others that unnecessarily mandate additional burdens on our refugee resettlement programs—are attempts to demonize refugees who are fleeing some of the most dangerous and devastating conditions in the world and to discredit our nation's long-standing and successful refugee resettlement programs that have welcomed and reunited refugee families from around the world.

We urge you to vote NO on HR 4038 which would halt and likely delay for months, years or more the Syrian and Iraqi refugee programs.

Sincerely,

AVIDEH MOUSSAVIAN.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my opposition to H.R. 4038, the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act. As a result of horrific terrorist attacks in Paris, France and Beirut, Lebanon last week, many elected officials in the United States are demanding that we stop admitting refugees fleeing Syria or place strict restrictions upon their entrance. This rhetoric is disheartening and disappointing. We are facing a global refugee crisis that requires a global response.

With 60 million people displaced, the United States must do its part to help protect and resettle vulnerable families and children who are fleeing violence and persecution. While we must continue to ensure that screening procedures are able to properly vet those seeking political asylum in this country, I refuse to turn my back on innocent people who are fleeing the atrocities in their homeland.

H.R. 4038 places unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles in front of Syrian and Iraqi refugees without any demonstrated public safety benefit and would result in completely unjustified discrimination based on nationality, origin, and religion. This is not only wrong, it is not American. H.R. 4038 also wrongly attacks vulnerable refugees who are fleeing the same dangerous attacks that we fear so much here on American soil.

While I do believe that we must remain vigilant in our safety precautions, we cannot close our doors and our minds to the children and families seeking protection, shelter, and safety. In Dallas, we have always shown our compassion to those who seek safety. I refuse to slam the door on a small fraction of the world's Syrian refugees. In fact, 184 Syrian refugees have already been placed in Texas with more than 1,500 across the nation and we will certainly welcome more.

We cannot turn our backs on those who fall victim to war, aggression, and tenor. Instead, we must show compassion by promoting peace and diplomacy. I urge my colleagues to vote against this divisive and discriminatory legislation.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to HR. 4038.

In the aftermath of last week's barbaric ISIL terrorist attack in Paris the Republican leadership of the U.S. House has decided that the best way to protect the security of the American people is to attack Syrian and Iraqi refugees. These are the innocent and vulnerable children, parents, and elders who are seeking protection from murderous armies, terrorist groups, and death squads.

The perpetrators of the Paris attack were ISIL radicals with European citizenship, not refugees. As many as 3,000 European extremists have traveled to Syria to join the ranks of ISIL. In fact, the ISIL mastermind behind the Paris attack who was killed by French authorities, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, was a Belgian citizen, not a refugee from Syria or Iraq. Meanwhile, the U.S. visa waiver program allows unrestricted access to the U.S. from the European Union which is an open door for European extremists not on a watch list to enter our country. In my view, this is where the real reform and intelligence sharing must be strengthened.

The American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act (HR. 4038) is a Republican ploy that is cruel, callous, and a blatant display of xenophobia used to energize a political base that is motivated by a hatred of immigrants. This legislation is not designed to protect our national security interests, but rather will be used as a political weapon to attack Democrats who still believe our nation should be a safe haven for vulnerable people seeking freedom from persecution and the threat of death.

I support resettling refugees in the U.S. and I have always welcomed them to Minnesota. The most modem identification technology and intelligence background checks need to be utilized in the resettlement security process. That means this Republican Congress must act responsibly and provide the necessary funding for such a comprehensive screening protocol. I support appropriating full funding for these strict protocols.

ISIL is a global scourge that must be eradicated. Keeping America safe and eliminating ISIL will require intelligence, military, and counter-terrorism coordination between the U.S. and all allies. Unfortunately, H.R. 4038 is a transparent effort to scapegoat Syrian and Iraqi refugees who have suffered immeasurably, but clearly not enough for some of my colleagues. I reject this Republican bill as another example of driving a political agenda based on willful ignorance in the face of a serious terrorist threat.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing H.R. 4038.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4038, the American Security Against Foreign Enemies (SAFE) Act of 2015, legislation that was introduced just 48 hours ago with no consideration by any Committees of jurisdiction. In the wake of horrific terrorist attacks across the globe, I understand and appreciate the concerns and fear in our communities. We must recommit to keeping our country safe and secure, but keeping our country safe and accepting refugees fleeing war and terrorism are not mutually exclusive and never have been throughout the history of our great nation.

The American SAFE Act would effectively bar refugees, many of whom are women and children, from escaping violence and finding a safe haven in our country. The United States already has an extremely rigorous screening process for refugees that includes 18 to 24 months of detailed background checks, screening, and interviews administered by the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Defense.

The President has committed to allowing an additional 10,000 refugees into our country, and more than half of those are children. Our history reflects a nation that thrives on diversity and is strengthened by the contributions of immigrants, and in darker times, our history also provides examples of where we have failed in the past, most notably during the early years of World War II. The men, women, and especially children who are seeking a better life and refuge from bullets and bombs are counting on us. As an American and a mother, I urge my colleagues not to respond to fear and political rhetoric by supporting this bill and instead commit to a thoughtful debate that will strengthen our national security policy without closing our border to the world's most vulnerable.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you with the words that are inscribed on our Statue of Liberty that reflects our history of a nation of what America is, should be, and to become to many people regardless of nationality, ethnicity, and creed (religious belief). We are a nation of Native

Americans, descendants of slaves, and immigrants. Historically, these words have not always reflected the true meaning of freedom through time and periods of conflict.

The American Safe Act is a bill that attempts to infuse fear on Americans about terrorism and would lead to slowing down the process of resettlement in the Syria and Iraq region for the most vulnerable refugees possibly for years to come.

History is a tool that we should always learn from and always seek to build on the existence of our past to make America better and not a spectator on the wrong side of history.

Remember what was said about the Japanese Americans during World War II, when they were placed in internment camps. Fear was the reason and rationale as to why specific citizens were looked on as enemy aliens that needed to be put away to protect our national security and make America safe from danger of foreign influences.

Remember what happen to immigration quotas and restrictions of Jewish refugees fleeing from a holocaust in Europe. Where American polls were suggesting to not allow German and other political refugees from entering America due to fear and concern of possible entry of German agents among refugees.

What about the Haitians and Africans who are turned back or returned to their country of origin while seeking refuge in America?

Mr. Speaker, Deja vu all over again, yes we should be cautious and yet wise in our decisions that are temper with compassion and not fear to reject a people in their greatest hour of need.

I submit the following Statue of Liberty Poem:

NEW COLOSSUS (STATUE OF LIBERTY POEM)

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name Mother of Exiles.

From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

''Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!'' cries she With silent lips.

''Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!''

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the entire goal of terrorists—in their cowardly acts of violence against innocent and unsuspecting civilians—is to cause death, chaos, bring intense fear and intimidate the global community. We were victims of the most horrendous terrorist attacks on 9–11 and we all joined in feelings of renewed honor as we watched the terrorist attacks in Paris.

We need to ensure that our response is both strong in purpose and effective. We did that after 9–11. We put in place the most stringent refugee resettlement program in the history of our country.

These are the facts:

Refugees are referred to the U.S. program after being screened by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees who first determines if resettlement in a third country is the right solution.

The current U.S. screening process takes between 18–24 months. It involves multiple Federal intelligence, security, and law enforcement agencies, including the National Counterterrorism Center, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS), State, and Defense, all aimed at ensuring that those admitted do not pose a threat to our country. These safeguards include biometric (fingerprint) to confirm identity, multiple layers of biographical and background checks, and medical screenings.

Specifically, each applicant's biographical information is checked against the Department of State's Consular Lookout and Support System—which includes terrorist watchlist information during prescreening. Then, Security Advisory Opinions from the law enforcement and intelligence communities for each applicant is secured.

All of this information helps to inform the lengthy in-person interviews. DHS officers scrutinize the applicant's explanation of individual circumstances to assess whether the applicant meets statutory requirements to qualify as a refugee and that he or she does not present security concerns to the United States. If as a result of the security process, U.S. security agencies cannot verify details of a potential refugee's story, they are denied. These checks happen before an application is approved and long before a refugee would be able to enter the United States.

And these are the facts on the refugees:

Refugees by definition are the most vulnerable people in our global society. They are fleeing war, violence and persecution. In Syria refugees are either fleeing the violence brought on by the civil war and the violence of President Assad's army or the terror of ISIS operating from there.

The emphasis for the U.S. program is to admit the most vulnerable—particularly women and children, survivors of violence and torture, and those with severe medical conditions. Since 2011, 2,034 Syrian refugees have been admitted to the United States. A quarter of these refugees are adults over 60. Half are children. Young, single males unattached to families constitute only 2% of the Syrian refugee admissions to date. DHS interviewers receive extensive, Syria-specific training before meeting with refugee applicants.

Each Member of Congress takes very seriously our number-one responsibility to protect the homeland. At times of crisis it is crucial that we act in a bi-partisan fashion. Regrettably that was not the process followed by the Republican Majority. They crafted the legislation before us today on their own and with no hearings, no expert testimony, no Committee markup, and no opportunity to offer amendment

As a result, the legislation before us sets a partisan course, and is being used mainly as a vehicle to criticize the President's foreign policy. The current screening system has been working. This bill does not improve it and could scramble up what is working. The legislation would require the FBI to have their own additional and undefined separate screening systems even though they currently fully participate in the stringent process led by the Department of Homeland Security. We created DHS after 9–11 to ensure the most effective system that brought all of the resources of the federal government together to combat terrorism. It does not seem wise to unwind that without thorough review and consideration.

The threat of terrorism brings to all of us and to communities across our country a sense of insecurity. It is our responsibility in Congress to channel those feelings into effective solutions. The legislation before us fails to do so. This bill would disrupt a screening process that is working and, in so doing, would yield the moral high ground that our country must hold at all costs if we are to defeat ISIS. We can and must both fight terrorism and help the victims who seek to escape it.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the American SAFE Act of 2015 (H.R. 4038). This ill-advised, short-sighted, closed-minded bill would immediately block all refugees from Syria and Iraq from resettling in the U.S. and make the process for entry significantly more challenging for those seeking refuge here.

Today, we are seeing the greatest number of refugees and displaced persons since World War II. That fact alone is startling and disheartening.

People do not uproot their lives and flee their homeland unless it is for the most dire reasons. Who would choose to expose their children to months of traveling on foot, with only the shirt on their back? The families fleeing from the violence in Syria are the most vulnerable in the world. The majority of the refugees are children and women who are fleeing from their terror, sexual violence, and destruction.

History will remember this moment: when our nation decides whether we will turn the most vulnerable away from our shores, or if we will stand with humanity, be inclusive, and protect those who need our help the most.

Mr. Speaker, I firmly oppose the American SAFE Act of 2015; it will only compromise our moral standing in the world, as well as our national security and safety.

Our Constitution is never tested during times of tranquility; it is during times of tension, turmoil, tragedy, trauma, and terrorism that it is sorely tested. We must not allow our anger and outrage toward ISIL terrorists and their cowardly attacks on civilians to turn us away from compassion and generosity. We must not shut our doors—not to the Syrian refugees, or to anyone. We need to find ways to help them find safe haven from the perpetrators of these acts of violence.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in opposition to H.R. 4038, the ''American Security Against Enemies Act of 2015'' (America SAFE Act).

This is the latest attempt to attack the President.

It is cheap and unworthy of this august body to engage in politics when our aim should be lofty and thoughtful policy.

President Obama has accomplished tremendous successes in restoring our nation's leadership and integrity around the world following the disasters of the previous administration.

He inherited 2 wars including the Iraq war, an unprovoked and unjustified invasion, which today is a strong contributing force to the situation that exists in Iraq and Syria.

The President has led where others have only talked—he has used soft power in an impressive and masterful way that thwarted Russia in its ambitions, and to bring Iran to the

negotiation table resulting in the curbing of that nation's nuclear weapon ambition.

Now the President's work to make sure that United States remains a leader in the global community by meeting the obligation to receive refugees from Syria and Iraq.

This bill is doing damage to our national interest.

The American SAFE Act requires a FBI background check for every refugee from Iraq and Syria who apply for asylum in the United States.

In addition, H.R. 4038 provides that no refugee from Iraq or Syria can be granted asylum in the United States unless the Director of the FBI, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, and the Director of National Intelligence each make an independent determination and concur unanimously that the applicant for asylum poses no threat to the national security of the United States.

I understand that the proponents of H.R. 4038 are responding to the legitimate apprehensions of many Americans shocked by the horror and carnage of the terrorist attacks that occurred last Friday, November 13, 2015, in Paris.

Mr. Speaker, this nation stands in unyielding solidarity with the people of France, which like the United States, is one of the most welcoming and freedom loving nations in the world.

Right now, our prayers are with the victims of the terrorist attacks and their families.

Every American can empathize with the people of France because we remember the terrible and heart-breaking events of September 11, 2001, the first and worst attack by an enemy on American soil since Pearl Harbor and which took the lives of more than 3,000 innocent persons.

On that day Americans of all races, religions, and creeds, in every region of the country were united in their shock and sadness and anger.

But we were united in our resolve to help each other, to defend our homeland, and bring to justice those responsible, and only those responsible, for their crime against humanity.

In the 14 years since that heart-wrenching day, our nation has learned much from our initial responses to the attacks of September 11; we have a much better idea today of what types of actions work, which do not, which go too far.

And the best way to honor those who lost or gave their lives on September 11, and to the victims of terrorism in France and other peace loving societies, is to apply the knowledge and wisdom we have gained from experience to meet the challenges and threats the civilized world faces today from radical jihadists.

Last September, the Homeland Security Committee, which I have served on since its inception, held a hearing at Ground Zero during the week marking the 14th Anniversary of the September 11.

Homeland Security Committee Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member THOMPSON and Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Immigration Ranking Member LOFGREN are dedicated public servants whose actions are always motivated by their commitment to keep our nation safe and secure.

It is safe to say that this motivation is shared by every Member of this House.

But that we all agree on the end to be achieved does not mean that we always agree on the means that should be employed.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of those occasions because while I yield to no one in my commitment to protecting the homeland and keeping the American people safe, I cannot agree that H.R. 4038 achieves that goal or is in the best interests of the United States.

On March 4, 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt assured the nation in his Inaugural Address that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

I would not oppose this bill if I believed that it was needed.

This is not to say that the actions H.R. 4038 requires should never be taken; only that they are not needed at this time and employing them would not be an exercise of American leadership but of fear and retreat.

Our nation is better than that.

But it is good that we are debating H.R. 4038 because it provides us another opportunity to remember who we are, what we believe, and what makes our nation exceptional.

ISIS/ISIL aspires to bring about a bi-polar world, one divided between those Muslims who share their distorted and profaned interpretation of one of the world's great religions on the one hand, and everyone else on the other.

We in the United States seek a peaceful world in which every person on earth is free to worship in peace, live in freedom, and enjoy the blessings of liberty.

In other words, like the French, we believe in "liberté, égalité, fraternité" (liberty, equality, and fraternity).

ISIS/ISIL would have none of this—the world they want is one where murder can be justified because you do not believe as they would have you believe or live as they would have you live.

Women and children, religious minorities—including other Muslim beliefs that differ from their views, have suffered under ISIS/ISIL's reign of terror.

The reign of terror unleashed by ISIS/ISIL is the source of refugees who are fleeing from something so all-consuming and destructive that they leave with nothing but their children in their arms and the clothes on their bodies.

Before September 11, few Americans could imagine that kind of terror.

Our allies in Europe understand that kind of terror—from the stories of those who sought refuge from the Nazis prior to and during World War II and after the war when escaping the totalitarian states of the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact.

Fear of the stranger has always existed, but civilization and institutions ease that fear by providing law and order to people to assure protection from want; violence; and war by expending resources to address conditions that would result in those societal destabilizing influences.

Each nation decides where it stands on principle, law, and conscience.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4038 is not necessary at this time because our nation already has in place the world's most rigorous screening process for refugees seeking asylum.

Mr. Speaker, there are other alternatives to the draconian approach of H.R. 4038, takes such as the bill introduced by Ranking Members THOMPSON and LOFGREN.

The President is another solution for those who seek reassurance that every precaution is being taken—he is in a position to certify to the Congress and the American people that the process is prudent and careful in its actions regarding refugees seeking entrance into the United States.

It is helpful to recount briefly the critical elements of that screening process.

Every applicant for asylum must:

1. register with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

2. provide background information, including what caused him or her to flee their home country (a ready means of comparing information provided by more than one million refugees to further verify the validity of the information provided);

3. meet one of five legal qualifications: threat of violence based on race, religion or faith or national origin; political beliefs; or membership in a targeted social group.

4. undergo a rigorous background check during which investigators fact-check the refugee's biography to ensure consistency with published or documented reports of events such as bombings or other violence;

5. be subjected to biometric tests conducted by the Department of Defense, in conjunction with other federal agencies (the U.S. military has an extensive biometric data base on Iraqis from its time in Iraq); and

6. sit for intensive in-person interviews, which may take months or years before they are conducted.

Mr. Speaker, over the past several years intelligence and law enforcement agencies have established and perfected an intense form of screening for Syrians called the "Syrian Enhanced Review."

If, during the screening process, a person from Syria gives response that raise red flags he or she is selected for more intense examination by U.S. intelligence agencies.

The demographic breakdown of those Syrians who have been approved for refugee status to come to the United States is as follows: children, 50%; persons over the age of 60, 25%; combat age males, 2%.

Mr. Speaker, we must be careful not to engage in ethnic or religious profiling.

Unless someone has been profiled it may be difficult to understand what collective guilt looks, or worse, feels like when it is heaped upon members of a group—no matter their age or their condition.

Here in America we have learned through bitter experience that it is morally and politically wrong to regard an entire group of people as unworthy of compassion, regard, concern, or consideration because of their race or religion or ethnicity.

As I stated at the outset, I do not question the motives of those who prevailed upon the

House leadership to rush this bill to the floor for a vote today.

H.R. 4038 was introduced on Tuesday, November 17, and is on the floor for a vote less than 48 hours later, Thursday, November 19.

This is fast—too fast for such a serious decision and without considering the arduous process that is in place to screen all refugees not just those from Iraq and Syria.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4038 only addresses the refugee process for those who are Iraqi and Syrian.

In its own way, it acknowledges that the process in place to vet refugees is difficult so much so that no terrorist would choose it as a means to enter the United States.

Unlike Europe where people from the Syrian and Iraqi conflict could walk by land to Europe by the tens of thousands, the United States is not accessible by foot.

We will not take any refugees who are now in Europe.

Our nation welcomes millions of tourist, business travelers, and students from around the world at our airports and seaports each day.

The United States Refugee Asylum process is not comfortable and it takes at a minimum 2 years.

The persons who apply must remain where they have registered until the process is completed, which involves a series of in person interviews, physical health status checks, collection of biometrics and other data as well as investigations by law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

The last thing a terrorist would want is to be a refugee—living in the harsh environment of a refugee camp for two years.

Refugees are the victims of terrorists—ISIS/ISIL does not love them—they want to murder every last one of them, because they will not bow to them.

We should be stirred by the defiance and courage that refugees exemplify—braving the unknown because they yearn to breathe free.

In truth ISIS/ISIL has killed more Muslims than any other group of persons because they practice their faith as they see fit and refuse to worship falsely.

This bill troubles me because it asks the impossible of professional law enforcement, national security, and intelligence agency personnel—by requiring a l00% guarantee that each person poses no threat.

No professional security or law enforcement professional will give anyone a 100% guarantee about anything.

They will not provide a l00% guarantee because they believe that something or someone is a threat—they will not provide a guarantee because it is grossly unprofessional to do so and we should never ask them to do this.

On its face H.R. 4038 would end any hope of asylum in the United States for any refugee from Iraq or Syria.

If this is what the leadership wants then they should say it plainly and have a debate about profiling as a national policy.

I cannot support this bill, but I am committed to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find common ground.

THE SCREENING PROCESS FOR ENTRY TO THE UNITED STATES FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES

Applicants register with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, or UNHCR, which collects identifying documents; biodata, such as name, date of birth, and place of birth; and biometrics, most commonly an iris scan.

UNHCR interviews applicants to confirm refugee status and the need for resettlement. Biodata, biometrics, and identifying documents are checked again.

Applicants fulfill criteria to be considered a refugee under U.S. law and processing priority qualifications.

Applicants meet UNHCR resettlement requirements and are referred to the United States for resettlement.

Applicants are received and interviewed by a Resettlement Support Center, or RSC, operated by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. The RSC compiles information for the security clearance process conducted by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or DHS.

Biographic and biometric checks: Refugee applicants are vetted against law enforcement, intelligence community, and other relevant databases to help confirm the applicants' identity and check for any criminal or other derogatory information.

First biographic check: Applicants are checked against the U.S. State Department's Consular Lookout and Support System, initiated at the time of prescreening by the RSC. Enhanced interagency security checks also take place at this time.

Second biographic check: If applicants meet certain criteria, the RSC requests Security Advisory Opinions from the law enforcement and intelligence communities.

Third biographic check: If applicants are within a designated age range, the National Counterterrorism Center conducts an interagency check, or IAC. Initially, the IAC was required only for Iraqi applicants but is now required for all qualified refugee applicants.

First biometric check: Applicants' fingerprints and photographs are taken by a trained U.S. government employee. Fingerprints are screened against the FBI's Next Generation Identification system.

Second biometric check: Applicants' fingerprints are screened against the DHS Automated Biometric Identification System, which contains watch-list information and previous immigration encounters in the United States and overseas.

Third biometric check: If applicants are within a designated age range, fingerprints are screened against the U.S. Department of Defense Automated Biometric Identification System, which includes fingerprint records captured in Iraq.

Syrian refugee applications are reviewed at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, or USCIS, headquarters by a Refugee Affairs Division officer.

Applicants that meet certain criteria are referred to the USCIS Fraud Detection and National Security Directorate for additional review and research that is used by the interviewing officer to inform lines of inquiry related to applicants' eligibility and credibility.

USCIS interviews applicants in person while abroad to determine whether or not they can be approved for resettlement to the United States.

USCIS approves applicants for resettlement in the United States.

Applicants undergo health screening to ensure that those with a contagious disease do not enter the United States.

Applicants complete cultural orientation classes.

Applicants are matched with a U.S.-based resettlement agency, a process called sponsorship assurance.

Applicants under a second interagency security check to make sure no new information disqualifies them for admittance to the United States.

Prior to entry to the United States, applicants are subject to screening from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection National Targeting Center Passenger and the Transportation Security Administration's Secure Flight program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 531, 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.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I am opposed.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Thompson of Mississippi moves to recommit the bill H.R. 4038 to the Committee on Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Strike all that follows after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Secure Refugee Process Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. SUPPLEMENTAL LIMITATIONS ON ADMISSION OF REFUGEES.

(a) IDENTITY VERIFICATION REQUIRED.—No refugee applicant of special interest shall be admitted as a refugee, until the refugee applicant of special interest has satisfactorily established his or her identity pursuant to procedures established by the Secretary of Homeland Security, which shall address any insufficient, conflicting, or unreliable information, including biographic and biometric data that has not been resolved at the time of admission.

(b) COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF REFUGEES TO IDENTIFY SECURITY THREATS TO THE UNITED STATES.—No refugee applicant of special interest shall be admitted as a refugee, if, by the time of admission, the identity of the refugee applicant of special interest's identity has not been checked against all relevant records or databases maintained by the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General (including the Federal Bureau of Investigation), the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of National Intelligence, and other Federal records or databases that the Secretary of Homeland Security considers necessary, to determine any national security, criminal, or other grounds on which the refugee applicant of special interest may be inadmissible to the United States.

(c) CERTIFICATION REQUIRED.—A refugee applicant of special interest may only be admitted to the United States as a refugee after the Secretary of Homeland Security certifies that all provisions of this Act have been complied with and that the refugee applicant of special interest has not been firmly resettled in a safe third country as described in section 208(b)(2)(A)(vi) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

(d) MONTHLY REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the appropriate Congressional Committees a monthly report on, for the month preceding the date of the report, the total

number of refugee applicants of special interest and the number of refugee applicants of special interest whose applications were denied.

(e) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall conduct an annual risk-based review of a statistically valid sampling of certifications and provide an annual report detailing its findings to the appropriate Congressional Committees.

(f) DEFINITION.—In this Act:

(1) The term ''appropriate Congressional Committees'' means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(B) the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(F) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(G) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives;

(H) the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives;

(I) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives;

(J) the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives;

(K) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(L) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) The term ''refugee applicant of special interest'' means any alien applying for admission to the United States as a refugee who—

(A) is a national or resident of Iraq or Syria;

(B) has no nationality and whose last habitual residence was in Iraq or Syria; or

(C) has been present in Iraq or Syria at any time on or after March 1, 2011.

Mr. GOWDY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

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

The Clerk will continue to read.

The Clerk continued to read.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi (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 Mississippi?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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.

Mr. Speaker, my motion to recommit will do several things:

The first thing it will do is require the Secretary of Homeland Security to verify the identity of refugee applicants. Any application that contains insufficient, conflicting, or unreliable information would be denied.

The second point of my motion to recommit is that this motion will require at least five Federal agencies—the Department of Homeland Security, the Attorney General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of National Intelligence—all together to check refugee applicants against their records. Any application that indicates a national security or criminal threat would be denied.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, my motion would also require that the Secretary of Homeland Security would certify that all relevant Federal immigration laws have been complied with and that the applicant has not been resettled in a safe third-party country, and has the Department of Homeland Security inspector general's review as a sample of the certifications.

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, my motion to recommit would require the Department of Homeland Security inspector general to submit monthly reports to Congress on refugee applications from Syria and Iraq. The Secure Refugee Process Act of 2015 is a pro-security, pro-compassion bill that would ensure the U.S. continues to maintain the most extensive interagency security screening process in the world to vet all people who seek safe harbor in our great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, the people we are talking about in this particular motion really don't have a country. Many of them have been tortured. The women have been raped. The children, for lack of a better term, are destitute.

□ 1315

We are a Nation of values. My bill speaks to those values.

It does not pause the process. It does not create a moratorium on the process. It adds an additional layer of security without stopping the refugee program.

It is not an immigration bill. It is a refugee program. As I said earlier, we had 23,000 individuals apply for status under this particular program who were Iraqi or Syrian citizens. Of that number, 7,000 received interviews. Of that number, around 2,000 were approved. So it takes time. My motion to recommit is a prudent approach to recognizing the values of this country.

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

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation of a point of order is withdrawn.

Mr. GOWDY. I rise in opposition to the motion.

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

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, national security and public safety are the preeminent functions of government. National security and public safety are not simply factors to be considered in the administration of some broader policy objective. National security and public safety are the ultimate policy objectives. And the safety and security of our fellow citizens should be the driving force behind every decision that we make.

This country, Mr. Speaker, has a long, proud, rich history of welcoming those fleeing persecution and liberating those suffering under oppression. We are the most welcoming, generous country in the world, having taken in over 3 million refugees since 1975.

We are generous and compassionate, Mr. Speaker, because we are free. And we are free because we are a country rooted in the law and public safety and standards of decency protected by a fundamental commitment to national security.

The world we currently find ourselves in, Mr. Speaker, is imperfect—and becoming more imperfect. So, rather than address the underlying pathology that results in displaced people, this administration is focused on the symptoms.

There are refugees from the Middle East and northern Africa because those regions are on fire and riddled with chaos. Our bright lines and policies of containment, smart power, or whatever we call it today, have failed.

Mr. Speaker, terrorists took the lives of over 100 innocent people in France and injured many more because they could. They killed a hundred only because they could not kill a thousand. Their objective is evil for the sake of evil, murder for the sake of murder; wanton and willful violence and premeditated depravity calculated to take innocent lives.

The terrorists have been very open about their present and future objectives. We should, therefore, be equally clear about our objectives.

Administration officials responsible for national security and public safety, Mr. Speaker, have repeatedly warned us they cannot vet failed nation-states. They cannot do background investigations where there is no database.

ISIS will use any means available to harm us. What this administration needs to tell the American people, Mr. Speaker, is how much risk is acceptable. Given the consequences of reconciling the risk wrongly, how much risk is this administration willing to take?

When it comes to public safety, we have to be successful all of the time. And those who seek to do us harm have to be successful just once. So how much risk are you willing to take with your own safety? How much risk are you willing to take with the safety of those you swore an oath to represent? Have you done everything in your power to mitigate that risk? Have you done everything in your power to explore alternatives other than resettlement here?

Mr. Speaker, every decision we make as elected officials should be with the safety and security of our fellow citizens as the preeminent objective. Unless and until those in charge of security and public safety can provide assurances, the aid we render to those in

need should be rendered where they are.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me say this. The President is the Commander in Chief. He should help us make this, our home, safer. He should help us make the homeland of the refugees safer. He should restore order to the region. That would be the very best and most humane thing we could all do: provide a better, safer life for those who aspire for one where they are.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose the motion to recommit and support the underlying bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if ordered, and agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 180, nays 244, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 642]

YEAS—180

Adams
Aguilar
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
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
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
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
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
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)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Yarmuth

NAYS—244

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
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
Russell
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
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOT VOTING—9

DeFazio
Ellison
Hinojosa
Ruppersberger
Takai
Watson Coleman
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (FL)

□ 1345

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. GABBARD, Messrs. CROWLEY, HONDA, and LARSEN of Washington changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. 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 289, noes 137, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 643]

AYES—289

Abraham
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Ashford
Babin
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bera
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Carney
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Doggett
Dold
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers (NC)
Emmer (MN)
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Graham
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guinta
Guthrie
Hahn
Hanna
Hardy
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd (TX)
Hurt (VA)
Israel
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kind
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Knight
Kuster
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Loudermilk

Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price, Tom
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney (FL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce
Ruiz
Russell
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Veasey
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Whitfield
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Young (IN)
Zeldin
Zinke

NOES—137

Adams
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Beyer
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (FL)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doyle, Michael F.
Duckworth
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gallego
Grayson
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hastings
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Honda
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
King (IA)
Kirkpatrick
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lee
Levin
Lewis
Lieu, Ted
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Maloney, Carolyn
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Pingree
Pocan
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Sires
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

DeFazio
Ellison
Hinojosa
Ruppersberger
Takai
Watson Coleman
Westmoreland
Williams

□ 1355

Mr. RUSSELL changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I was, unfortunately, unable to vote today due to a personal matter. Had I been present I would have voted the following ways: rollcall 641—H.R. 3189, the FORM Act of 2015—''nay;'' rollcall 643—H.R. 4038, the American SAFE Act of 2015—''nay.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, November 19, I was absent from the House due to illness. Due to my absence, I am not recorded on any legislative measures for the day. I would like to reflect how I would have voted had I been present for legislative business.

Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on rollcall 638, the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the American SAFE Act of 2015.

I would have voted ''yes'' on rollcall 639, providing for consideration of the American SAFE Act of 2015.

I would have voted ''yes'' on rollcall 640, the Democratic Motion to Recommit the FORM Act of 2015.

I would have voted ''no'' on rollcall 641, the FORM Act of 2015.

I would have voted ''yes'' on rollcall 642, the Democratic Motion to Recommit the American SAFE Act of 2015.

I would have voted ''no'' on rollcall 643, the American SAFE Act of 2015.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I was not able to vote today for medical reasons.

Had I been present on rollcall vote 638, I would have voted ''no.''

Had I been present on rollcall vote 639, I would have voted ''no.''

Had I been present on rollcall vote 640, I would have voted ''yes.''

Had I been present on rollcall vote 641, I would have voted ''no.''

Had I been present on rollcall vote 642, I would have voted ''yes.''

Had I been present on rollcall vote 643, I would have voted ''no.''

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 3996. An act to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

H. CON. RES. 93. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the ratification of the 13th Amendment.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

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

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

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to Section 8002 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, in order to fill the House majority vacancy on the Joint Committee on Taxation created by your resignation from the Committee, Mr. Devin Nunes has been designated to serve on the Committee. Thus, those serving on the Joint Committee on Taxation for the House are: Kevin Brady, Sam Johnson, Devin Nunes, Sander Levin and Charles Rangel.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means.

NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH DAY

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the fifth annual National Rural Health Day. The third Thursday in November is set aside each year by the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health to recognize the unique healthcare needs of and challenges facing rural Americans and their communities.

These challenges include fewer healthcare providers and longer travel distances. The hospitals serving rural communities continue to be burdened by arbitrary regulations such as physician supervision regulations as well as the 96-hour certification rules which we certainly need to address.

Mr. Speaker, this year, rural consumers in 12 States also face the challenge of finding a new insurance plan because the so-called Consumer Oriented and Operated Plan, or CO-OP, created by ObamaCare, from which they purchase coverage, has failed. This includes 120,000 Nebraskans and Iowans who bought coverage through CoOportunity Health.

Mr. Speaker, consumers and taxpayers deserve to know what went wrong with the CO-OPs and whether the $2.4 billion in Federal loans to this failing program will be repaid. I will continue to fight for these answers.

□ 1400

REMEMBERING DR. KEVIN MURPHY

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

Ms. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to remember Dr. Kevin Murphy, who passed away at his home in Port St. Joe, Florida, on Thursday, November 5, at the age of 71.

Throughout his decades in medicine, Dr. Murphy built up an incredibly long list of accomplishments, from starting a heart surgery program in Indiana, to visiting impoverished and isolated villages across the world to provide care.

In 2002, Dr. Murphy moved to north Florida, where he became medical director for the Gulf County Health Center. He worked there for more than a decade and became well known as a passionate health provider and advocate for equal access to quality care.

As the proud great-granddaughter of one of north Florida's first country doctors, I have a special place in my heart for physicians like Dr. Murphy. The amazing care he provided for his community ensures he will always be loved and remembered in north Florida.

HONORING DR. MILTON PITTS CRENCHAW

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

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of Arkansas' finest sons, Dr. Milton Pitts Crenchaw, who passed away on November 17, 2015, at the age of 96.

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Dr. Crenchaw became known as the ''father of Black aviation in Arkansas.'' Dr. Crenchaw was one of the original supervising squadron commanders providing training and instruction under the Civilian Pilot Training Program for the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II.

Dr. Crenchaw served his country for more than 40 years of Federal service with the U.S. Army Air Corps and the U.S. Air Force. Later in life, Dr. Crenchaw's advocacy on the part of veterans and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen was relentless. In 2007, Dr. Crenchaw, along with the other members of the Tuskegee Airmen, were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal.

His courageous service and sacrifice to his country is an example all Americans and Arkansans can admire and will remember Dr. Crenchaw forever.

INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMICS AND PEACE

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

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to, of course, extend my heartfelt condolences to the victims of terrorism in Paris. But what I also want to do, because I take my membership in this august body seriously, is to make sure that we are not fostering the perception that Black lives don't matter.

If we look at the Global Terrorism Index, published by the Institute for Economics and Peace, we would see that Boko Haram has killed 6,644 people last year; 77 percent of them who were private citizens. On the other hand, ISIL has killed 6,073; 44 percent of them were private citizens.

I just want to take a moment and highlight over the last 2 months the terrorism that has been going on in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Chad. Just this Wednesday, 15 people were killed at a mobile phone market with a bombing; 34 people were killed with a bombing at a fruit and vegetable market; 4 people were bombed at a mosque; and 3 people were bombed at a mosque on November 9. And in October, more of the same. October 23, 11 people were bombed at a mosque; and October 14, 42 people killed at a mosque.

Mr. Speaker, I say this to just highlight the fact that terrorism is plaguing communities all across this world. We should make sure that we, as the United States Congress, highlight all of those communities and express our condolences and seek to create peace all around this country.

THE SECURITY OF OUR NATION MUST BE THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, the recent terrorist attack in Paris is a terrible tragedy. Our prayers go out to the victims and their families.

These heinous crimes and attacks are a reminder of the great threats that are facing the United States and our allies. We must stand strong with our international partners to eradicate this evil.

Here at home, we must ramp up measures to keep the American people safe. That means halting the admittance of Syrian and Iraqi refugees until we are sure the vetting is airtight. And, right now, it is not.

The President's own security advisers have reinforced this fact. Yet he is moving full steam ahead with his plan to admit 10,000 refugees over the next year. This is irresponsible.

Our Nation has the greatest and most generous refugee policy in the world, but we cannot allow terrorists to exploit our compassion. The safety of the American people must be our number one priority.

TERRORISM IS PLAGUING US ALL OVER THE WORLD

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the remarks made by the gentleman from Louisiana. Terrorism is plaguing us, not only in Europe—we are concerned about, naturally, our country, the United States of America, keeping it safe—but it is happening all over the world, in Europe, and in Africa. That is the reason the notion of Black lives matter has been raised.

The African people are suffering from Boko Haram, which has aligned itself with ISIL as well. If we are going to fight terrorism in one place, we need to make sure we fight it everywhere.

And let me just say, Mr. Speaker, that I am very concerned about the vote that was just taken today in terms of Syrian refugees. We were asked to have a pause. Well, if you don't feel that 18 to 24 months is a pause in getting into this country, passing a 13- to 14-mark checklist, by the time a 5-year-old gets into this country, he is 7.

I think that the bill that was just voted on was flawed and miscued. We have a system in place that gives enough time and ample time to make sure that these people seeking asylum have the right to come here, as we have done throughout the history of this Nation.

SHIFT FOCUS OFF THE HOUSE AND BACK TO THE PRESIDENT

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

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I am deeply concerned about the future of American leadership abroad.

For nearly 5 years, this administration has defended a containment strategy, even as ISIS rapidly escalates.

As Paris tragically demonstrates, containment as a strategy is as ineffective as it is morally bankrupt. It allowed for the development of the world's largest humanitarian disaster since 2002, while placing us and our allies at grave risk.

This refugee crisis is a direct response to Assad's mass atrocities against Syrians, civilians, and the associated expansion of ISIS.

I call on the President to choose and execute a broader strategy that destroys ISIS, stops Assad's reign of terror, and allows refugees to return home and rebuild their lives.

It is time for real commitment and real courage. The American people and the world are waiting.

WE ALL HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this is a long list of the vetting process

that desperate refugees who happen to come from camps in Jordan and Lebanon—and who happen to be Syrian—go through. It is more than 21. In fact, the last one says: Prior to entry to the United States, applicants are subject to screening again from the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol. Applicants undergo, in No. 20, a second interagency security check. That is after 19 other security checks.

I want to thank Lutheran Services, Catholic Charities, and Interfaith Ministries for recognizing the importance of the face of America to be a refuge for those who are worn and desperate.

I want to join my colleagues to say that we all have a responsibility for national security. I hope the Senate will engage in vigorous debate, that the President will announce to the world that we are fighting ISIS. We are joining allies and taking it to the fight, but we must do other things besides denying and stopping innocent refugees from coming in, a small, small number: Secure our airports; ensure that the back side of the airport is secure; make sure that no foreign fighter is able to come into the United States, and I have introduced legislation for this. We are not for not protecting. We are for protecting, but we must do it in a way that America has been able to stand up and be respectful or recognizing, of course, all of those who come and struggle.

Mr. Speaker, Happy Thanksgiving. I know we are a great country, and I know they know that we are.

RECOGNIZING UKRAINE

(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, I rise to welcome to Washington the deputy chief of staff to President Poroshenko of the Ukraine, General Andriy Taranov, who has joined us today in this hall in our gallery, and is accompanied by the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States, Valeriy Chaly.

Ambassador Chaly was with me in Los Angeles last weekend where he was there for the commemoration in remembrance of the catastrophic Holodomor disaster and atrocity of 1932–1933, in which Stalin killed millions of Ukrainians. But Stalin failed in his ultimate goal. An independent Ukraine today stands in resistance to aggregation from Moscow.

I would also like to recognize in our gallery, a Ukrainian-American innovator, Igor Pasternak. His company, Aeros, is the first American firm to provide the Ukrainian Government with the military equipment necessary to defend its sovereignty.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues and the administration to redouble their efforts to help Ukraine protect its sovereignty by providing Ukraine with the necessary assistance to protect her freedom.

The United States stands with the people and government of Ukraine as they resist aggression once again now in the 21st century.

If you free Ukraine and it maintains its territorial integrity, it is in America's interest. It is, therefore, imperative that Ukraine has a strong and secure border.

That is why I am pleased to be joined by our guests here today and look forward to working with the Ukrainian Government to preserve Ukrainian freedom and am proud that it is a company from Los Angeles that is the first and, unfortunately, as of yet, the only company to provide the Ukrainian Government with the military equipment it needs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTERMAN). The Chair will remind Members that the rules do not allow references to occupants of the gallery.

□ 1415

PROVIDING FOR AN ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE TWO HOUSES

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a privileged concurrent resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 95

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Thursday, November 19, 2015, through Wednesday, November 25, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, November 30, 2015, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Thursday, November 19, 2015, through Tuesday, November 24, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, November 30, 2015, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 3 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3. (a) The Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, after concurrence with the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the Senate adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the Senate shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today on a motion offered pursuant to this order, it adjourn to meet at 5 p.m. on Friday, November 20, 2015, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in House Concurrent Resolution 95, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, the Louisiana Air National Guard began to turn around. After coming in 38th in the Nation at the end of September 2012 with a 98.4 percent strength, in 2013, the Louisiana Air National Guard moved up to 20th, and, last year, it ranked 15th.

The Louisiana Army National Guard's fiscal year 2015 end strength goal of 9,554 soldiers was surpassed with a total of 9,650 soldiers, or 101.2 percent. The Air National Guard surpassed its 2015 end strength goal of 1,390 airmen with 1,496 airmen, or 107 percent of its goal.

Strong numbers directly relate to our ability to respond to our State and Nation. Great leadership under Major General Glenn Curtis has put a priority on personal readiness. Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that I have worked very closely with General Curtis over the years, and he is an incredible man who has garnered incredible respect from the men and women of the Louisiana National Guard.

Here are a few other statistics for your information:

The National Guard end strength at 9,652 is 101 percent, or fourth, in the Nation. The Air National Guard end strength is 1,496, which is 108 percent, or fifth, in the Nation. The Army National Guard retention rate is 80 percent, which constitutes first in the Nation. The Air National Guard retention rate is 82 percent, which puts them in the top 10. The medical readiness rate is 89 percent. The 256th IBCT ranked number 1 of 28 IBCTs. The Army Community of Excellence program placed

in the top 4 of 38, and it received a site visit to determine the top three spots.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the men and women of the Louisiana National Guard for their perseverance, for their strength, and for their contribution to the State of Louisiana and to the United States of America.

SYRIA

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, the United States military began active engagement in Syria back in September of 2014 when the United States-led coalition began its ongoing airstrike campaign, along with Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. During this period, the Pentagon also administered a $500 million program to train and equip moderate Syrian opposition forces to target ISIS. This effort failed to train many soldiers or to yield the desired results; so the administration scrapped the effort.

The wide range of state and nonstate actors in Syria has created one of the most geopolitically complex conflicts in recent memory. This highlights the urgency and the necessity for a clear strategy in Syria: What is the United States' end game? A definition of what success means in Syria. A strong commitment to eliminating any and all threats that ISIS poses to the United States, its allies, or a shift away from the conflict.

I believe this administration has been incredibly vague about all of those, and I have repeatedly reached out to the White House on this topic, and I will continue to call on the President to articulate a clear path forward in Syria.

Before the United States risks any American lives and resources, the administration, the State Department, and the Department of Defense should provide clarity on U.S. objectives and on how the ongoing use of military force fits into a comprehensive strategy for success in the region. Success needs to be defined, but I would suggest defining success as the neutralization of all direct threats ISIS poses to America and our national security.

We need to clarify the U.S. strategy in Syria now, and I hope to work with the administration and with other Members of Congress toward getting us on the right path. Well before this Syrian refugee issue became a hot-button issue, I joined together with Members on the other side of the aisle in bipartisan efforts to reach out to the Department of Defense, to reach out to the administration in order to express these very concerns.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. It is our failed policy in Syria that has created this predicament of refugees. If we had a clear strategy—a definitive strategy—if we had clear objectives, if we were aggressive in achieving those objectives, of eliminating and of neutralizing ISIS, of creating a new government structure there to fill the void created by our removing and helping to remove with the international community the Assad regime, we wouldn't have refugees. We would have stability in Syria. We would have a place for people to live, and there would not be this refugee situation where tens of thousands of folks are being displaced into the United States and other areas, where we have this threat to our national security and the inability to vet these refugees before they come into the United States.

Mr. Speaker, as reports have indicated in recent days—and I want to be clear that this isn't from any classified setting. This is a place where you, apparently, get real information—the Drudge Report. There are reports right now of folks with fake Syrian passports who are being questioned in Honduras and in Costa Rica. There are reports of Afghan and Iraqi refugees from years ago in Kentucky and in other areas who have been involved in efforts to attack the United States. I will say that again. There are refugees from other countries—from Middle Eastern nations of Iraq and elsewhere—who were previously brought to the United States and who had, apparently, not gone through a sufficient vetting process who were caught trying to attack the United States, according to reports that are out there now. There are reports of folks from the Middle East who are trying to illegally cross over and come into Arizona and Texas.

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly a systemic failure—the inability to place refugees, to secure our borders, to secure our Nation. This isn't a partisan issue. We should not be sacrificing the security of Americans. There are ways in which we can be good community citizens, good world leaders, and allow for refugees to come here or, better yet, to stabilize, to help work with the international community to stabilize their own countries.

Mr. Speaker, I want to continue to work with other Members of Congress, including with our Louisiana delegation. Just this week, Senator VITTER introduced legislation to address the refugee problem to ensure that we are not threatening Americans' security, to ensure that we are not sacrificing the safety and security of Americans in exchange for those from Syria. Together, with Congressman BOUSTANY, Congressman ABRAHAM, and Congressman FLEMING, we introduced companion legislation in the House of Representatives to ensure that that happens.

I want to be clear again, Mr. Speaker. This is not some jumping to the hot issue of the day. Before this issue became a crisis and was in the news, we joined together with Congressman BABIN and others to ensure America's safety, to ensure that we were properly vetting these refugees before they came to the United States, and to understand the implications to taxpayers—the cost of having these folks here in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the strong bipartisan vote that just occurred here in this body, but we need to continue to work together in a bipartisan fashion. This is not a partisan issue. Terrorism affects every American, and we need to continue to be very aggressive and not allow this to degrade into partisanship. This is about the safety and security of the United States.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, the Land and Water Conservation Fund was first authorized in 1965. There was some type of compromise that was reached at that time whereby this proliferation of offshore energy production would occur. At the same time, there was a concern that those activities could threaten the environment; so there was a negotiation reached whereby the first $900 million of offshore energy revenues from oil and gas production would be committed to the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The idea was that half of those dollars would be used to go toward the acquisition of Federal lands for the purpose of creating or growing national parks or wildlife refuges, BLM land, and national forests. Half of the funds would be authorized to go to stateside grant programs for similar types of activities in order to increase recreational opportunities, State wildlife refuges, and State parks for citizens in the United States. That stateside program is a match of 50–50. The States have to put up half of the money.

Mr. Speaker, I would call the Land and Water Conservation Fund and its objectives a laudable goal to preserve these recreational and conservation activities for Americans. Certainly, as this Nation's population grows, we are going to continue to develop areas. So, for these areas that are especially sensitive, productive, and beautiful, let's ensure that we create those opportunities and retain those opportunities for recreation for Americans for generations to come.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund expired for the first time in its history. This program is no longer an authorized program, and there have been folks on both sides of the aisle who have been working to help to reauthorize the program.

□ 1430

I will say it again, Mr. Speaker. I think it is a laudable goal. However, 50 years have passed. I think, with 50 years of history of this program, it is appropriate to go back and revisit the lessons learned.

I am from Louisiana. I want to be clear. This offshore energy activity that has funded the billions of dollars over the last 50 years in the Land and Water Conservation Fund activities and other things, like the Historic Preservation Fund, is from oil and gas and offshore energy activities occurring offshore our coast at home in Louisiana.

Various discussion drafts have been proposed to take these funds and cut

them up and allocate them to different programs across the country, to slice up the pie. I think that is great for all these people to go out there and express their dream or vision for how all these things happen.

However, I would like to bring you back to reality. I view this as being our money, and I will tell you why. Right now, when you produce energy on Federal lands in the United States, 50 percent of the money generated from those activities go to the States that host the production.

So let me be clear on this. The States of Wyoming and New Mexico together receive over a billion dollars a year with no strings attached whatsoever. An additional 40 percent of the money from those same activities go into the reclamation fund to fund water projects in those same western States.

So, in effect, 90 percent of the funds from energy production on Federal lands goes back to the States that largely host that energy production on Federal lands. Yet, when we go in the offshore, folks take the money and decide they are going to divvy it up to all these other States, but not the State where the energy is produced.

Now here is a reason why I am so frustrated by all of these efforts to reauthorize and continue spending this money all over the country in other programs. Mr. Speaker, we have produced nearly $200 billion in revenues for the U.S. Treasury. We have received not the 90 percent that other States have received nor 50 percent. We have received less than a fraction of 1 percent back.

The State of Louisiana passed a constitutional amendment that would dedicate any funds received to go toward actually restoring the environment for things like coastal restoration. The State of Louisiana has lost over 1,900 square miles of our coastal wetlands.

Why is it that we are reauthorizing the Land and Water Conservation Fund and funding environmental and conservation efforts in other States, particularly in western States?

I will acknowledge again it is a laudable goal. But why are we doing that before we are addressing environmental issues right there where these activities are occurring and, in many cases, are occurring as a result of historic, several-decades-ago activities that occurred in the coastal area related to this OCS production?

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward on this, that that needs to be a critical component. That needs to be the priority, is addressing environmental issues, addressing conservation, right here where this money is derived from because the activities simply aren't sustainable if we don't address this.

I fully support the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I think it needs to be done in a principled manner that recognizes the lessons learned over the last 50 years and, most importantly, recognizes the fact that this area that has generated nearly $200 billion for the United States Treasury has severe environmental consequences or severe environmental problems right there as a result of the Federal Government's actions.

Mr. Speaker, the Deepwater Horizon disaster was truly one of the Nation's worst environmental disasters in our history. That disaster resulted in millions of barrels of oil covering nearly 600 miles of the State of Louisiana's coast.

The U.S. Department of the Interior appropriately took a look at well control and blowout preventer regulations and guidelines to ensure that a disaster like the Deepwater Horizon disaster and the awful tragedy to the 11 lives that occurred would never occur again. I think it is appropriate to take a look at that.

The U.S. Department of the Interior actually took 4½ years behind closed doors to develop a well control and blowout preventer regulation that was put forth in recent months. It took 4½ years to write this regulation behind closed doors without involvement and without engagement of this multibillion-dollar industry.

Now, the regulation was paired with a 30-day comment period. I am going to say that again. They took 4½ years to draft a regulation and they gave 30 days for folks to actually comment on it.

Of course, being very concerned about that and the implications whether the rule was actually going to improve safety or be a detriment to safety, we asked that more time be given to comment to allow us to fully understand it, to allow the industry to fully understand it, and to allow the environmental community to fully understand it.

The administration came back and gave a 60-day comment period, which is absolutely absurd with the complexity. Keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, it took them 4½ years to draft it.

Now, to give you an idea of the disconnect here, the U.S. Department of the Interior says that compliance with the rule is going to cost $800 million. A separate analysis that was done independently says that the cost of compliance is going to be in excess of $30 billion, Mr. Speaker. The disconnect there is crystal clear just in the cost estimate.

It is going to have a detrimental effect on the United States' national energy security. What this is going to result in is it is going to result in us becoming more independent on energy sources from around the world.

Why are we not being energy self-sufficient and utilizing our resources here, promoting jobs here?

There is a study that I read that says, for every dollar in U.S.-produced energy, it has a $3 implication on our economy. For every dollar spent at the pump on foreign energy, it has a 40-cent implication on our Nation's economy. I think the answer there is crystal clear. We should become energy self-sufficient. We should be utilizing our own energy resources.

Mr. Speaker, analyses have determined that 20 percent of the oil and gas wells produced in the offshore over the last 5 years would not be produceable under this rule, not even produceable. Let me give you an idea what that means. That causes an estimated $12 billion economic loss to the United States, to the U.S. Treasury, just over the next 10 years.

Now, you would think that the U.S. Department of the Interior would want to get this rule right, and you would think that they would be engaging folks. Yet, we have had phone call after phone call from people saying they are refusing to engage, they are refusing to take meetings, and they are refusing to discuss.

Mr. Speaker, I have actually experienced it myself, asking the U.S. Department of the Interior for a meeting with the Gulf Coast delegation, with House Members and Senators, to sit down and discuss this to ensure that the Department of the Interior gets it right. And I want to be clear on what ''right'' means, which is to make things safer, not to propose regulations that are actually going to result in the potential for disaster.

I am not an expert in offshore production, but I can read the regulations and determine the disconnect and the lack of technical understanding of the folks who drafted this rule. Yet, the U.S. Department of the Interior also told us that they would not meet with us, shutting the door.

Mr. Speaker, this is the United States of America. That is not how this country works. People at agencies have to understand that they shouldn't be sitting in some ivory tower drafting regulations that are going to export jobs, that are going to increase the trade deficit, and that are going to make us reliant or dependent upon nations like Venezuela for energy, nations that don't share America's values. What in the world are we doing? Who is running this place?

This is the United States of America. We have had people who have put their lives on the line to protect our freedoms and to protect our greatness. I don't think this is what they were protecting or that this is what they were fighting for.

Mr. Speaker, I want to urge, as we move forward on legislation at the end of this year, that we take appropriate action to ensure that America's energy security is protected, to make sure that America's independence is protected, to make sure that we don't take actions that penalize or increase our trade deficit, and that we promote American jobs, America's economy, and America's workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

TERRORIST ATTACKS AND SYRIAN REFUGEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. COMSTOCK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deepest condolences to all the individuals who have been affected in recent months by terrorist attacks throughout the world and, also, to focus on the need for America to step up and to in a more comprehensive way lead a global effort again these terrorists.

My thoughts and prayers—and our thoughts and prayers as a Nation—continue to be with the people of France, Algiers, Lebanon, and Russia, the victims and their families, who are suffering during this time.

With worldwide attention and support for defeating terrorism, America has a new opportunity to draw a line in the sand and lead a global coalition. The United States, our allies, and those who oppose terrorist groups must come together on a comprehensive plan for eliminating terrorist organizations, like ISIL, al Qaeda, and all those who support terrorist activities, whether it be on the Internet or in all sorts of ways that we are discovering today.

America must provide the leadership and use all of the resources at our disposal to eliminate these terrorist organizations and their supporters. I understand that the world is facing a humanitarian crisis and it is a serious problem.

I think we here in the Congress all understand that our first responsibility is to protect and defend the American people from all enemies, foreign and domestic. We take an oath when we are sworn in every 2 years for that purpose.

The Syrian refugees are seeking safety, and the United States has a thorough vetting process for those refugees and others. We can always improve our efforts to protect the American public while at the same time providing the very humanitarian aid that is necessary.

Recent terrorist attacks have led Congress to assess the current process the United States uses to grant entry to refugees who are seeking safety from their country. These are women and children. These are innocent people who have been terribly impacted by the civil war in Syria. There are camps in Jordan with over a million and a half people, and Turkey has a similar number. Of course, we see the accounts of these refugees fleeing to Europe.

What do we do? We have to respond. The legislation that passed today and the legislation that the Senate has introduced today is an effort to improve the current system. Clearly, these legislative efforts are a work in progress and they will change.

To succeed, we must work closely with the President always to focus on ways that we can improve to protect American citizens because we know this, that terrorists never ever sleep. I believe the administration is doing everything it can to make absolutely certain that our efforts to provide that humanitarian support does not threaten American lives.

In addition to ensuring that a strict and thorough vetting process is in place, we need to pursue comprehensive efforts that include working with our allies to end this civil war in Syria, which, as we know, is the primary source of this refugee crisis.

Let's be clear. It is easy to Monday-morning-quarterback this, but there are multiple causes to the conflicts in Syria and, in essence, more than one war that is taking place.

There is the civil war that is caused by Assad, but there is a proxy war between Russia and Iran against the Sunni nations. Then, of course, there is a conflict going on between Turkey and the Kurds.

Then, of course, there are our collective efforts for the majority of the countries to go after ISIL and their horrific crimes. We have conflicting alliances within the multiple conflicts that are taking place within Syria today.

□ 1445

Therefore, it is not easy as we try to sort this out in a way to put this comprehensive strategy together. If a global coalition is put in place, we can, I believe, combat this terrorism activity and bring those terrorists responsible for these horrific crimes, crimes against humanity, to justice. And we must.

Let's face it. They have declared war on Western civilization and our very way of life. I know that the President is working very hard to put this comprehensive effort together.

Ladies and gentlemen, Madam Speaker, this is not nor should it be a partisan issue. Every Member of Congress and the President go to bed at night, and we wake up in the morning with the safety of the American people being always our first priority.

Let me repeat that. This is not a partisan issue. We all fear for a worst case scenario. Therefore, we must be working together in a bipartisan effort on any concepts of legislation that we consider with the administration, with the President to continually improve our ability to protect our American citizens.

Now, it is important that we understand that this will be costly, and sacrifices will inevitably be made. Today, American men and women are in harm's way in the Middle East, serving in our military, doing their very best on multiple fronts. It is not just the sacrifices they are making, but it is the sacrifices their families are making as well.

It is essential that we come together to develop and implement a long-term comprehensive plan. At the end of the day, it is the only way we will protect our freedoms and our way of life. This is what is at stake, and this is why, as we go home for the Thanksgiving recess, with our families and friends, we contemplate how we might do a better job working with the administration.

As we look at this Thanksgiving week coming up, truly we have a lot to be thankful for in this Nation. We must remember as Americans, the common values that we share, the bonds that we hold most dear are far, far stronger than whatever differences we may have.

Madam Speaker, I wish my colleagues here in the Congress, as we go back to our homes throughout America, a very blessed Thanksgiving with their families and friends. May God bless the United States of America, and may He grant us the guidance to work together in a more united way to solve these difficult challenges we have in front of us today, because we know, working together, all is possible.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, these are the times that try men's souls.

After so many Americans have given the last full measure of devotion for their country, for our freedom, for the freedom of so many others, we are at a time in our history when we have enemies reporting that they are entering the United States. That is confirmed by the Director of the FBI and others in this administration. As is now reported, there are active ISIS elements in every State in the Union.

Some say, well, those who want to suspend bringing in Syrian refugees, wouldn't that be like telling the Jews during World War II they couldn't come to America? Actually, it would be more like saying we are going to suspend bringing Germans—we are going to keep bringing in German Jews because clearly they are being persecuted. We are going to try to save them from the Holocaust, but we are going to suspend bringing in those who appear to have similar backgrounds to the Nazis because we are not sure who is Nazi and who isn't.

Can you imagine dealing with what France has dealt with after we welcomed with open arms Nazis before and during World War II, if that had been the policy of the Roosevelt administration? Thank God it wasn't. But, unfortunately, Jews were turned away before and during World War II.

The President wants to continue bringing in refugees, continue the mass migration of illegal aliens into the United States. We have this report from yesterday by Brandon Darby and Ildefonso Ortiz. They report on eight

Syrians being caught at the Texas border in Laredo yesterday.

The story says:

''Two Federal agents operating under the umbrella of U.S. Customs and Border Protection are claiming that eight Syrian illegal aliens attempted to enter Texas from Mexico in the Laredo Sector. The Federal agents spoke with Breitbart Texas on the condition of anonymity, however, a local president of the National Border Patrol Council confirmed that Laredo Border Patrol agents have been officially contacting the organization with concerns over reports from other Federal agents about Syrians illegally entering the country in the Laredo Sector. The reports have caused a stir among the sector's Border Patrol agents.

''The sources claimed that eight Syrians were apprehended on Monday, November 16, 2015. According to the sources, the Syrians were in two separate 'family units' and were apprehended at the Juarez Lincoln Bridge in Laredo, Texas, also known officially as Port of Entry 1.''

The President has also stated in recent days—it's been played over and over as the President condemns Republicans and conservatives and liberals and moderate Americans across the specter of politics, Americans who are concerned about one thing: the safety of their homeland.

The President comes out and condemns, and he said: ''When I hear political leaders suggesting that there would be a religious test for which a person who's fleeing from a war-torn country is admitted . . . that's shameful. . . . That's not American. That's not who we are. We don't have religious tests to our compassion.''

It doesn't violate the rules of the House to point out when an elected official is ignorant. It is a violation to insinuate some ill motive. I am insinuating no ill motive. I am stating that the President is completely ignorant of what our laws are because the law is very clear, if you look at 8 U.S.C. 1158—and I need to tip the hat to Andrew McCarthy. I have got his article in front of me from yesterday, from nationalreview.com.

He points out that under Federal law the executive branch is expressly required to take religion into account in determining who is granted asylum. Under the provision governing asylum—and again, that is 8 U.S.C. section 1158—''an alien applying for admission''—and this is the law—''must establish that . . . religion . . . was or will be at least one central reason for persecuting that applicant.''

Now, there are other potential reasons that can be given for establishing the persecution, but religion is a very important one, and we have always looked at that issue as being important. If you are being persecuted for your religious beliefs in the world, that is always historically American to look at that fact and determine, yes, there is a religious test, and these people are being persecuted because of their religious beliefs, and only if we look at their religion and whether or not that religion is being persecuted can we determine whether they are entitled to asylum.

So to answer the question that is raised by the ignorant statement by our President, the truth is, yes, it is American. It is the law. We need to know what religion you are to determine whether or not you are being persecuted for your religion.

In another place, and this is over from 8 U.S.C., this is in section 1101, and this is the section regarding refugee status, but to qualify, the applicant must be a refugee as defined by Federal law, and then that definition is what is at section 1101(a)(42)(A).

''The term 'refugee' means (A) any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality . . . and who is unable or unwilling to return to . . . that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of . . . religion.''

Religion is important to take into account in determining whether someone is truly a refugee. It is American. It is not shameful. It is what we have done historically, and that is why I would have a Baloch minority in my office today talking to me about persecution against the Baloch people in Iran, because, as he says, Americans have traditionally been compassionate when people are being persecuted unfairly. And we have. And to take such persecution into account, we look at whether religion is a factor in their persecution. That is American. It is recognized even in Iran as being American and being unshameful—not only not shameful, but being to the glory and credit of the United States of America that we do care.

Mr. McCarthy's article goes on. He says:

''In the case of this war, the Islamic State is undeniably persecuting Christians. It is doing so, moreover, as a matter of doctrine. Even those Christians the Islamic State does not kill, it otherwise persecutes as called for by its construction of sharia (observe, for example, the ongoing rape jihad and sexual slavery).''

From my discussions when I have been in Nigeria with the poor Africans whose children have been kidnapped, they explained it was only the daughters that were being kidnapped and that the school was attacked.

I asked: Was it attacked because it was a girls school and they don't want girls having education?

They said they don't want girls having education, but that is not the reason they attacked it. They attacked it because it was a Christian school.

So these radical Islamists associated with the Islamic State, they attack schools, particularly Christian schools; and after they attack a Christian school, the Nigerians explained they bring the children out, and if they are boys, they just go ahead and kill them immediately because they are Christian boys, and they don't want that to spread.

□ 1500

If, however, they are girls, the Nigerian Africans who were victims of Boko Haram explained, they don't kill them. No. But you couldn't really say they weren't persecuted because they are kidnapped and they are kept strapped to beds and they are repeatedly raped until such time as they are sold into sexual slavery.

And this administration, according to some in Nigeria, has said: We may help you, but you have got to adopt a same-sex marriage provision, or we are not going to be such help to you.

And as one Nigerian bishop said, to his deep credit: Our religious convictions are not for sale—not to President Obama, not to anybody.

God bless them.

The same effort was made to push Kenya into adopting same-sex marriage laws against their religious beliefs in that country. I was so proud of the Kenyan President. And I have heard other African leaders say they were so proud. They were also proud in Africa of the Kenyan President not being intimidated by President Obama's demand that they change their marriage laws to go against the teachings of the man whose profile is right up here above the main door to our Gallery—a man named Moses—who said he was speaking for God. And according to God's law, a man shall leave his father and mother and a woman leave her home and the two will become one flesh. That was to be marriage.

When Jesus was asked about marriage and divorce, he quoted Moses perfectly—the man we have depicted up here in our House Chamber. He quoted Moses perfectly: A man shall leave his father and mother and a woman leave her home and the two will become one flesh. And then he added to Moses' perfect quote: And what God has joined together, nobody put asunder.

Anyway, our President was in African in the past trying to push them into changing their laws, but unfortunately for people in areas where radical Islamist's have reigned, if you are a Christian, you are being persecuted for your religious beliefs. And if you are a Christian boy in a school that Boko Haram attacks, they will most likely just shoot you, kill you; and if you are a girl, they take you into sex slavery, in all likelihood.

McCarthy goes on: ''To the contrary, the Islamic State seeks to rule Muslims, not kill or persecute them.''

I think that is a very important point Mr. McCarthy makes. The radical Islamists are not seeking to kill or persecute Muslims like they are Christians. They are seeking to rule them.

Mr. McCarthy goes on:

''Obama prefers not to dwell on the distinction between the jihadist treatment of Muslims, on the one hand, and

of Christians, Jews, and other religious, on the other hand, because he—like much of Washington—inhabits a world in which jihadists are not Islamic and, therefore, have no common ground with other Muslims . . . notwithstanding that jihadists emerge whenever and wherever a population of sharia-adherent Muslims reaches critical mass. While there is no question that ISIS will kill and persecute Muslims whom it regards as apostates for refusing to adhere to its construction of Islam, it is abject idiocy to suggest that Muslims are facing the same ubiquity and intensity of persecution as Christians.

''And it is down right dishonest to claim that taking such religious distinctions into account is 'not American,' let alone 'shameful.' How can something American law requires be 'not American'? And how can a national expression of compassion expressly aimed at alleviating persecution be 'shameful'?''

That is Andrew McCarthy yesterday, the NationalReview.com.

''The State Department Turns Its Back on Syrian Christians and Other Non-Muslim Refugees'' is an article by Nina Shea, November 2. She says: ''Over the past 5 years of Syria's civil war, the United States has admitted a grand total of 53 Syrian Christian refugees, a lone Yazidi, and fewer than 10 Druze, Baha'is, and Zoroastrians combined. That so few of the Syrian refugees coming here are non-Muslim minorities is due to American reliance on a United Nations refugee-resettlement program that disproportionately excludes them. Past absolute totals of Syrian refugees to the United States under this program were small, but as the Obama administration now ramps up refugee quotas by tens of thousands, it would be unconscionable to continue with a process that has consistently forsaken some of the most defenseless and egregiously persecuted of those fleeing Syria.

''The gross underrepresentation of the non-Muslim communities in the numbers of Syrian refugees into the U.S. is reflected year after year in the State Department's public records. They show, for example, that while Syria's largest non-Muslim group—Christians of the various Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant traditions—constituted 10 percent of Syria's population before the war, they are only 2.6 percent of the 2,003 Syrian refugees that the United States has accepted since then.

''Syria's Christian population, which before the war numbered 2 million, has since 2011 been decimated by what Pope Francis described as religious 'genocide.' ''

I want to insert at this point, Madam Speaker, that I have been advised that this administration is now saying that the persecution of Christians is not being deemed a genocide. Perhaps it is because this administration feels like if you are taking the young girls and putting them into sex slavery and you are not outright killing them—you are just raping them and putting them into sex slavery—then maybe that is not a genocide. You are letting the girls live.

So maybe they are so callous that they would consider it is not genocide if you just rape and put these young girls who are Christians or from Christian families into sexual slavery.

This article from Nina Sea says:

''Clearly, far more than a dozen members of Syria's religious minorities should qualify as refugees under the legal definition of a refugee as someone with a 'well-founded fear of persecution based on religion.'. . . Instead minorities have difficulty getting to step one in the U.N. process. The religious terror that drove them from Syria blocks their registering. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is largely limited to collecting refugee applications and making resettlement referrals from its own camps and centers—the burden of feeding creates strong incentives for this practice.

''In an email to me, Knox Thames, the State Department's new Special Adviser for Religious Minorities wrote that 'many minorities have not entered the U.N. system because they are urban refugees.' That is, because they live far from the remote U.N. camps and aid centers, they lack the information and access to register. And, as is widely known, many non-Muslim refugees try hard to avoid these camps.''

The reason Christians try to avoid these U.N. camps is that they are Muslim.

In fact, in this article, it is pointed out:

''According to British media, a terrorist detector asserted that militants enter U.N. camps to assassinate and kidnap Christians. An American Christian aid group reported that the U.N. camps are 'dangerous' places where ISIS, militias, and gangs traffic in women and threaten men who refuse to swear allegiance to the caliphate.

''Such intimidation is also reportedly evident in migrant camps in Europe, leading the German police union to recommend separate shelters for Christians and Muslim migrant groups.''

The article goes on to point out:

''According to a recent UNHCR posting, 19,000 Syrians picked straight from 'refugee camps in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan,' have received U.N. approval and are awaiting resettlement in the United States. In October, President Obama ordered their expedited admission. Without further action, however, only token numbers of non-Muslim minorities will be among those rescued. George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, called it right about the Christian refugees, and his words equally apply to Syria's other non-Muslim communities: They are being 'left at the bottom of the heap.' ''

There is an article from Todd Starnes, November 18—yesterday—entitled ''Obama is Importing Muslims, Deporting Christians.''

Well, if this is true, so much for his test—that we don't care about religious tests.

But this article says:

''When individuals say we should have a religious test and that only Christians—proven Christians should be admitted—that is offensive and contrary to American values, the President said—just one day after he called such behavior un-American.''

But as Todd Starnes says:

''What is offensive and contrary to American values is refusing to properly investigate those wanting to come to our Nation—especially those coming from regions that are hotbeds of Islamic extremism.

''Those of us who fear that Islamic radicals might be lurking among the refugees have been called every name in the book: bigots, Islamophobes, and un-American . . . But the President says such prudence only further enflames the Islamic jihadists.''

The President warns that it is counterproductive and needs to stop.

The truth is, I will insert parenthetically, what has been a huge recruiting tool for ISIL, ISIS, and the Islamic State, has been American weakness and unwillingness to confront radical Islam head up and call it what it is.

We found back when we were engaged in Iraq that one of the big recruitments that was used by radical Islamists is they would go back to 1979 and the fact that Jimmy Carter did not after they attacked our Embassy and took over 50—51 people or so—as hostages. We did basically nothing to them.

And they point out that we pulled out of Beirut after our Marines were killed there. And they go out and point out the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center under Bill Clinton. We really did nothing after that in response. And after the USS *Cole* was hit, we basically did nothing effective.

And they go on to point out each time that America has been hit and we did nothing effective to counter the attack upon us, that is the biggest recruiting element that ISIS or any radical Islamist group has had, when they can show that they have attacked and we have been weak.

And nothing has been shown to be less effective in responding to attacks against us, against Americans, against Christians, against minority groups, against moderate Muslims, then what has happened during this administration. Call George W. Bush what you will, but the fact is the world knew that while he was President, if you messed with America, he would strike back.

□ 1515

That is what led Qadhafi to abandon his nuclear efforts. It led him to open up his doors. You tell me what weapons I can keep. He was afraid we were going to invade them next.

According to this article, it says, ''But the cold, hard reality is that Protestants, Catholics and Jews aren't

the ones beheading people. The Lutherans and Nazarenes aren't gunning down young folks in concert venues.''

Nevertheless, the President remains steadfast. The Muslims will come.

''We don't have religious tests to our compassions,'' he told journalists from high atop his soapbox.

But that is not entirely accurate. Last year the Obama administration led a fierce legal battle to have a German Christian family thrown out of the United States.

The Romeikes fled their homeland in search of a nation where they could homeschool their children. A judge initially granted them asylum, believing they were escaping from religious persecution. However, the Obama administration waged a fierce campaign against the Romeike family, demanding they be returned to Germany.

The family lost court battle after court battle, but, at the eleventh hour, the White House relented and begrudgingly let them stay.

But just a few months ago a Federal Immigration judge ordered a dozen Iraqi Christians deported from a facility in San Diego. An Immigration Customs Enforcement spokesperson declined to tell the San Diego Union Tribune why the Iraqi Christians were being sent back to their native land.

So the next time President Obama wants to lecture the Nation about religion, maybe he could explain why his administration is importing Muslims and deporting Christians.

I realize that I just have a few minutes left, Madam Speaker. Our hearts, our prayers and thoughts have been with the people of France and Lebanon and Russia, victims of radical Islamist attacks and anywhere they have been occurring, Brussels, as well.

There is great irony. On Wednesday of last week, the European Union announced what it had been building to for some time. In essence, it announced it was declaring economic war on Israel.

Anti-Semitism has grown all over the European Union to levels I never would have dreamed, as a little boy, would ever come back to Germany, where we read and studied about the Holocaust and the persecution of Jews not just in Germany, but around Europe, and there were other countries that actually assisted the Germans.

There were people like George Soros, who was Jewish, that helped finger other Jews. I never thought we would get to the level of anti-Semitism where Europe, as a whole, as a group, would basically declare economic war against Israel. Incredible how anti-Semitism has grown there.

And then, within 48 hours of them declaring war, siding with the Palestinian Muslims, siding with those—they are attacking the Christians and Jews in Israel and siding with the wrong people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 208. An act to improve the disaster assistance programs of the Small Business Administration.

H.R. 639. An act to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing.

H.R. 2262. An act to facilitate a pro-growth environment for the developing commercial space industry by encouraging private sector investment and creating more stable and predictable regulatory conditions, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3996. An act to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 2036. An act to suspend the current compensation packages for the chief executive officers of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of today, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, November 20, 2015, at 5 p.m., unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 95, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3501. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Photovoltaic Devices from the United States (DFARS Case 2015-D007) [Docket No.: DARS-2015-0024] (RIN: 0750-AI41) received November 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3502. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Eliminate Data Collection Requirement (DFARS Case 2015-D031) [Docket No.: DARS-2015-0048] (RIN: 0750-AI73) received November 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3503. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Housing Improvement Program [156A2100DD/AAKC001030/A0A501010.999900 253G] (RIN: 1076-AF22) received November 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Financial Services.

3504. A letter from the Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's FY 2015 Annual Report, pursuant to 29 U.S.C. 1308; Public Law 93-406, Sec. 4008 (as amended by Public Law 109-280, Sec. 412); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3505. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's interpretive bulletin — Interpretive Bulletin Relating to the Fiduciary Standard Under ERISA in Considering Economically Targeted Investments (RIN: 1210-AB73) received November 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3506. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's interpretive bulletin — Interpretive Bulletin Relating to State Savings Programs That Sponsor or Facilitate Plans Covered by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (RIN: 1210-AB74) received November 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3507. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information, Department of Commerce, transmitting the fourth quarterly report from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration regarding the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority transition, pursuant to the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015, Public Law 113-235; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3508. A letter from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's Algal Toxin Risk Assessment and Management Strategic Plan for Drinking Water, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 300j-19(a); Public Law 114-45, Sec. 2(a); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3509. A letter from the Chief, Policy and Rule Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communication Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions [GN Docket No.: 12-268]; Office of Engineering and Technology Releases and Seeks Comment on Updated OET-69 Software [ET Docket No.: 13-26]; Office of Engineering and Technology Seeks to Supplement the Incentive Auction Proceeding Record Regarding Potential Interference Between Broadcast Television and Wireless Services [ET Docket No.: 14-14] received November 17, 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.

3510. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's requirements and procedures — Media Bureau Finalizes Reimbursement Form for Submission to OMB and Adopts Catalog of Expenses [GN Docket No.: 12-268] received November 18, 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.

3511. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-085, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3512. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-089, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3513. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-111, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3514. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-018, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3515. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-080, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3516. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-071, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3517. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-063, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3518. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-054, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3519. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a certification, Transmittal No.: DDTC 15-053, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c)(2)(C); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 36(c) (as added by Public Law 94-329, Sec. 211(a)); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3520. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Yemen that was declared in Executive Order 13611 of May 16, 2012, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), Sec. 204(c) and, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3521. A letter from the Administrator and Chief Executive Officer, Bonneville Power Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting the Bonneville Power Administration's 2015 Annual Report, pursuant to the Third Powerplant at Grand Coulee Dam Act, Public Law 89-448 (80 Stat. 200) and the Chief Financial Officers Act, Public Law 101-576; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3522. A letter from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Administration's Performance and Accountability Report for FY 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. Sec. 8G(h)(2); Public Law 100-504, Sec. 104(a); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3523. A letter from the Archivist of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration, transmitting the annual Agency Financial Report of the National Archives and Records Administration for FY 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) Sec. 8G(h)(2); Public Law 100-504, Sec. 104(a); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3524. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Secretarial Election Procedures [156A2100DD/AAKC001030/A0A501010.999900 253G] (RIN: 1076-AE93) received November 17, 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.

3525. A letter from the Chief Impact Analyst, Office of Regulatory Policy, Office of the General Counsel (02REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Expanded Access to Non-VA Care through the Veterans Choice Program (RIN: 2900-AP24) received November 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

3526. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final regulations — Transitional Amendments to Satisfy the Market Rate of Return Rules for Hybrid Retirement Plans [TD 9743] (RIN: 1545-BL62) received November 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3527. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Qualified Student Loan Bonds [Notice 2015-78] received November 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3528. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2015-80] received November 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3529. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Extension of Guidance in Notice 2013-7 for Participants in the HFA Hardest Hit Fund [Notice 2015-77] received November 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3530. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rules — Final Rules for Grandfathered Plans, Preexisting Condition Exclusions, Lifetime and Annual Limits, Rescissions, Dependent Coverage, Appeals, and Patient Protections under the Affordable Care Act [TD 9744] (RIN: 1545-BJ45, 1545-BJ50, 1545-BJ62, 1545-BJ57) received November 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, and Education and the Workforce.

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. McCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 3842. A bill to improve homeland security, including domestic preparedness and response to terrorism, by reforming Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers to provide training to first responders, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–343, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. McCAUL: Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 2899. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Office for Countering Violent Extremism; with an amendment (Rept. 114–344). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 3490. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the National Computer Forensics Institute, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–345, Pt. 1). Ordered to be printed.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. S. 611. An act to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes (Rept. 114–346). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 8. A bill to modernize energy infrastructure, build a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, bolster America's energy security and diplomacy, and promote energy efficiency and government accountability, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 114–347, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. House Joint Resolution 71. Resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from New, Modified, and Reconstructed Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units'' (Rept. 114–348). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. House Joint Resolution 72. Resolution for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''Carbon Pollution Emission Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units'' (Rept. 114–349). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committees on Science, Space, and Technology, Education and the Workforce, Oversight and Government Reform, and Foreign Affairs discharged from further consideration. H.R. 8 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on the Judiciary discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3842 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi (for himself, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. SMITH of Washington, and Mr. SCHIFF):

H.R. 4079. A bill to require that supplemental certifications and identity verifications be completed prior to the admission of refugees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. JONES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. ESTY, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. NEAL, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. HECK of Washington):

H.R. 4080. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for unlimited eligibility for health care for mental illnesses for veterans of combat service during certain periods of hostilities and war; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. WEBSTER of Florida:

H.R. 4081. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish a Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act Revolving Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. WEBSTER of Florida:

H.R. 4082. A bill to coordinate transportation services for transportation-disadvantaged individuals; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. BRAT, Mr. BUCK, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. HARPER, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. OLSON, Mr. POSEY, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. STEWART, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. BABIN):

H.R. 4083. A bill to exclude the Internal Revenue Service from the provisions of title 5, United States Code, relating to labor-management relations; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. WEBER of Texas (for himself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. TONKO, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BABIN, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4084. A bill to enable civilian research and development of advanced nuclear energy technologies by private and public institutions and to expand theoretical and practical knowledge of nuclear physics, chemistry, and materials science; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. REED, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California):

H.R. 4085. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of church pension plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4086. A bill to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LOVE (for herself, Mr. ZELDIN, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. BABIN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. STEWART, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. ZINKE, Mrs. ROBY, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. HURD of Texas, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. YODER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. MOORE, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. CLYBURN):

H.R. 4087. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to adjust the effective date of certain reductions and discontinuances of compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation, and pension under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. CARNEY):

H.R. 4088. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an investment tax credit related to the production of electricity from offshore wind; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 4089. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to strengthen student visa background checks and improve the monitoring of foreign students in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4090. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to improve choices available to Medicare eligible seniors by permitting them to elect (instead of regular Medicare benefits) to receive a voucher for a health savings account, for premiums for a high deductible health insurance plan, or both and by suspending Medicare late enrollment penalties between ages 65 and 70; 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 Ms. BORDALLO:

H.R. 4091. A bill to provide reforms through the Organic Act of Guam; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4092. A bill to reauthorize the sound recording and film preservation programs of the Library of Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4093. A bill to revise certain administrative and management authorities of the Librarian of Congress, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BRAT:

H.R. 4094. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create Universal Savings Accounts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 4095. A bill to amend the charter of the Gold Star Wives of America to remove the restriction on the federally chartered corporation, and directors and officers of the corporation, attempting to influence legislation; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CAPUANO (for himself and Mr. STIVERS):

H.R. 4096. A bill to amend the Volcker Rule to permit certain investment advisers to share a similar name with a private equity fund, subject to certain restrictions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CAPUANO:

H.R. 4097. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for visas for certain advanced STEM graduates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. JUDY CHU of California (for herself and Mr. ROYCE):

H.R. 4098. A bill to amend title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to strengthen minority-serving institutions; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CLAY (for himself and Mr. STIVERS):

H.R. 4099. A bill to increase from $10,000,000,000 to $50,000,000,000 the threshold figure at which regulated depository institutions are subject to direct examination and reporting requirements of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. CLAY (for himself and Mrs. WAGNER):

H.R. 4100. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to undertake remediation oversight of the West Lake Landfill located in Bridgeton, Missouri; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mr. JONES, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 4101. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding proprietary institutions of higher education in order to protect students and taxpayers; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. COMSTOCK:

H.R. 4102. A bill to provide for the establishment of a mechanism to allow borrowers of Federal student loans to refinance their loans, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided educational assistance to employer payment of interest on certain refinanced student loans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CRAMER:

H.R. 4103. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the provision of medical care to veterans at critical access hospitals; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself and Mr. PAULSEN):

H.R. 4104. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat bicycle sharing

systems as mass transit facilities for purposes of the qualified transportation fringe; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. DESJARLAIS (for himself, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. BARR, Mr. FINCHER, Mrs. BLACK, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee):

H.R. 4105. A bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to provide increased protection for horses participating in shows, exhibitions, or sales, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. DINGELL (for herself, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. POCAN):

H.R. 4106. A bill to provide for a program of research, development, demonstration, and commercial application in vehicle technologies at the Department of Energy; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. DONOVAN (for himself and Miss RICE of New York):

H.R. 4107. A bill to provide for transparency, accountability, and reform of the National Flood Insurance Program; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself and Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 4108. A bill to prohibit the use of funds for the provision of assistance to Syrian opposition groups and individuals; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committees on Intelligence (Permanent Select), and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. MCDERMOTT, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 4109. A bill to amend the Higher Education Opportunity Act to restrict institutions of higher education from using revenues derived from Federal educational assistance funds for advertising, marketing, or recruiting purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 4110. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to study the feasibility of modifying the 5-month waiting period for certain individuals entitled to disability insurance benefits under section 223 of the Social Security Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LANCE (for himself, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. LOEBSACK):

H.R. 4111. A bill to include skilled nursing facilities as a type of health care provider under section 254(h) of the Communications Act of 1934; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK):

H.R. 4112. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow refunds of Federal motor fuel excise taxes on fuels used in mobile mammography vehicles; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Ms. LEE, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 4113. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 regarding reasonable break time for nursing mothers; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H.R. 4114. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the amount that can be withdrawn without penalty from individual retirement plans as first-time homebuyer distributions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4115. A bill to adjust the amount of monthly old-age, survivors, and disability insurance payments under title II of the Social Security Act based on locality-based comparability payment rates; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MOORE (for herself and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota):

H.R. 4116. A bill to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to ensure that the reciprocal deposits of an insured depository institution are not considered to be funds obtained by or through a deposit broker, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida (for himself, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 4117. A bill to require statistics relating to community trust in law enforcement in the National Crime Victim's Survey, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4118. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide support to university law school programs that are designed to provide legal assistance to veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 4119. A bill to authorize the exchange of certain land located in Gulf Islands National Seashore, Jackson County, Mississippi, between the National Park Service and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. GROTHMAN, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 4120. A bill to amend the Head Start Act to authorize block grants to States for prekindergarten education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SERRANO (for himself, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ):

H.R. 4121. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to provide greater access to the supplemental nutrition assistance program by reducing duplicative and burdensome administrative requirements, authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to award grants to certain community-based nonprofit feeding and anti-hunger groups for the purpose of establishing and implementing a Beyond the Soup Kitchen Pilot Program for certain socially and economically disadvantaged populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Ms. SINEMA (for herself and Mr. SALMON):

H.R. 4122. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide that aliens who were present in certain countries may not be admitted under the visa waiver program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WALKER:

H.R. 4123. A bill to withhold United States contributions to the regularly assessed biennial budget of the United Nations until the United Nations adopts a definition of ''international terrorism'' concurrent with United States laws, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. WALZ (for himself and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 4124. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to eliminate the age restriction on the commencement of the receipt of retired pay for non-regular service; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN (for herself, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HONDA, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. SIRES):

H.R. 4125. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct a study on the feasibility of the Secretary entering into public-private partnerships to improve the access of veterans to medical facilities in densely populated communities and rural communities; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. YOHO (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. MILLER of Florida):

H.R. 4126. A bill to clarify that any action by the President in contravention of the restriction on transfer or release of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, is without legal effect, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BARR, Mr. BARTON, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BLUM, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. BUCK, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. HARDY, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. MESSER, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MCKINLEY, Ms. MCSALLY, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. PALMER, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. POSEY, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. SALMON, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. TROTT, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. YOHO, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. LABRADOR):

H.J. Res. 74. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency relating to ''National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H. Con. Res. 95. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WOODALL (for himself, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. POSEY, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. COOK, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia, Mr. COLLINS of New York, and Mr. NEWHOUSE):

H. Con. Res. 96. Concurrent resolution condemning Palestinian incitement of violence and reaffirming the special bond between Israel and the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. FLORES, Mr. SESSIONS,

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ROUZER, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. JONES, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. PITTS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. YODER, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. PALMER, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. SALMON, Mr. POSEY, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. LONG, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. BABIN):

H. Con. Res. 97. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should submit to the Senate for advice and consent the climate change agreement proposed for adoption at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris, France from November 30 to December 11, 2015; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. HASTINGS):

H. Con. Res. 98. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that homelessness in America should be eliminated; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KATKO (for himself, Mr. GIBSON, Miss RICE of New York, and Mr. COLLINS of New York):

H. Con. Res. 99. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 100th anniversary of the United States Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. CHABOT (for himself, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. ASHFORD, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. BLUM, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BOST, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Ms. DELBENE, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HARDY, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. KNIGHT, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. MARINO, Ms. MENG, Mr. MOULTON, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. TAKAI, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. TITUS, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. KIND, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BRAT, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. MCCAUL):

H. Res. 534. A resolution expressing support for the designation of a ''Small Business Saturday'' and supporting efforts to increase awareness of the value of locally owned small businesses; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. HANNA (for himself, Mr. ISSA, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. FARR, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. ABRAHAM, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. TURNER, Ms. GRAHAM, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H. Res. 535. A resolution condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks in Beirut, Lebanon, on November 12, 2015, that resulted in the loss of at least 43 lives; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SIRES (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina):

H. Res. 536. A resolution supporting freedom of the press in Latin America and the Caribbean and condemning violations of press freedom and violence against journalists, bloggers, and individuals exercising their right to freedom of speech; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:

H. Res. 537. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Federal law prohibits the transfer of individuals detained at United States Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York (for himself, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. POCAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. HONDA, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. LEE):

H. Res. 538. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Adoption Day and National Adoption Month by promoting awareness of adoption and the children in foster care awaiting families, celebrating children and families involved in adoption, recognizing current programs and efforts designed to promote adoption, and encouraging people in the United States to seek improved safety, permanency, and well-being for all children; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

150. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of California, relative to Assembly Joint Resolution No. 16, calling upon the President of the United States to encourage the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services to adopt policies to repeal the current and upcoming discriminatory donor suitability policies of the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding blood donations by men who have had sex with another man and, instead, direct the FDA to develop science-based policies such as criteria based on risky behavior in lieu of sexual orientation; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

151. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of California, relative to Assembly Joint Resolution No. 25, urging the President and Congress of the United States to support legislation that will provide a comprehensive solution to allow banks and credit unions to perform financial services for marijuana businesses; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

152. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of California, relative to Assembly Joint Resolution No. 22, urging the federal government to take steps to reform the outdated and inadequate Official Poverty Measure to better reflect poverty and the unmet needs demonstrated by the Supplemental Poverty Measure; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

153. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of California, relative to Assembly Joint Resolution No. 27, urging the Congress of the United States to permanently reauthorize and fully fund the federal land and Water Conservation Fund in order to maintain and preserve land and water resources; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

154. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of California, relative to Assembly Joint Resolution No. 13, urging the Congress and President of the United States to continue to secure citizens' right to vote and remedy any racial discrimination in voting; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

155. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of California, relative to Assembly Joint Resolution No. 26, urging the Congress of the United States to ban the sale or display of any Confederate flag, including the Confederate Battle Flag, on federal property and encourage states to ban the use of Confederate States of America symbolism from state flags, seals, and symbols, and would encourage the donation of Confederate artifacts to museums; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 4079.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4080.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I; Section 8; Clause 1 of the Constitution states 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. WEBSTER of Florida:

H.R. 4081.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The authority granted Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and Clause 7 of the United States Constitution establish the basis for Congress providing transportation infrastructure.

By Mr. WEBSTER of Florida:

H.R. 4082.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The authority granted Congress under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 and Clause 7 of the United States Constitution establish the basis for Congress to authorize surface transportation funding.

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 4083.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the Commerce Clause) of the Constitution of the United States which grants Congress the power ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes'' as well as Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (Necessary and Proper Clause) of the Constitution of the United States which gives Congress the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested to Congress.

By Mr. WEBER of Texas:

H.R. 4084.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18:

The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department of Officer thereof.

By Mr. TIBERI:

H.R. 4085.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I

By Mr. HILL:

H.R. 4086.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 Clause 4 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. LOVE:

H.R. 4087.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 4088.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 4089.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts, and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the forgoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4090.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. BORDALLO:

H.R. 4091.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV Section 3

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4092.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4093.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I.

By Mr. BRAT:

H.R. 4094.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution grants Congress ''power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.'' Left undefined in the amendment, the ''incomes'' appropriate for taxation must be determined through legislation passed by Congress. Congress therefore has the power to exclude from income taxation such sources as it deems appropriate.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 4095.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Amendment 1 to the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. CAPUANO:

H.R. 4096.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. CAPUANO:

H.R. 4097.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 4 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Ms. JUDY CHU of California:

H.R. 4098.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CLAY:

H.R. 4099.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, ''The Commerce Power Congress''

By Mr. CLAY:

H.R. 4100.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 4101.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mrs. COMSTOCK:

H.R. 4102.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (Power To lay and collect Taxes); Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (Commerce Clause); and the Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

By Mr. CRAMER:

H.R. 4103.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 4104.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: ''The Congress shall have Power to law and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises . . .''

By Mr. DESJARLAIS:

H.R. 4105.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with Foreign Nations, and among the several states, and with Indian Tribes.

By Mrs. DINGELL:

H.R. 4106.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8, Article I of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. DONOVAN:

H.R. 4107.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. GABBARD:

H.R. 4108.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4109.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Ms. KELLY of Illinois:

H.R. 4110.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

US Const., Art. I, Sec. 8, Cl. 1, 18 (''The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . . [and] 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.'')(Social Security Disibility benefits are provided to individuals who have physical disabilities that prevent them from working, so as to ensure their ''general Welfare,'' and are paid through tax revenues. A GAO study on modifying payments to certain recipients is a proper means of ensuring the program is as effective as possible).

By Mr. LANCE:

H.R. 4111.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4112.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises to pay the debts and provide for the common Defense and general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1. Thus, Congress has the authority not only to increase taxes, but also, to reduce taxes to promote the general welfare of the United States of America and her citizens. Additionally, Congress has the Constitutional authority to regulate commerce among the States and the Indian Tribes, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4113.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Fourteenth Amendment, Section 5, which reads: The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, which reads: The Congress shall have Power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York:

H.R. 4114.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4115.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America.

By Ms. MOORE:

H.R. 4116.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Sect. 8, Clause 3 ''to regulate commerce''

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4117.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I section 8 Constitution of the United States, which states the Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4118.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PALAZZO:

H.R. 4119.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Sec. 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United Sates).

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4120.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: The Congress shall have power. . . To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. SERRANO:

H.R. 4121.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Ms. SINEMA:

H.R. 4122.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. WALKER:

H.R. 4123.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7—''No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.''

By Mr. WALZ:

H.R. 4124.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article. I. Section. 8. To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:

H.R. 4125.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. YOHO:

H.R. 4126.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. ''To provide for the common defense,'' ''to raise and support Armies,'' ''to provide and maintain a Navy,'' and ''to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces.''

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.J. Res. 74.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 (the Commerce Clause) of the Constitution of the United States which grants Congress the power ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes'' as well as Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (Necessary and Proper Clause) of the Constitution of the United States which gives Congress the authority to address and prevent new regulations.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 169: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 170: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 223: Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 224: Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BEYER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 282: Mr. YODER and Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 290: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 359: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 379: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 452: Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 539: Ms. ADAMS, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. ASHFORD, and Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 540: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 545: Mr. MICA, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 670: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 745: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 746: Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 816: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 820: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 845: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 855: Mr. YOHO.
H.R. 911: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 953: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 969: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 985: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
H.R. 1076: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1150: Mr. POSEY and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 1174: Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. ZELDIN, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 1220: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD.
H.R. 1258: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 1268: Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 1288: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 1292: Mr. MOOLENAAR.
H.R. 1336: Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 1342: Mr. EMMER of Minnesota, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. TED LIEU of California, and Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 1343: Mr. BABIN and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 1356: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 1453: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1457: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.R. 1530: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.
H.R. 1552: Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 1559: Mr. POE of Texas and Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 1576: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 1604: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 1610: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 1635: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 1685: Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 1763: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. COOK, and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1769: Ms. MOORE.
H.R. 1786: Mr. LAHOOD.
H.R. 1814: Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 1893: Mr. LONG.
H.R. 1942: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 1971: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 1979: Ms. FUDGE.
H.R. 1988: Mr. TURNER and Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 2070: Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 2124: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. LYNCH, and Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 2156: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 2205: Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 2293: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 2342: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 2408: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 2434: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. PITTS, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. FLORES, Mr. YODER, Mr. LAMALFA, Mrs. WAGNER, and Mr. GUINTA.
H.R. 2449: Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 2461: Ms. LOFGREN and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 2500: Mr. POMPEO and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 2515: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H.R. 2519: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 2521: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 2533: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 2568: Mr. POE of Texas.
H.R. 2646: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 2689: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
H.R. 2715: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 2752: Mr. DEFAZIO.
H.R. 2759: Mr. SWALWELL of California and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 2850: Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 2858: Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 2874: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. WALZ.
H.R. 2894: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 2903: Mr. BLUM, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, and Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 2980: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 3026: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H.R. 3036: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 3046: Mr. AGUILAR.
H.R. 3065: Mr. LIPINSKI and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 3074: Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3222: Mr. CULBERSON.
H.R. 3223: Mr. RUSH, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. DOLD, and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.
H.R. 3229: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama and Mr. KLINE.
H.R. 3268: Mr. AMODEI and Mrs. LAWRENCE.
H.R. 3286: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 3294: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 3296: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 3314: Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 3323: Mr. GOSAR.
H.R. 3326: Mr. LOUDERMILK, Mr. DENHAM, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mr. KING of Iowa.
H.R. 3339: Mr. MEADOWS, Mrs. ROBY, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
H.R. 3377: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 3399: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 3459: Mr. LUCAS.
H.R. 3463: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 3516: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 3565: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 3573: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 3660: Mr. BARLETTA.
H.R. 3700: Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. RIBBLE.
H.R. 3734: Mr. PEARCE, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. WESTERMAN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. BARR, Mr. STEWART, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, and Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 3765: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 3779: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 3799: Mr. GOSAR and Mr. YODER.
H.R. 3845: Mr. VALADAO, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. EMMER of Minnesota.
H.R. 3860: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 3862: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 3865: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 3879: Mr. SARBANES and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3880: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 3916: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 3917: Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 3932: Mr. ZINKE, Mr. COFFMAN, and Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 3940: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. LONG, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. NEWHOUSE, and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.
H.R. 3946: Mr. WESTERMAN.
H.R. 3964: Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 3965: Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. BASS, and Mr. PETERS.
H.R. 3987: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 3991: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 3997: Mr. PETERS, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 4008: Mr. CONYERS, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. HUFFMAN.
H.R. 4026: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. LAMALFA.
H.R. 4029: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 4031: Mr. ZELDIN and Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.R. 4032: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. JONES, Mr. ZINKE, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. GOHMERT, and Mr. CLAWSON of Florida.
H.R. 4038: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. STIVERS, Mrs. ELLMERS of North Carolina, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. LONG, and Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 4058: Mr. BLUM.
H.R. 4062: Mr. BABIN, Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. SMITH of Missouri.
H.R. 4068: Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
H.J. Res. 33: Mr. ROONEY of Florida.
H.J. Res. 59: Mr. GOSAR.
H.J. Res. 71: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. STEWART, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. GOHMERT, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BLUM, Mr. TROTT, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. PITTS.
H.J. Res. 72: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. STEWART, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. GOHMERT, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. JOLLY, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BLUM, Mr. TROTT, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. YOHO, and Mr. PITTS.
H. Con. Res. 89: Mr. BRADY of Texas.
H. Res. 12: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia.
H. Res. 218: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. WEBER of Texas, and Mr. ROHRABACHER.
H. Res. 432: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. MULLIN, and Mr. HASTINGS.
H. Res. 445: Mr. WITTMAN.
H. Res. 469: Mr. ASHFORD.
H. Res. 494: Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. SHUSTER.
H. Res. 501: Mr. WELCH.
H. Res. 508: Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H. Res. 510: Mr. WITTMAN.
H. Res. 519: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H. Res. 521: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H. Res. 523: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. KIND, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Ms. NORTON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. HONDA, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. TAKANO, and Ms. TITUS.
H. Res. 532: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. RENACCI, and Mr. STIVERS.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015 No. 171

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Pastor Jeff Wheeler, pastor of the Central Baptist Church in Sioux Falls, SD.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God, with the uncertainty in our world today, we pause to declare Your matchless power and moral perfection. We are reminded that You are in control. You govern Your creation with righteousness and truth. You extend mercy to the downcast and hope to the broken. May these men and women govern with the same spirit.

You tell us righteousness elevates a nation to greatness. O God, forgive our sin and grant righteous judgment to these leaders as they make moral and ethical decisions. Please grant discernment.

Fill our hearts with compassion for the weak, courage in adversity, wisdom through debate, and vision in the storm. May every decision be tethered to the anchor of Your unending truth.

O Lord, be pleased to dwell among us today. Let Your presence dispel the darkness of self-centeredness. Let humility give birth to the servant-hearted spirit. May Your Name once again be great in our Nation, for Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.

In Jesus's 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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The senior Senator from South Dakota.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is a great honor for me to be able to welcome to the Senate today our pastor from Sioux Falls, SD, Jeff Wheeler, who just offered our invocation this morning, and to express how much Kimberley and I have appreciated the opportunity to worship and to benefit from his ministry. We enjoy and are blessed by his teaching each and every single week when we are back home in South Dakota. His ministry has and continues to impact people all across our community, across our State, and across our region.

He and his wife Shirlene are with us today in the Senate, and on behalf of myself and my colleagues, we extend the warmest welcome and appreciate the great work he does in serving the Lord in South Dakota and across our country.

Thank you, Mr. President.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is clear that the American people are concerned about the administration's ability to properly vet thousands of individuals from Syria. More than half of our Nation's Governors, Governors of both parties, have demonstrated their concern. Many Members in Congress, Members of both parties, have raised concerns as well.

Given all this and given all that has happened in Paris, it simply makes sense to take a step back for now, to press the pause button so we can determine the facts and ensure we have the correct policies and security screenings in place. That is the most responsible thing for the administration to do right now. That is the most reasonable and balanced thing for the administration to do right now.

We should also not lose sight of why we are in this position to begin with. The Syrian people are fleeing Syria because of a brutal civil war. The ultimate solution to this problem is to make Syria a place the Syrian people can continue to return to, but the administration has never had a coherent strategy to settle this conflict. Every single one of us knows that ISIL presents a threat to our homeland, and it is not contained. So if the administration is serious about starting to turn this situation around, then it is going to have to develop a serious and workable strategy that can swing and win strong bipartisan support.

GUANTANAMO BAY DETENTION FACILITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, years ago, then-candidate Obama made a campaign promise that has not withstood the measure of time or the realities brought by terrorism. He said he wanted to close the secure detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. Ever since, he has pursued policies that willfully avoided the targeting chain of capture, interrogate, build intelligence, and target. It turns out that the reality of closing the secure detention facility is a lot harder than making promises on the campaign trail. It is an incredibly complex issue with grave national security concerns for the citizens of our country and for our allies.

The fact that the President has never been able to present any kind of serious plan to Congress seems to say quite a lot. We hear he is working on one now. We will, of course, give consideration to what the President says. We

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

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will, of course, keep an open mind. It doesn't mean Congress is going to agree with him. It is going to be a very tough sell because it is hard to understand why indefinite detention for terrorists on U.S. soil is preferable to detaining terrorists who cannot be released in Guantanamo. This is especially true when one considers the fact that bringing terrorists here presents serious risks that simply do not exist if we keep the terrorists in the secure facility down there in Guantanamo Bay.

This much is crystal clear though: If the President wants to be able to import Guantanamo terrorists into Americans' backyards, he is going to have to persuade a majority in Congress to change the law. The law prevents that.

Just last week, big bipartisan majorities in Congress voted twice to underscore the point. We overwhelmingly passed a defense authorization bill with a clear bipartisan prohibition on the President moving Guantanamo terrorists into our country. We overwhelmingly passed a veterans funding bill with a clear bipartisan prohibition on the President improving military facilities for the detention of Guantanamo terrorists in our country.

The Senate has voted many times in recent years to enact these bipartisan protections. We enacted them in Congresses with split party control. We enacted them in Congresses with massive Democratic majorities. The President signed them all into law. So if the President wants to bring Guantanamo terrorists into the United States, he has to change the law. That is the opinion of the President's own Attorney General. She was asked directly this week if the President should ignore legislation passed by Congress that prohibits him from transferring Guantanamo detainees to American soil. This is what Attorney General Loretta Lynch said: ''The law currently does not allow for that.'' Let me repeat that. ''The law currently does not allow for that.'' That is Attorney General Lynch of this administration. That is what the Nation's chief law enforcement officer, a woman appointed by President Obama himself, had to say on his ability to import Guantanamo terrorists into our country.

This isn't exactly a revelation to anybody. The fact that the President is now contemplating flouting the law in pursuit of a campaign promise from years ago means that it is apparently necessary for his own Attorney General to remind everybody that the law is the law, even for President Obama.

There are a multitude of other reasons not to bring these individuals into our country. I plan to continue reminding my colleagues of them here on the floor from time to time.

If the President ever presents some kind of plan we can actually debate, I am sure there will be several different views on it. I am sure we will each have a lot to say. I am sure the President will make his pitch to convince Congress that moving terrorists into American communities is a good idea. As I said, it will be a hard sell. But the President should make his case if he feels passionately about it. For now, though, we should at least be able to agree with what one of our Democratic colleagues recently said of the President: ''He is going to have to comply with the legal restrictions.''

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 3762

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3762) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we all know that the Federal Government has many obligations, but chief among them is to protect the American people from harm. That responsibility is now at the forefront of talk here in our Nation's Capital, and rightfully so. ISIS continues to spread its campaign of terror across the entire world.

The United States is committed to combating terrorism. Our government will do all that is possible to protect the people of this Nation. In this fight against evil ISIS, it is absolutely critical that we as Americans do not lose sight of our Nation's core principles. Those principles are eloquently etched into the base of the Statue of Liberty.

I can remember taking my family there for the first time. I didn't have all my children yet—we had more that had to be born—but my older children still remember that. I remember it.

Here is what it says:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The retched refuse of your teaming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me.

That, of course, is directed to the United States. All across Europe and the Middle East, there are huddled masses of Syrian families desperate to find refuge someplace from Syria's civil war and the ISIS reign of terror. Millions of Syrians fled their country. About 300,000 of them have been killed since the civil war started—300,000. They fled to neighboring nations such as Turkey, Lebanon, and tiny little Jordan.

But the crisis in Syria continues to worsen and people are forced to seek refuge. What else can they do? On a daily basis, Europe's borders are being flooded by people in search of safety and a better life—mothers cradling infants and fathers carrying children in their arms. The nations of Europe have helped. Greece, Germany, and others have accommodated the enormous influx of people as safely as possible.

They are overwhelmed. The United States must do its part. We have a rigorous screening process for when we accept these refugees. The refugees we are accepting are women and children and old and older men with families. Only 2 percent of the refugees are men of military age—2 percent. We accepted a little under 2,000 last year. Two percent of those were of military age.

The United States has a long and proud history of providing refuge to the world's most vulnerable. That history includes my father-in-law, Israel Goldfarb. He and his family came from Russia. They were refugees escaping the programs of a czar. I have been disgusted in recent days to see some of my Republican colleagues shun the American tradition of displaying compassion for those in need, of sheltering those fleeing torture, rape and oppression. Frankly, I have been disappointed by Republican fear-mongering and bigotry.

Apparently they have learned nothing from history. We cannot repeat the dark days of the 1930s when many Americans resolved to turn away helpless refugees fleeing Nazi Germany and Adolf Hitler or imprisoned innocent Japanese Americans during World War II, like our late colleague Dan Inouye and his family.

Those mistakes were based on misguided fears of people we did not know. How many people died because of unfounded apprehension? I don't know but far too many. Yet it seems many Republicans are destined to go down that same path again. Some in the Republican Party have suggested that we categorically block all Syrian refugees. One Republican candidate for President suggested we turn away even 5-year-old refugee children. Two other Republican candidates for President implied that the United States of America should have some sort of religious test for refugees. They are saying only Christians.

This is the latest in what has become a disturbing pattern of Republican hatred and intolerance toward Muslims. Remember, Syria is mostly Muslim, but there are Jews, there are Christians—lots of them. During the course of the current Presidential cycle, we have heard from the leading lights of the Republican Party the following: that we are at war with Islam, that we should be shutting down Muslim houses of worship in America, close the mosques, that we should ban Muslims from government service. We have two of my friends who serve in the House of Representatives who are Muslim. They are proud. That religion has made them better people.

Now they are even suggesting that we should reject refugees fleeing persecution on the grounds that they are Muslim. That is not America. That is hate emanating from some Republicans. That anti-Muslim venom from Republicans is a propaganda bonanza for ISIS. Christian groups have responded to those Republican attacks. We have heard what the Pope said: to kill in the name of religion is blasphemous.

World Relief, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service are all dismayed at the anti-refugee fervor pushed forward by Republicans and are urging supporters to contact elected officials on behalf of these victims of the Syrian conflict.

We must pause and think about what they have been through—poison gas, cluster bombs. Let's think about who these refugees are. They are not our enemies. They are expelled from their homeland by the same evil rulers we are fighting. All they want is to find safety, to restart their lives. These people have been persecuted—that is an understatement—by President Assad and ISIS. The Syrian regime, I repeat, has barrel-bombed their own citizens, has unleashed chemical weapons against their own citizens, rapes, justifying the rapes of these hundreds and hundreds of women in the name of their religion—murdering women and children. Those refugees hate Assad. They hate ISIS. That is why they are trying to get out of that horrible situation they find themselves.

The Department of Homeland Security has verified that not one of 1,800 refugees already admitted in the United States has a single confirmed tie to terrorism—not one. To deny our moral obligation to these struggling people would be to abandon the principles of this great country. That is how France feels about it also. On the heels of last week's appalling attacks, the President of France is refusing to neglect France's duty to humanity. Here is what this good man said yesterday:

> 30,000 refugees will be welcomed over the next two years. Our country has the duty to respect this commitment.

After what they have been through, this is what the President of France said: Accepting Syrian refugees is the moral thing to do and it is sound policy. Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice agrees that the United States must open its arms to those fleeing persecution. Here is what she said:

> What the United States has done is to be open to people who are fleeing tyranny, who are fleeing danger, but we have done it in a very careful way.

Secretary Madeleine Albright authored an op-ed this week for Time magazine. Now, remember, she herself was a refugee. That is how she came to this country during World War II. She said Americans must respond with compassion if we are going to defeat ISIS. We can do all we want with refugees. This is no way to win the war, attacking the refugees. Here is what she said, Madeleine Albright:

> Our enemies have a plan. They want to divide the world between Muslims and non-Muslims, and between the defenders and attackers of Islam. By making Syrian refugees the enemy, we are playing into their hands. Instead, we need to clarify that the real choice is between those who think it is okay to murder innocent people and those who think it is wrong. By showing that we value every human life, we can make clear to the world where we stand.

What Secretary Albright said and what Secretary Rice said is absolutely right. We process Syrian refugees in a very careful way. It has worked. We are not the nations of Europe. Has anyone stopped for a minute and thought that we have an ocean between us and them, an ocean, the Atlantic Ocean.

The U.S. refugee screening takes place well before any individual comes to our borders. To enter the U.S. refugee program as an applicant, the U.N. Refugee Agency must first select and refer all potential refugees to our program. We accept refugees solely on a referral basis from the United Nation's agency. We do not go out and solicit any of these people. After being referred, all refugees, including those from Syria, are subjected to extremely rigorous screening and security checks. This is not some easy procedure where refugees fly right through the application process and are sent here in a matter of days. No. It takes an average of 18 to 24 months for a refugee to make it through the process to come to the United States.

Remember, the vast majority of these people are checked and rechecked, taking 24 months; they are women and children and old men. I repeat. It takes 18 to 24 months for a refugee to make it through the process of coming to the United States. That is why only 1,800 refugees have been admitted since the start of the conflict out of the millions who are fleeing Syria. Our government accepts only the most vulnerable of the Syrians, survivors of violence and torture, those with severe medical conditions, women and children, but security precautions are not taking a backseat in the process. These Syrian refugees are real people. Images of their plight should be so visually apparent in our minds. Think of that little boy whom we saw and everyone saw around the world, a picture of this little dead boy washed up on a beach, a drowned Syrian boy whose body was washed up on this Turkish beach, pictures on the front page of newspapers, all the TV programs for several days.

At that time, Democrats and Republicans together responded with calls for compassion and action. I urge Republicans to remember that little boy. We must help where we can. That is who we are. We are America. We come to the defense of the defenseless. We come to the aid of those in need. Right now we are needed. We are a nation—a nation of freedom. We should not forsake our duty and obligation to these struggling people.

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

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

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 until 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Texas.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that after I promulgate two unanimous consent requests, the remaining time between now and 11 a.m. be equally divided between myself and the assistant Democratic leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 247

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 247 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; I further ask that the bill be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on behalf of the Democratic ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator PAT LEAHY, and myself, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2302

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2302 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; I further ask that the bill be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, moments ago I asked this body to take up and pass two commonsense pieces of legislation in response to the terrorist attack in Paris. The first, the Expatriate Terrorist Act, is legislation I introduced over a year ago—attempted to pass over a year ago—and that the Democratic Party blocked. That legislation provides that any American citizen who goes and joins ISIS, who takes up arms against America and attempts to wage jihad, by doing so, forfeits his or her U.S. citizenship. Existing Federal law provides for grounds of revocation of citizenship, and this piece of legislation would add joining terrorist groups such as ISIS to those grounds.

Unfortunately, the Democratic Party has just objected to passing that commonsense legislation. As a consequence, and because of that objection, it means that Americans—and the estimates are it could be up to or over 100 Americans—who have gone and joined ISIS right now are waging jihad against America. As a consequence of that objection, it means those ISIS terrorists can come back to America using a U.S. passport and wage jihad against this country—attempt to murder innocent men and women in this country using a U.S. passport. That is, I believe, a profound mistake.

The second piece of legislation I just asked this body to pass and the Democrats just objected to is legislation that would stop President Obama and Hillary Clinton's plan to bring in tens of thousands of Syrian Muslim refugees to the United States in light of the declaration of war from ISIS, in light of the horrific terrorist attack and in light of the admissions from the Director of the FBI, Director Comey—who I might note President Obama appointed—who said the administration cannot vet these refugees to determine whether or not they are ISIS terrorists. Indeed, he said since they do not have the data on which of the Syrian refugees are involved with ISIS terrorism, they can query the database, but with no information in the database, he said they can query over and over again until the cows come home, but they do not have the information.

Unfortunately, the Democratic Party, the Democratic Senators in this body have chosen to stand with President Obama and his absurd political correctness, his unwillingness even to utter the words ''radical Islamic terrorism.'' The President refuses to say the words ''radical Islamic terrorism.'' Hillary Clinton refuses to say the words ''radical Islamic terrorism.'' Not only do they refuse to say the words, but they are supporting a policy of bringing tens of thousands of Syrian Muslim refugees into this country knowing full well we cannot vet them to determine who is coming here to wage jihad. That is a profound threat to this country, and I hope we will stand as one. This ought to be an area of bipartisan agreement.

I would note that the legislation I introduced includes an exception for persecuted minorities facing genocide—Christians, Yazidis, small minorities facing genocide. In response to my acknowledging genocide as a different circumstance, President Obama, 2 days ago in Turkey, attacked me directly. He said it was un-American to want to protect this country from terrorists and to want to help persecuted Christians. Then yesterday, President Obama attacked me again from Manila, saying it was offensive that I, and so many millions of other Americans, want to keep our children safe.

Mr. President, it is neither un-American nor offensive to believe in the rule of law, to believe in standing up to radical Islamic terrorism. And it is an astonishing statement that so many Democratic Senators choose to stand with a President who will not confront radical Islamic terrorism.

Indeed, just this week Secretary Kerry rationalized the terrorist attack on Charlie Hebdo saying it was understandable why they attacked Charlie Hebdo. We should not be acting as apologists for radical Islamic terrorists. The very first obligation of the Commander in Chief is to keep this Nation safe. And I will say that any official responsible for bringing people in when they do not know if they are radical Islamic terrorists will bear responsibility for the consequences of their actions.

ISIS has been plain. They intend to murder as many Americans as possible and they intend to carry out terror attacks here, such as that which happened in Paris. This commonsense legislation would have helped protect this Nation, but I am sorry to say the Democratic Party is objecting to it.

I believe we should put America first, protecting America first. Unfortunately, my friends on the other side of the aisle are blocking that effort.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I understand there is a limited amount of time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 7½ minutes remaining on the Democratic side.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the distinguished Chair.

Mr. President, I am worried in this country that we hear rhetoric that is dangerous, and it is time to stop. It shames the very nature of what America is. These are ideas that are wrong, and I would say they are deeply anti-American.

My grandparents—my Italian grandparents, my Irish great-great-grandparents—heard some of this rhetoric when some in this country said they shouldn't come here: Don't allow these Papists into the United States; don't allow these Irish, who are opposed to the rule of Great Britain on their island, and they actually stood up and fought against Great Britain.

The words back then, like some of the words today, come from a place of fear and hatred. I do not want to stand by quietly and see the victims of terrorism and torture be demonized just so people will have talking points for the local evening news. We are better than this.

The bill my colleague, the junior Senator the from Texas, introduced an hour ago would prevent refugee protection for virtually all nationals of Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen, regardless of how much they have suffered at the hands of terrorists and despots. Women fleeing gang rapes and children fleeing horrors we cannot even imagine would be closed off.

A few weeks ago the world came together, stunned and heartbroken over the image of a 3-year-old Syrian child's lifeless body washed up on a Turkish beach. His tragic death focused our attention on the desperate plight of so many Syrians who have fled the horror of ISIS and Bashar al-Assad.

We called it the humanitarian issue of the day. We called forth images of our Statue of Liberty and our proud history as a land of refuge for those fleeing persecution. I heard so many on this floor as well as from commentators in the news. Those who call now for us to slam our doors on even properly vetted Syrian and other refugees should remember that the people we will shut out are those very children who touched our hearts just weeks ago.

Of course, we are horrified by what happened in Beirut and Paris, and we need an effective, thoughtful strategy for countering ISIS and other terrorist organizations. That is what we should be debating. What we have done so far is not working, and we should be talking about how more countries should be involved in this fight. ISIS is our enemy; the people fleeing ISIS are not.

In fact, we have had discussions about other things that could be done. Somebody who is on a terrorist watch list but who is in this country legally can go to a gun show and buy all the automatic weapons they want, and they break no law. They can buy all the ammunition they want, and they

break no law. They can go to the store, as did one of the greatest terrorists this country faced—the man who did the Oklahoma city bombing—and buy the components of a bomb, and they break no law. These are the things we ought to be discussing.

I do not understand why Senator CRUZ is on the Senate floor seeking unanimous consent to pass this bill. This very bill is on the Judiciary Committee agenda, and the committee is currently considering it and needed improvements to it.

When the Senate Judiciary Committee debates this bill, we will have a lot to discuss. This legislation affects constitutional rights, and should be carefully vetted by the judiciary committee. Serious constitutional concerns have been raised by voices from across the political spectrum—from the National Review to the ACLU.

Just yesterday I received a letter from former NRA president David Keene and Georgetown Law professor David Cole, in their roles with The Constitution Project. They urge opposition to this bill because it ''serves virtually no practical purpose, raises serious constitutional concerns, and would do nothing to keep America safe.'' These are strong words, and I take these concerns seriously. Rushing a bill to the floor when that very bill is already scheduled for consideration by the committee of jurisdiction is not a responsible approach to legislating. And when legislation involves something as fundamental as citizenship, we should give the judiciary committee an opportunity to consider and debate this bill before it is brought to the Senate floor.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD several articles relating to the topic at hand.

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

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. PATRICK J. LEAHY,
Ranking Member, Senate Judiciary Committee, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY, RANKING MEMBER LEAHY, AND JUDICIARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS: On January 22, 2015, Senator Ted Cruz (R–TX) introduced S. 247, the Expatriate Terrorists Act (ETA). Representative Steve King (R–IA) simultaneously introduced companion legislation in the House. According to the bill's sponsors, the ETA is a common sense counterterrorism tool that would strip U.S. citizenship from Americans who fight with or support foreign terrorist organizations working to attack the United States. The ETA would also purportedly ''fill . . . statutory holes'' in the Secretary of State's ''authority to revoke a terrorist's passport.''

In fact, the ETA serves virtually no practical purpose, raises serious constitutional concerns, and would do nothing to keep America safe. We urge you to oppose it.

Like previous iterations of the same idea, the ETA would amend 8 U.S.C. 1481(a), which sets out limited circumstances under which U.S. citizens can be denaturalized or expatriated. The bill would add the following to the short list of predicate acts that can result in loss of citizenship: 1) taking an oath of allegiance to a foreign terrorist organization; 2) joining a foreign terrorist organization's armed forces while they are fighting the United States; and 3) ''becoming a member of, or providing training or material assistance to,'' a foreign terrorist organization.

The ETA also amends the Passport Act of 1926 to require the Secretary of State to deny a passport to, or revoke one from, anyone who the Secretary has determined is a member, or is attempting to become a member, of a foreign terrorist organization.

Senator Cruz has said repeatedly that the ETA works a ''formal'' or ''affirmative'' renunciation of U.S. citizenship. To the extent he means to suggest that, under the bill, a person would automatically lose citizenship simply by engaging in the above conduct, he is wrong. The ETA does not and could not achieve that result.

Citizenship is a constitutional right, and the Constitution prohibits the government from revoking a person's citizenship against his will under any circumstances. As the Supreme Court has explained, ''the intent of the Fourteenth Amendment, among other things, was to define citizenship . . . [and] that definition cannot coexist with a congressional power to specify acts that work a renunciation of citizenship even absent an intent to renounce. In the last analysis, expatriation depends on the will of the citizen rather than on the will of Congress and its assessment of his conduct.'' As a constitutional right, citizenship can be knowingly and voluntarily waived, but it cannot be taken away from an individual absent such a waiver. Thus, to revoke a person's citizenship the government must prove not only that he committed an expatriating act prescribed in section 1481(a), but also that he did so voluntarily and with the specific intent to relinquish his citizenship.

Given these requirements, the ETA will almost certainly result in no additional expatriations. Unless Senator Cruz expects citizens subject to expatriation proceedings freely to admit that they joined or supported a foreign terrorist group specifically intending to renounce their U.S. citizenship, no one will in fact be expatriated. We doubt that government officials would believe it an efficient use of resources to try, especially given the broad reach of existing laws that already provide harsh penalties for U.S. citizens who engage in acts of terrorism.

The bill's passport revocation provisions are similarly unnecessary. There is no ''statutory hole'' to fill—the Secretary of State already has the authority to deny a passport to anyone whose ''activities abroad are causing or are likely to cause serious damage to the national security or the foreign policy of the United States,'' and to revoke a passport on the same grounds.

Not only is the bill practically useless, it also raises serious constitutional concerns. The ETA makes membership in or ''providing training or material assistance to'' certain foreign terrorist organizations a predicate act to expatriation. There are two constitutional problems with this provision. First, neither ''training'' nor ''material assistance'' is defined. Similar language in 18 U.S.C. 2339B was ruled unconstitutionally vague until Congress added specific definitions. Because Congress has not done so here, this provision of the ETA suffers from the same constitutional flaw.

Second, unlike other crimes currently listed in section 1481(a) that can result in loss of citizenship (see section 1481(a)(7)), Senator Cruz's addition does not require proof of a conviction as a prerequisite. That omission undermines the constitutional right of due process. As the Constitution Project's Liberty and Security Committee explained in opposing similar past attempts to amend section 1481(a):

[T]he language of 1481(a)(7) expressly requires a conviction as a necessary prerequisite to denaturalization or expatriation proceedings. This requirement protects the constitutional right of due process, since one cannot actually be said to have committed the acts specified in 1481(a)(7)—each of which are crimes against the United States—until and unless those acts have been proven to a jury beyond a reasonable doubt. As the Supreme Court expressly held in Kennedy v. Mendoza-Martinez, Congress cannot deprive an individual of his or her citizenship as a ''punishment'' absent the procedural safeguards of a criminal trial.

The rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the United States' response to date raises a critical question for Congress to consider, but it is not the ETA. For well over a year, the United States has been at war with ISIL and Congress has still not weighed in, notwithstanding its constitutional responsibility to do so. Members should spend their time debating and voting on this grave question, not preoccupied with needless and likely unconstitutional legislation.

We urge you to oppose the Expatriate Terrorists Act.

Sincerely,

DAVID COLE,
Hon. George J. Mitchell, Professor in Law and Public Policy at Georgetown University Law Center; co-chair of the Constitution Project's Liberty and Security Committee

DAVID KEENE,
Opinion Editor, The Washington Times; Former Chairman, American Conservative Union; co-chair of the Constitution Project's Liberty and Security Committee.

[From the National Review, Jan. 28, 2015]

HOW NOT TO FIGHT TERRORISM

(By Gabriel Malor)

Representative Steve King and Senators Ted Cruz and Chuck Grassley have reintroduced the Expatriate Terrorist Act, a bill to strip U.S. citizenship from terrorists. The proposal sounds nice in theory, but it is also unconstitutional and unnecessary, the latest in a sad line of civil-liberties infringements justified by politicians trying to look tough in the war on terrorism. Even if the bill did not have these fatal infirmities, it would put the determination of who will retain their citizenship in the hands of unelected bureaucrats at the Departments of Justice, State, and Homeland Security. On that ground alone, all Americans should unite in opposition.

The idea to strip citizenship from terrorists is not a new one. In 2010, Senators Joe Lieberman and Scott Brown introduced similar legislation, dubbed the Terrorist Expatriation Act. Their bill would have amended the list of expatriating acts in the Immigration and Nationality Act to include material assistance to foreign terrorist organizations. Legal scholars and civil libertarians pointed out that the bill was neither necessary nor constitutional, and ultimately it died.

The new bill put forward by King, Cruz, and Grassley goes further, adding membership, training, and oaths of allegiance to the list of expatriating acts. They claim that this legislation is necessary to protect the homeland from radicalized citizen-terrorists returning from abroad.

But citizenship is not a mere privilege. It is a right specifically protected by the Constitution. Congress cannot simply decide that individuals lose their citizenship when they commit certain acts. Rather, to strip a person's citizenship requires that the government prove not only that he committed an act deemed expatriating by Congress but that he did so knowingly and voluntarily and with the intent to relinquish his citizenship. In the words of Justice White, writing for the Supreme Court when this issue was settled decades ago, ''in the last analysis, expatriation depends on the will of the citizen rather than on the will of Congress and its assessment of his conduct.''

Senator Cruz's claim that his bill would make the act of becoming a terrorist an ''affirmative renunciation'' of citizenship is deeply misleading. To be constitutional, expatriation can be accomplished only by intent to relinquish, something that Cruz, a lawyer and litigator of great skill, should already know. And if he doesn't mean what he is saying, he owes it to the American public to tell us how he believes the law would operate or if it would even be practicable at all.

On the issue of deception, King, Cruz, and Grassley say the statutory change targets dangerous terrorist fighters who try to return to the United States from abroad. The plain language of the proposed legislation, however, is not limited to those who actually take up arms. It applies to anyone who merely claims membership in a terrorist organization or gives an oath, training, or material assistance to terrorists, regardless of whether he actually fights. And it is not limited just to terrorists abroad; any of those actions taken inside the United States would also trigger the citizenship-stripping provision under the express terms of the legislation, leading to the deplorable circumstance of creating stateless terrorists within the jurisdictional boundaries of the United States.

This is assuming the courts actually credit King, Cruz, and Grassley's stated security purpose for proposing the law. If the courts were to decide that the expatriation of terrorists was intended to be a punitive act rather than a security measure, a different and more stringent series of constitutional prohibitions come into play, including the Fifth and Sixth Amendment protections for criminal defendants.

King, Cruz, and Grassley are selling fear to justify an unconstitutional deprivation of rights, and they are doing it for no good reason. If the U.S. government has enough information to identify citizen-terrorists abroad and intercept them on their attempted return, it has enough information to bring criminal prosecutions against those individuals for terrorism when they try to reenter the United States. The authority to intercept and detain such individuals has already been granted by Congress to the Department of Homeland Security. The Department of Justice, of course, also has the authority to prosecute such individuals. And so the stated purpose for the proposed legislation is dubious, since the government's responsibility for intercepting returning terrorists is settled law, which has a side benefit of being constitutional.

Even if this legislation were passed into law, because of its constitutional infirmity it would never work as billed by its proponents. Instead, it would mobilize an army of bureaucrats at Justice, State, and Homeland Security to start sniping away at Americans' rights of citizenship and travel. For example, the Justice Department gets to designate or decline to designate foreign terrorist organizations and so controls the determination of who is subjected to losing his citizenship. State Department officials have the authority to determine who gets sent expatriation certificates. And Homeland Security customs and border officers are responsible for detaining and paroling or removing non-citizens, including expatriated former citizens, who attempt entry to the United States.

All of these bureaucratic acts are subject to abuse. For that reason they are also subject to various types of administrative and judicial challenge, which typically drag on for years at great cost. Such litigation and the bureaucratic infrastructure to support it would be for questionable benefit in light of the alternate means already in place to intercept terrorists.

In short, the Expatriate Terrorist Act is a constitutionally suspect law. Well-established programs for intercepting terrorists attempting to enter the United States already exist. At best, the proposed bill would greatly increase the power of government to use and abuse its discretion to meddle with American lives. It does not represent a genuine attempt to better our national security. On the contrary, it is merely the latest in a series of questionable infringements of civil liberties proposed by politicians eager to exploit the public's fear of terrorism.

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION,
Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

Re Oppose Senator Ted Cruz's Request for Unanimous Consent on S. 247, the Expatriate Terrorists Act, which Strips U.S. Citizenship without Due Process and based on Suspicion

VOTE ''NO'' ON S. 247 AS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

S. 247 STRIPS AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP BASED ON MERE SUSPICION BY AN UNNAMED GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

DEAR SENATOR: The American Civil Liberties Union strongly urges you to oppose S. 247, the Expatriate Terrorists Act, which is sponsored by Senator Ted Cruz. The bill would strip U.S. citizenship from Americans who have not been convicted of any crimes, but who are merely suspected by an unnamed government official of wrongdoing.

S. 247 is dangerous because it would attempt to dilute the rights and privileges of citizenship, one of the core principles of the Constitution. As the Supreme Court explained in 1967 in Afroyim v. Rusk, ''the Fourteenth Amendment was designed to, and does, protect every citizen of this Nation against a congressional forcible destruction of his citizenship, whatever his creed, color, or race . . . [It creates] a constitutional right to remain a citizen in a free country unless he voluntarily relinquishes that citizenship.'' The bill is also unnecessary because existing laws already provide significant penalties for U.S. citizens who engage in acts of terrorism.

An already unconstitutional federal statute, 8 U.S.C. §1481, provides that an American can lose his or her citizenship by performing either of the following broad categories of acts with the intention of relinquishing his or her nationality:

acts that affirmatively renounce one's American citizenship, such as taking an oath of allegiance to a foreign government or serving as an officer in the armed forces of a foreign nation; or

committing crimes such as treason or conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government, or bearing arms against the United States, ''if and when [the citizen] is convicted thereof by a court martial or by a court of competent jurisdiction.''

S. 247 would add a new category of expatriating acts—''Becoming a member of, or providing training or material assistance to, any foreign terrorist organization designated under Section 219.'' This implicates several constitutional concerns.

First, the material assistance provision added by the bill would treat suspected provision of material assistance as an act that affirmatively renounces one's American citizenship. Thus, unlike treason or conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government, this provision would not require a prior conviction. It would only require an administrative finding by an unspecified government official that an American citizen is suspected of providing material assistance to a designated foreign terrorist organization with the intention of relinquishing his or her citizenship.

Second, this provision would violate Americans' constitutional right to due process, including by depriving them of citizenship based on secret evidence, and without the right to a jury trial and accompanying protections enshrined in the Fifth and Sixth Amendments. In sum, the bill turns the whole notion of due process on its head. Government officials do not have the power to strip citizenship from American citizens who never renounced their citizenship and were never convicted of a crime.

Third, the material assistance provision suffers from the same constitutional flaws that plague other material support laws, and goes far beyond what the Supreme Court has held is constitutionally permissible when First and Fourth Amendments rights are at stake. In 2010, the Supreme Court disappointingly ruled in Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project that teaching terrorist groups how to negotiate peacefully could be enough to be found guilty of material support. Even if that logic might apply to criminal conduct, it should not cause an American to lose his or her citizenship.

For these reasons, the ACLU urges you to oppose S. 247. Please contact Chris Anders at canders@aclu.org or (202) 675–2308, if you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

KARIN JOHANSON,
Director, Washington Legislative Office.

CHRISTOPHER ANDERS,
Senior Legislative Counsel, Washington Legislative Office.

Mr. LEAHY. I reserve my time, and I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time remains on each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 3 minutes on the Democratic side and 2 minutes on the Republican side.

The assistant Democratic leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me say at the outset the initial unanimous consent request made by the junior Senator from Texas was a bill which he had pending before the Senate Judiciary Committee today. He did not attend that meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee. I wish he had. I think we should have all been there if we wanted to take this up and debate it. I objected on behalf of Senator LEAHY and myself, and the Senator has spoken to the reasons for that objection.

Let me address the second part of this bill relative to refugees. We will reflect in years to come about what happened in this world in the last week and 10 days. We will reflect on the terrible tragedy that occurred in Paris,

France, and in Beirut and other nations, which was led by the ISIS terrorists. We will reflect on those poor victims who died as a result of their terrorist acts. And we will also reflect on acts of heroism and wisdom that emerged from this terrible tragedy, heroism on the ground in Paris and other places by those who defied these terrorists and those who risked their lives to bring those responsible to justice, and the wisdom and compassion shown by leaders around the world not to exploit this situation.

When President Hollande of France announced that his country would receive 35,000 refugees after this attack, he made it clear that he would not hold those innocent, helpless refugees accountable for the terrible misdeeds of these terrorists. When the nation of Canada said they would accept thousands of refugees, even after the Paris attack, they showed the wisdom and good sense to differentiate those helpless victims of terrorism around the world who are seeking refuge on our shores from those who perpetrated these terrorist acts. Then listen to the debate on Capitol Hill. Listen to the unanimous consent requests made this morning by the junior Senator from Texas. It is not consistent with that ethic. It is not consistent with those values.

To say we will accept only refugees who are the victims of genocide would close the doors to Cuban refugees who came to the United States, trying to escape all of communism and what it meant to their families. It would have closed the doors to Soviet Jews persecuted in that country who were looking for freedom and came to the United States as refugees. I can list countless others who were not the victims of genocide, but they were the victims of persecution, they were from war-torn countries, and they were the victims, as Senator LEAHY has said, of gang rape and terrorism.

Listen to what has been said on the other side of the Rotunda and in this Chamber today. It does not merit the kind of appreciation of American values that we insist on when we make these critical decisions. In time of war, in time of attack, sometimes rash decisions are made. I predict that in the course of history, as people in the future reflect on what happened in the Senate and the House of Representatives this week, they will hope that saner voices will prevail.

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

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, the Senator from Vermont spoke against overheated rhetoric and in the very next breath accused me of being anti-American, echoing the attack President Obama gave standing on the soil of Turkey. Let me say that speaking the truth is not terrorism.

My Democratic friends invoked their Irish and Italian grandparents. Well, when my Irish and Italian grandparents came to this country, they did not pose a terrorist threat because they were not seeking to murder innocent citizens. When my Cuban father came as a refugee, he was not a terrorist threat seeking to murder innocent citizens. This is an example of the Democratic Party's refusal to acknowledge the qualitative difference. Perhaps if they cannot see it, they can hear it, because in 2009 the Obama administration released Abu al-Baghdadi, the leader of ISIS. As he was being released, Abu al-Baghdadi turned to Army COL Kenneth King and said: See you in New York.

ISIS intends to murder Americans, and if the Democratic Party cannot distinguish between ISIS terrorists and Irish and Italian and Jewish and Cuban immigrants, then they are ignoring reality.

I would note that the Expatriate Terrorist Act is very, very similar to legislation that was introduced in 2010 by Democratic Senator Joe Lieberman and Senator Scott Brown, both of whom apparently, under the view of the Senator from Vermont, are un-American as well. I would note that at the time, then-Senator Hillary Clinton said about legislation virtually identical to my legislation:

> United States citizenship is a privilege. It is not a right. People who are serving foreign powers—or in this case foreign terrorists—are clearly in violation of the oath which they swore when they became citizens.

Yet President Obama and the Senator from Vermont apparently now consider Hillary Clinton's statement to be un-American. It is the essence of being American to say the Commander in Chief should protect the safety and security of this country.

I would note that the assistant Democratic leader invoked President Hollande in France. President Hollande said he would support stripping French citizenship. We should protect ourselves every bit as much as the other nations on Earth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2577, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

> A bill (H.R. 2577) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Pending:

> Collins/Reed amendment No. 2812, in the nature of a substitute.
>
> Collins/Reed amendment No. 2813 (to amendment No. 2812), to make a technical amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE AND SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I wish to speak about Friday night for a few moments. In Connecticut, on Friday night the world really did stop. Thousands of people in my State watched their television set or their smartphone as images like this one poured in from the blood-soaked streets of Paris: horrific reports, scores dead, more badly wounded. Deep down, in Connecticut, we ached deeply for Paris's loss. Maybe it is because for those of us who hail from the former colonies, we feel a special sense of brotherhood with the French. In my boyhood town of Wethersfield, CT, I grew up a stone's throw from the tavern where Washington and Rochambeau met to plan their campaign against the British. We pain for France because of 250 years of friendship and also because we know, unfortunately, exactly what they are going through. That ominous sense of familiarity and that perverse bond among nations that have been visited by mass terrorist attack are part of the reason why we ached so acutely on Friday night, over the weekend, and into this week.

But also, these pictures cause us pain because we fear this isn't the end of the mass slaughter. We grieve because the massive scale of this particular attack, on a nation that already had its antenna tuned for a potential attack, made us realize how vulnerable we still are today to a similar assault. The threat of another large-scale extremist attack just became so much more real for millions of Americans who had, frankly, begun to settle into an understandable comfortable complacency, a decade and a half since that last major terrorist attack just miles from Connecticut's border.

In Connecticut, to be honest, people are mad and they are scared. Having watched all of this coverage, I understand why. But images such as this also move the people of my State. These are two little kids, Ralia and Rahaf, 7 and 13 years old. This is where they sleep at night, on the streets of Beirut. They went there from Damascus after their mother and their brother were killed by a grenade. Along with

their dad, they have been sleeping on the streets for over a year. Rahaf, who is 13, says she is scared of the ''bad boys'' in Beirut on those streets at night. When she talks about that, Ralia starts crying.

I don't want to cast with a broad brush all of the people of my State, but I think I can safely say that their hearts ache for pictures like this, for images such as the one of the 3-year-old boy—just about the same age as my youngest son—who washed up limp and dead on the beach in Turkey. My neighbors are not comfortable living in a country that simply turns its back on little kids who have been ravaged by torture and rape, dying from barrel bombs and executions and slipshod escape vessels.

There has been a lot that has disturbed me about the debate here in Washington, across the country, and on the cable news channels since Friday's massacre: the hyperpartisanship, the concern for one religion over another, the refusal to wait for facts before jumping to policy conclusions.

Maybe what has disappointed me the most is the suggestion that the people in my State or the people of this country or this Congress need to make a choice between acting on concern for this image or acting out of concern for this image. The suggestion is that if your priority is protecting us from a Paris-style attack, you can't show compassion for those two little kids. If you want to show compassion for these innocents, then you compromise national security.

Here is the truth: Not only are these two priorities not mutually exclusive, they are actually interdependent. There is simply no choice to be made between protecting this country and helping the victims of terror. We can take steps together—Republicans and Democrats—to make sure terrorists do not get into this country, and we can continue in the best traditions of America to be, as our Statue of Liberty says, a home for ''your tired, your poor, your huddled masses.'' How do I arrive at this conclusion that we can do both, that we can protect our country and respond to the victims of terror in Syria? First, I asked the questions my constituents are asking: How can we be sure refugees fleeing Syria aren't going to pose a risk to the security of the people who live in my State in Connecticut?

Yesterday I sat through two exhaustive briefings to seek the answer to this question, and here is what I learned. There is no one who comes to the United States, in any immigration category, that receives a more comprehensive and exhaustive background check than refugees: biometrics, international background checks, interviews, fingerprints—a process that takes anywhere from 18 months to 2 years to make sure we get it right. It is exhaustive, and it is probably why of the nearly 2,000 Syrian refugees who are resettled in the United States this year, not a single one has been connected to terrorist activity. The other reason for this, as I learned yesterday, is because the profile of the refugees we are prioritizing for entry into the United States tells the story as well. We largely bring women and children, the frail and the sick, those who have been beaten, raped or tortured by terrorists—the ones who simply cannot survive in the refugee camps. It means that of all the Syrians who are already here, only 2 percent of them are young, single males. We aren't bringing into the United States the type of people who fit the profile of those who could pose a danger to us.

The second reason I have concluded that ending the refugee program really will not make us safer is because of conversations I have had with experts about the nature of ISIS itself. I don't think you can argue that ISIS has been contained. Paris showed us ISIS can be lethal anywhere, anytime. Over the past year, ISIS has proffered two narratives to its recruits. The first is that this so-called caliphate is expanding. It is an unstoppable, inexorable force that challenges young Muslims to get on board now before it overtakes them by force. The second is this narrative that there is a war between the West that is left over from Iraq, left over from Afghanistan, left over from the aftermath of Sykes-Picot, left over from the Crusades. It is this idea that the Western World is out to destroy the East, they argue, and we have to fight for our survival.

The first narrative is still strong, but it is not strong as it used to be. ISIS isn't expanding its territory in the Middle East anymore. They have 25 percent less territory than they did last year at this time. The second initiative now actually becomes more important, and the Paris attacks are evidence of this. Indiscriminate attacks on civilians in a place like Paris are designed, in part, to provoke a response from the West to feed this argument over a clash of civilizations. That doesn't mean we shouldn't respond, it doesn't mean we shouldn't respond forcefully, but it should wake us up to the reality of the necessity of this us-versus-them narrative that is essential to the growth of ISIS. The story of the Christian world's marginalization of the Muslim world is the nourishment that feeds the growth of ISIS.

That is what makes our response to the Syrian humanitarian disaster interwoven into our strategy to defeat ISIS. Turning our back on those who have been tortured and raped and battered and beaten by Bashar al-Assad, after having welcomed massive refugee flows from Cuba and Vietnam and Bosnia, feeds straight into this radical Sunni argument that we are at war with Islam. Imagine the glee in Raqqa when they see postings of American politicians arguing we should take Syrian refugees but only the Christian ones and not the Muslim ones. That is a story line that is an ISIS recruiter's dream.

None of this is to suggest we shouldn't be taking the fight to ISIS in Syria and Iraq. I have been a vocal supporter of the thousands of bombing runs by American planes, of our efforts to support the Iraqi Army and the Peshmerga as they seek to kill as many ISIS fighters as possible. Fighting ISIS inside Syria and Iraq is absolutely necessary in order to defeat them. So we engage in that fight with the knowledge that our involvement may also help with recruitment. We weigh the benefit against the cost and we fight.

When it comes to turning away the victims of terror inside Syria, if we are able to build a system that screens out any Syrians who pose a threat to the United States, then the meager benefit can never outweigh the costs of feeding this anti-Muslim narrative. Now that narrative is more important than ever to sustain ISIS.

Here is the most important point to make. The people I represent don't believe we can just stand still in the wake of Paris, even if they believe the screening program is robust enough. They may be convinced of this, but they are certainly right that we can't accept the status quo. My worry over the past week is that this hyperfocus on the refugee program that has only brought in 2,000 immigrants last year—mostly women and children—misses the forest for the trees.

The Visa Waiver Program brings in 20 million people a year—not 2,000—20 million people. It has background checks, too, but nothing like what is applied to refugees. There is a good reason for this difference, because the countries that are part of the Visa Waiver Program are our allies—countries we can generally rely on—but with several of the Paris attackers bearing EU passports, making them eligible for the Visa Waiver Program, this sense of security we have had with these countries has been shattered. If we want to have a real conversation about changing our immigration laws to better protect this country, then focusing on 20 million lightly vetted visitors rather than 2,000 highly vetted visitors sounds like the better approach.

There is absolutely room to make the Visa Waiver Program stronger. There are a myriad of security information sharing agreements between the United States and Europe and among countries within Europe that have not been executed. Now is the time to demand that these agreements, like the umbrella law enforcement agreement between the EU and the United States, be executed, be signed. Now is the time for both the United States and Europe to require that every EU nation modernize their protocols for uploading law enforcement and anti-terrorism information onto the databases that we use to compile our no-fly list. If these agreements aren't signed or these protocols aren't updated, then we need to consider whether an unreformed Visa

Waiver Program is still in our national interests.

If our goal is really to keep America safe from infiltration of terrorist groups, this reform is the most important one we can make to our immigration system, and it should bring together Republicans and Democrats.

Every day that I go home to my 7-year-old and my 4-year-old, I am reminded that my most sacred duty here is to enact policy that keeps them safe and keeps my constituents safe. The hundreds of calls and emails that my office has received since Friday reinforces for me this commitment, but I live in a nation like no other. I live in the United States of America, a nation that in the late 1800s had emerged from Civil War to become a beacon for the oppressed and the repressed all over the world and millions showed up on our shores—people like my Irish and Polish ancestors—and a nation that was spreading its wings over the world, beginning to understand the impact for good that we could have. It was during that time that the poet Emma Lazarus called America ''The New Colossus.'' The feeling was that we were capable of a greatness, a bigness of both achievement and heart that the world had never witnessed and exceptionalism, one that still burns bright today.

The argument that America cannot both protect itself and protect those who are fleeing terrorism feels so small. It feels so contrary to this idea of exceptionalism that has been at the foundation, at the root of the American story. It feels very weak. In fact, the moments where we have made choices solely out of fear to marginalize others are moments we now regret. We interred Japanese Americans in camps because we were at war with Japan or hesitated to take Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis out of fear that some might be spies. In hindsight those measures did not reflect on who we really are as a nation.

The America I live in does not settle for false choices that make America look and feel small or powerless. We can save the terrorized and protect ourselves from being terrorized at the same time. In fact, we have to do the former to accomplish the latter. In doing so we can come together as a Congress and as a country to make good policy and to recall that sense of American exceptionalism that caused Emma Lazarus's poem to end up on a statue that was sent as a present to the United States from France as a reminder of our unbreakable bond with them.

I yield the floor.

Ms. COLLINS. 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. MCCONNELL. Madam 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. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 366 through 371; that the Senate vote on the nominations without intervening action or debate; 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. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, for the information of our colleagues, we are making good progress in clearing a number of amendments that have support on both sides of the aisle. I expect we will be able to proceed with an amendment offered by Senator CORNYN and Senator REID shortly, and in the meantime 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. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment in order to call up my amendment No. 2844.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, reserving the right to object, over 1,000 Americans have called my office in the last couple of days, and they are very concerned about admitting people from the Middle East when we are not sure what their intentions are. The Boston bombers were here under the refugee program, and two Iraqi refugees came to my State with the intent to buy Stinger missiles.

I have asked for a very simple amendment. I ask unanimous consent to have an amendment placed in the queue for a vote that lets the American people vote on whether we want to bring more people here from the Middle East and whether we are doing an adequate job of screening these people. I think having a vote on that is a reasonable request, and therefore, until I am allowed to have a vote for which I think the American people are clamoring, I will continue to object.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, I also ask unanimous consent to bring forward my amendment to limit and end the subsidized housing for new people who come here from the Middle East. My amendment is No. 2843, and I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to set aside the current business and bring my amendment forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, on behalf of myself and the ranking member of the subcommittee, Senator REED, I object. We are in a process where we are trying to clear amendments, and we are making good progress on this bill. I understand Senator PAUL has raised an issue that is issue, but it does not belong on this bill and indeed would result in this bill not progressing.

We are trying to get back to regular order on the appropriations process. With cooperation, I am confident we could finish this important appropriations bill today. We could show the American people that we can govern and fund essential transportation and housing programs that are included in this bill. By and large, we have had excellent bipartisan cooperation. I was hoping we could move to the amendment offered by the Senator from Texas—a member of the Republican leadership—and cosponsored by the Senate Democratic leader. It is an amendment that I believe we could dispense with quickly, and we would then be able to continue to work through the amendments on this bill.

Since the amendment from the Senator from Kentucky would grind this bill to a halt and does not belong on this bill—and there will be other opportunities to deal with this issue because the House is going to be passing legislation this week dealing with the issues raised by the Senator from Kentucky—I will object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I agree with the senior Senator from Maine and the bill manager that the concerns Senator PAUL has raised, which are shared by many of us as far as the adequacy of the screening process for the refugees coming to our country, is a serious matter. It is a matter, as the Senator from Maine has said, that will be voted on today, and my prediction is that there will be broad bipartisan support for the additional security measures contained in that bill.

This is a transportation bill, and it is very important for us to get our work done, and unfortunately that is appearing more and more difficult.

If I could say a word about my amendment because this is an important matter to me and to my State, as well as to other States. My amendment would direct the Secretary of Transportation to conduct cost-benefit determinations for new airports which are seeking entry into the federal

tower program but have been unnecessarily prohibited by the Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA's current moratorium on accepting new airports negatively impacts airport sponsors that have already submitted their applications to the FAA, including the North Texas Regional Airport in Grayson County, TX. I know there are airports like that around the country, which is why this amendment has such broad bipartisan support.

This amendment would simply require the Secretary of Transportation to process applications that have already been submitted—in some cases years ago—but have been punished by this arbitrary administrative delay. It would not have any negative impact on any current contract tower airports and would only allow new airports to be admitted to the program if funds are available.

I am grateful to Senator COLLINS and Senator REED for their favorable consideration of this amendment, and I hope we can work through the objection raised by the Senator from Kentucky so we can process this legislation and pass it in the near future.

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

Madam President, on another note, I wanted to say a few words about National Adoption Month.

Yesterday, Senator GRASSLEY, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, convened a very important hearing on the subject of international adoptions; specifically, ensuring that the process—which at times can be bogged down in bureaucratic redtape and take an excruciatingly long time to complete—remains a priority for this administration.

Last year, if my recollection serves me correctly, there were about 22,000 intercountry adoptions. In other words, there were families here in the United States who wanted to adopt these children who, in many circumstances, have very poor prospects in the countries where they were born.

As I said, this is National Adoption Month. I am glad Senator GRASSLEY enabled us to highlight the challenges of people who are trying to adopt children from, for example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are about 400 adopted children the government of the Congo will not release. Yesterday, many of us, on a bipartisan basis, met with the ambassador and asked: What is the way forward for these families and these children, many of whom are in pretty poor circumstances back in their home country.

Americans, of course, adopt not only children from their local communities or their State, but from literally around the world. It is something we ought to encourage. Devoted parents who make the decision to adopt ought to be commended for providing an opportunity for a better life for a child in need and for providing support and the love that all children need and deserve.

One of the things that struck me yesterday during the hearing, as we heard from the State Department, are the numerous protections that are embedded within the adoption process to ensure that these internationally adopted children are placed in safe homes and how important they are for protection of these children. These measures include commonsense safeguards such as thorough background checks, intensive interviews with potential parents, multiple visits to the child's future home, and, of course, proper vetting of other people who will be living under the same roof. This is important for the protection of this adopted child.

This is a process that puts safety and the interests of the child first, and I think we would all agree that is exactly where that priority should stand: the best interests of the child first.

So while it was reassuring to me to hear about these rigorous requirements that our government has put in place to protect these adopted children, I was reminded that protecting children during the placement process should not be just limited to when we are talking about adoptions. Over the last two fiscal years, more than 95,000 unaccompanied children have crossed our southern border without legal permit, the large majority of them making a perilous and deadly journey across thousands of miles from Central America. We can only imagine the horrible circumstances that parents must see and the poor prospects for their own children's future for them to turn them over to essentially criminal organizations that will then ferry them, if they are lucky, from their country of origin through Mexico and into the United States. But the surge of which we are all familiar—again, 95,000 unaccompanied children in just the last 2 years—has exposed the vulnerability of our southern border to human smugglers and transnational criminal networks. As a matter of fact, I asked one of the witnesses at the hearing yesterday: Are the same criminal organizations that engage in human trafficking and illegal immigration and illegal importation of drugs—are they all the same people?

He said: Absolutely.

I don't know how we can turn a blind eye to some of the illegal immigration issues and to say we are completely outraged at the drug trafficking going on between our countries or the human trafficking going on between our countries when, in fact, that activity is being conducted by exactly the same criminal organizations that have one interest in mind, and it is not the best interest of the child. It is money. They view children as a commodity just as they view drugs as a commodity.

Yesterday's hearing showed us that the lack of border security can cause a humanitarian crisis that endangers the lives of children who were turned over by their parents and then smuggled into the United States. We know from numerous reports and testimony that children on this journey are preyed upon in the form of human trafficking, rape, and even murder. Many of them don't even make it here because they are killed along the way, held hostage, perhaps for ransom, or otherwise assaulted. To this day, we still have no idea how many children and parents have perished during this unprecedented surge across our border. Once these children arrive here in the United States, I think—I would hope—we would all agree that it is our joint and collective responsibility to do what we can to protect them and ensure that they are no longer preyed upon by criminals and human traffickers.

Current law requires that within 72 hours of being located by law enforcement officials, a child be placed in the protective custody of the Department of Health and Human Services so they can be protected from the danger of abuse and exposure to forms of violence. Unfortunately, current law also requires that these children be released, sometimes even to nonfamily members, sometimes even to noncitizens, without any assurance or systematic protections that they are being sent into a safe environment—certainly nothing even remotely approaching the sort of care and precautions that we use when it comes to international adoptions.

As I heard yesterday, the administration is capable of making these assurances in the context of international adoptions, so why would we not take steps to ensure that the same level of protection is there for these unaccompanied children?

During the surge of these children across our border in 2014, I stood right here and I posed two very important questions: Could anyone in the administration say with certainty that the children being released from U.S. custody were leaving with an actual family member? Believe it or not, there is no legal requirement that these children be turned over to an actual family member. Also, could the administration say with certainty that none of these children have been handed over to an adult with a criminal record?

The answer to both of these questions was and continues to be no, and that ought to shock our collective conscience. Sadly, we don't know how many of these children have fallen into the wrong hands.

Earlier this year, four individuals were indicted for their involvement in a trafficking ring that smuggled unaccompanied Guatemalan children into the United States and forced them into slave labor at egg farms in Ohio. These children faced horrific conditions, including long work hours, abuse, threats, and exploitation. But even more shockingly, many of these children could have been spared if the Federal Government and the Department of Health and Human Services had an adequate system for screening and vetting the nongovernmental sponsors for these unaccompanied children. None of

the protections—none of the protections—that are available for international adoptions have been applied here to protect these children.

The human traffickers in this case that I mentioned were able to gain custody of these children by simply showing up at an HHS shelter, telling the U.S. Government that they were family friends, and submitting a fake family reunification application. This is unacceptable, and it is our duty to these children to make sure that we do a better job of protecting them, just as we do in cases of international adoption.

I know that our colleague from Ohio, Senator PORTMAN, in his oversight role in the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is taking a hard look at this process through which we move unaccompanied children out of protective custody and into the hands of potential danger—not even family members, not even citizens, no criminal background check, and absolutely no way to know what the government is turning these children over to. I look forward to reviewing the findings of his forthcoming report, and I hope we can make efforts to implement his recommendations.

Last Congress, I was proud to be the author and sponsor of a piece of legislation that we called Helping Unaccompanied Alien Minors and Alleviating National Emergency Act—or the HUMANE Act—which would require all potential sponsors of unaccompanied children to undergo a rigorous biometric background and criminal history check. This is bipartisan legislation. Though there is certainly more we can do to ensure an acceptable screening process, I believe that the protections in my legislation are a good start and would make a difference.

So I urge my colleagues, or anybody else who may be listening, as we reflect on National Adoption Month and the appropriate protections we put in place for international adoptions, to think about these almost 100,000 other children who have crossed our borders over the last few years and who were afforded none of the protections that we afford adopted children.

I truly hope we will take a comprehensive look at the concerns I have raised here today.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam 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.

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

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

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, last November, faced with Congress's failure to act, President Obama, through Executive action, took a courageous and practical step on immigration. Like every President since President Eisenhower, President Obama exercised his legal authority to prioritize U.S. immigration enforcement and make our system more fair and just. The most significant parts of the President's Executive actions were those intended to keep families together and give more people the opportunity to come out of the shadows.

The President announced an expansion of the successful Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, program. He also created a new Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents called DAPA. DAPA allows the undocumented parents of U.S.-born children to stay in this country with their families.

Since its creation in 2012, DACA has given nearly 700,000 undocumented young people the opportunity to pursue their dreams through education and jobs. Sixty percent of DACA recipients have been able to find new jobs, contributing to our tax base and our economy. Experts estimate that DACA recipients will contribute $230 billion to our GDP over the next decade.

Together, the expanded DACA and DAPA programs will mean that around 5 million more individuals will be able to work legally, pay their taxes, and care for their families.

While the President's actions generated a great deal of support and excitement, they also generated opponents who challenged these actions in court. These court challenges resulted last week in a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that further delays help for these 5 million people in our country. As Judge Carolyn King stated in her very strong dissent in the Fifth Circuit case, ''a mistake has been made.''

The administration is acting to swiftly appeal this decision to the United States Supreme Court. I am hopeful that the Supreme Court will find that the President's actions are lawful and that justice for millions of workers and families will eventually be served. We cannot continue to be inactive in Congress while millions of people remain in the shadows. Yet, here we are.

Today, politicians—from Presidential candidates to sitting Governors—appeal to our Nation's fears in arguing against any meaningful reform of our broken immigration system. Conjuring up shadowy images fuels these fears—violent gang members from South America, terrorists from the Middle East. In their divisive rhetoric and in their rush to build walls and close our borders, they neglect the faces of those they demonize, and they forget the facts.

The National Academies of Sciences recently released an authoritative look on how immigrants assimilate into the United States. That report paints a very different picture from what you will hear from Republicans on the campaign trail. For example, the Academies found that neighborhoods with more immigrants have lower rates of crime and violence than comparable nonimmigrant neighborhoods, and foreign-born men are incarcerated at ¼ the rate of native-born Americans.

Today's immigrants are learning English just as fast as prior waves of immigrants; only our schools aren't equipped to help them as well as they should be. Eighty-six percent of first-generation male immigrants have jobs, as do 61 percent of women. In fact, immigrant men with the lowest education levels are more likely to have jobs than comparable groups of nonimmigrant men.

These paint a very different picture than gang members and terrorists. In fact, it is clear that immigrants are an asset to our communities and our Nation. The vast majority of people come to America seeking a better life for themselves and their families. They work extremely hard and in many cases under very difficult circumstances.

Despite our country's being a nation of immigrants and the great benefit immigration has meant to our culture and economy, immigration remains a difficult issue in America.

Just last month we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. Prior to President Johnson's signing that law, the United States had a racially discriminatory quota system. In fact, prior to 1965, Asians were essentially excluded from immigrating to the United States. The 1965 law wasn't perfect, but it moved our system forward by focusing on family reunification—not racial quotas amounting to racial discrimination—as a guiding principle.

Since the 1965 law, our Nation has benefitted greatly from the millions of immigrants from all over the world who have come here. Immigrants have built vibrant communities, become titans of industry, expanded American arts and music, and strengthened our public institutions. Their positive contributions have changed America and what it means to be an American.

No matter how toxic the immigration rhetoric may be right now, we can't stop pushing to improve our broken system. President Obama's Executive actions were neither a complete nor a permanent solution for immigration reform, but they were positive steps forward. It has been more than 2 years since the Senate passed its comprehensive immigration reform bill with 68 bipartisan votes. I was proud to have worked on this bill as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Sadly, the House refused even to consider the bill—even after Republicans released their immigration principles, acknowledging the brokenness of our immigration system. Congress remains deeply divided, and there is still no indication that we will be able to pass comprehensive immigration reform any time soon, leaving 11 million people in our country in the shadows.

As the only immigrant serving in the Senate today, I remember very well my mother's courage in bringing her three children to this country so that we could have a chance at a better life. That is what comprehensive immigration reform will mean to the 11 million people living in the shadows in our country—a chance for a better life for themselves and their families. These are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers; and they are neighbors and friends. They are not looking for handouts. They are looking for the chance for a better life, and that is the universal appeal of our great country.

As leaders, we need to act to make real for these millions of people the promise of America. We need to pass comprehensive immigration reform soon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to leave the bill for a couple of minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I would yield to the Senator from Oklahoma for the purpose of explaining an amendment that he has at the desk, and a modification—a very good amendment, I might add.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Thank you, Madam President.

It is my intention to ask to set aside the pending amendment for the purpose of considering the Inhofe amendment No. 2820, and I want to explain what this is.

Today the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the FAA are working on the next generation radar system. We have talked about this for a long period of time. I think the Senate knows that this Senator has been active in aviation for a long time, and this is something we have been working on together. The next generation radar system, called Multi-function Phased Array Radar, or MPAR, is comprised of individual radar stations capable of both air traffic tracking and weather surveillance.

The new system will replace the multiple systems separately maintained by the FAA and NOAA and allow the consolidation of the number of discrete radar sites in the United States by about a third and yet do a more thorough job.

To support the development of the next generation radar, it is important for the FAA and NOAA to be working together and one not getting out in front of the other one. For that reason—and I think my junior Senator, who is going to be working on this, agrees—there is some concern that the FAA is getting out in front of NOAA on the selection of technology to meet both goals. We would clarify that in the amendment.

What I will be asking for is the consideration of amendment No. 2820, as modified. The modification is at the desk now, expressing the sense of the Senate that the FAA and NOAA continue to work together so that one agency doesn't get out ahead of the other and ensuring that the priorities of both agencies are met. Sometimes you have to get involved with the bureaucracies when there is more than one working on it.

At the proper time, I will be wanting to do that. There is a courtesy being extended to another Member to be involved perhaps in this.

So with that, I will yield the floor and be prepared to offer my amendment.

Ms. COLLINS. I want to thank the Senator from Oklahoma for his courtesy to one of our colleagues who is on his way to the floor to repeat an earlier ritual that we went through when one of our colleagues attempted to make an amendment pending.

So in deference to that colleague, 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. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I spent some time on the floor a few minutes ago explaining an amendment that I have. It is amendment No. 2820, as modified. The modification is at the desk. It is one of those things where there is no opposition at all.

We are trying to get to a new radar system that is—it is rather complicated. It will end up saving a lot of money and letting other people in other parts of the country—all over the country—have the radar capability they don't have today. So it is something I know that no reasonable person would object to.

Madam President, for that reason, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment to call up my amendment No. 2820, as modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, the biggest issue of the day is how we protect ourselves from terrorism. My amendment goes to the heart of the matter.

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. PAUL. Are we sufficiently vetting those who might come here and attack us from the Middle East?

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. PAUL. I don't think we are. The two Boston bombers were here during the refugee program. Two Iraqi refugees came to my hometown——

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, Parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. PAUL. Of Bowling Green, KY.

Mr. INHOFE. Parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. PAUL. I have an amendment that is not only pertinent——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PAUL. To the biggest issue of the day. I have an amendment that is germane.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PAUL. For those who make a mockery of this process by saying we are going to have regular order, we are not going to have regular order——

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. PAUL. Until we address the issues of the day on a germane amendment.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam 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.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. COLLINS. Madam 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, until 2 p.m. today.

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

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRANSPORTATION-HUD APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, for the information of our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I would like to explain the situation we face. First, let me say that working very closely with the ranking member of the subcommittee, my friend and colleague Senator JACK REED, we have been making very good progress on this bill.

We have a number of amendments offered by Senators from both sides of the aisle that we have agreed to work out, to clear on both sides, with both managers of the bill. In some cases we have also gotten to the authorizing committees, the Budget Committee. In other words, a great deal of hard work has gone into clearing amendments that are ready to be considered, that could be accepted by voice vote or

unanimous consent or in a managers' package. I am confident because of this bipartisan cooperation, because of the extraordinarily hard work of our staffs, that we could finish this appropriations bill today.

Would that not be progress for the Senate, to be able to complete action on a bill that has vital funding for homeless veterans, for homeless youth, for disabled and low-income elderly who depend on the subsidized housing programs that are funded in this bill? This bill has important infrastructure spending. All of us are aware of the deteriorating infrastructure, the crumbling roads and structurally deficient bridges that we have in this country, the need for improvements in rail safety, in our transit system.

There are so many issues that are important to the American people. This bill funds the Community Development Block Grant Program, possibly one of the most popular programs with State and local officials for spurring economic development and job creation in their communities, but, alas, we have encountered a roadblock. As we have seen this morning, even amendments that have been cleared on both sides of the aisle are not being allowed to proceed. I think that is so unfortunate because with cooperation I am confident we could have finished work on this bill and moved to final passage today. Regrettably, that is not going to occur unless there is a change of heart.

I do want to say I recognize there are other very important issues for us to deal with. The House today is taking up a bill that would deal with the screening process for refugees who come into this country. All of us recognize that our first obligation is the security of the American people. That is not what the bill before us is dealing with, but there is action on the House side. A bill is expected to pass today with widespread bipartisan support and will be sent over for our consideration. So I think it is unfortunate that we apparently cannot complete action on the appropriations bill that is before us.

However, I do want to assure my colleagues that we are going to continue to work on this bill. We are going to continue to review the amendments that have been filed. We are going to work with the sponsors. We are going to work with the floor managers. We are going to continue to make progress behind the scenes in the event that we find a way around this roadblock.

In the meantime, I do want to express my appreciation to my ranking member, Senator REED, for his close cooperation on this bill. He and I introduced the substitute amendment jointly when we began work on this bill. A special thanks to our staffs who have been working night and day to clear amendments that are ready go but unfortunately cannot be considered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, this whole process has been moved forward by the leadership of Chairman COLLINS. She and her staff have done an extraordinary job of taking the additional resources made available by the budget agreement and constructively focusing them towards addressing important policies in transportation and housing in the United States.

As Chairman COLLINS discussed, we have about nine amendments—bipartisan amendments—that have been agreed to that focus on housing and transportation issues exclusively. These amendments also display the give-and-take and back-and-forth that is necessary, the compromise that is necessary. One example is the amendment that Senator CORNYN, along with Senator HARRY REID, proposed that dealt with small airports throughout the United States.

Those are the types of issues that should be the focal point of our deliberations on the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill, and that is what we have tried to do. Frankly, under Senator COLLINS' leadership, we were moving forward, but we have run into a bit of an impasse. We are going to continue to work because it is critical to the country that we rebuild our infrastructure and make sure that we have adequate, affordable housing, which is key to so many things—to having a job, to holding a job, to children being in a school for the whole year and not moving from school to school. All of these are tied directly to our efforts here today.

I again compliment the chairman for her extraordinary efforts. The staffs have done a superb job. We will continue to work. Our objective is to get a bill done and move forward in the process. Unfortunately, we have hit this bump, but we are still going down the road.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Madam President, the Presiding Officer has been in the chair before when I have done my waste of the week. This is my 27th ''Waste of the Week'' this year, where I come to the floor of the Senate and take a documented waste, fraud, or abuse within the Federal Government, expose that abuse, and inform taxpayers that their hard-earned money is being wasted by this Federal Government. We are taking those items that have been documented by government accounting agencies, by agencies that have been charged with the responsibility of looking into how we spend the taxpayers' money and alerting us to problems of fraud, waste, and abuse.

So No. 27 waste of the week is up this week, and this week it involves the issue of paid leave. This is an executive policy which applies to departments and agencies across the Federal Government.

Specifically, what I wish to do today is highlight the $31 million in payments to Federal employees who have received paid leave for over a 1-year period of time. For Federal employees, paid administrative leave is typically a paid, excused absence that is separate from vacation time. It includes things such as jury duty or time to allow a person to transition home after an overseas deployment or post. Some agencies also use paid leave when making personnel evaluations. This could include things such as investigations into alleged misconduct, security threats, and similar situations where the employee should be restricted from the worksite while the investigation occurs. Many of these are legitimate. Many of these fall into this category. But being given paid leave for over a year?

First, it raises the question, What is going on here? This is way beyond the norm.

Secondly, shouldn't we have some documentation as to why this takes place? Currently, Federal agencies across the Federal Government have the authority to set their own policies regarding administrative leave, and this leads to a variety of different policies from agency to agency. Why are there discrepancies among agencies in both length of time and the frequency of the granted paid leave?

What is particularly troubling to me is that an audit by the Government Accountability Office, the GAO, found that 263 employees have received paid administrative leave for over a 1-year period of time—more than 1 year. Most of us expect, yes, OK, 2 days off or a week off because I have been selected for jury duty. I have a citizen's and a resident's obligation to do that. Paid leave is justified on that basis. For someone returning from a post overseas, to get resettled, paid leave is justified. There are some other justifications. But over a year? Paid leave for over a year and $31 million paid out to people who haven't worked for over a year? Something needs to be looked into regarding how and why that takes place.

Last month, the Washington Post told a story about how this issue has persisted within the Department of Homeland Security even after the report was issued. The Post article states that ''close to 100 DHS [Department of Homeland Security] employees still are being paid not to work for more than a year.''

So I think the question we need to ask ourselves in response to this report is why? Why did the Federal Government spend $31 million to pay 263 employees not to work for more than a year? And what is the justification for the 1-year paid leaves? Unfortunately, the Government Accountability Office was unable to disclose the specific details as to why these 263 individuals were on paid leave for over a year. However, there are public reports that give examples of employees who have

continued to receive paychecks for over a year.

The Washington Post again reported the case of a former high-level Environmental Protection Agency employee who pretended he was a member of the Central Intelligence Agency for years. This employee collected paid leave under the pretense he was conducting top-secret work for the CIA when, in fact, he was home exercising and pursuing a personal research project. He effectively, according to the Post, stole $900,000 from taxpayers for work he never did. That included his salary and bonus. He was actually paid bonuses. The man was paid a bonus payment for not working—defrauding the Agency he worked for. The good news is that they caught him. The bad news is that it took 2½ years to figure out something was going on.

An article in the Washington Times details a 4-year case where an employee at EPA was fired for ''sending a 'hostile email' and making inappropriate statements that 'caused anxiety and disruption in the workplace.' '' That employee was ultimately removed from the EPA a second time but only after he received 1,496 hours of backpay.

And on and on it goes. I could stand here for a long time talking about examples of paid leave to personnel totaling $31 million for payments of paid leave for over a 1-year period of time. It is not just the EPA. I am not picking on one agency. Every agency in government has these policies. GAO estimates that there are some bad track records for these agencies. For instance, the Department of the Treasury has 25 employees on paid leave for over a year and the Department of Veterans Affairs has over 46. And even more disturbing is the fact that the GAO investigation found that Federal agencies don't have sufficient documentation for the paid leave, if they had any documentation at all. How can you put someone on paid leave, how can you make payments for over a year and have no documentation as to why you are making the payments?

Coming to the floor with these waste of the week, fraud-and-abuse situations, it is hard to comprehend how these things go on. The ingenuity of those who are committing fraud and those who oversee agencies that are paying this out is stunning.

I want to make it clear that I am not against paid leave. There are many valid cases. But taxpayers deserve to know why Federal agencies are paying their employees not to work for over a year without sufficient documentation for taking such action. In fact, this ought to go for all paid leave, whether it is for 1 day, 1 month, or 1 year.

Particularly, though, what ought to be ringing an alarm bell is someone who is on the record as receiving paid leave for several months or over a year—and I am only documenting that which was documented for over 1 year. Who knows how much this would total if we looked into every agency's policies and found out that they weren't documented and that they couldn't prove that the paid leave was legitimized.

I need to give credit where credit is due. The Office of Personnel Management has finally recognized that this is a costly issue and has moved to take steps to address this misuse of taxpayer dollars. This summer, the agency announced guidance on what does and doesn't constitute paid administrative leave. I urge OPM to follow up now and ensure that all Federal agencies are implementing these recommendations. But why did it take us so long? Why do we have to have an investigative report? Where is the management? Where is the management in these agencies that oversees this and does not allow this to happen? Why do we have to wait for the Government Accountability Office to come in and audit these agencies and find this unbelievable amount of waste, fraud, and abuse that takes place?

So taxpayers are on the hook for another $31 million of waste. We add that to our ever-growing total of waste, fraud, and abuse, now reaching well over—almost $119 billion. And we have Members down here talking about a program that needs funding because it is an essential program, but we don't have the money to do it. Others come down and say we can't cut a penny more from any of the programs we have—and that is another issue—and yet we continue to waste this kind of money.

Next week it will be item No. 28 as we go forward exposing waste, fraud, and abuse in the Federal Government, taking hard-working taxpayers' dollars at a time when the economy is not doing all that well. This is something which continues to be a noose around the Federal Government's neck and which needs to be addressed.

Madam President, with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I was seeking the floor, but it is my understanding that Senator MCCONNELL, our leader, is on his way to the floor. I will wait until he speaks. I don't think we have to ask for a quorum call because I think he will be here in just a minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

CLOTURE MOTIONS WITHDRAWN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the two pending cloture motions with respect to H.R. 2577 be withdrawn.

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

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2015, PART II

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam Pesident, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3996, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3996) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

The bill (H.R. 3996) was passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

TERRORIST ATTACKS IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, because of what happened in Paris last week, a lot of speeches are going to be given on the floor of the Senate about terrorism. But it is too bad that we only seem to talk about the dangers of terrorism when bad things happen in the United States or happen in Paris or someplace else that brings the issue to our attention. I think what we all need to remember is that it is a constant danger that may not appear to us daily, but somewhere out there are people thinking about killing us for what we believe.

So I rise today, again, expressing my sympathies to the people of Paris and those affected by Friday's terrible attacks by radical Islamic terrorists there. On behalf of the people of Iowa, I continue to stand with the people of France.

Unfortunately, the attacks last Friday should not have been a surprise. Radical Islamic terrorists have been waging war against the United States and our allies for years. When thinking about the last three decades of the last century, you think about the terrorism at the Munich Olympics or an American being murdered on a TWA plane. Then we had a Jewish person in a wheelchair thrown overboard in the Mediterranean. There was the attempt to bring down the Twin Towers in 1993

by car bombs. Marines were murdered in Lebanon—over 200, I think it was. We had the attack on the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, where our military people were living. We had the East African Embassy attacked, and we had the USS *Cole* attack.

Now, all of those happened before 9/11. Since 9/11, attacks have occurred around the world—from the train bombings in Madrid in 2004 to the suicide bombings in London in 2005 to the senseless slaughter in the streets of Mumbai in 2008. My focus today, however, will be on the United States homeland.

Terrorists have continued to try to attack us here on many occasions since 9/11. Some of these attacks have succeeded. Most of them have failed. Some of them have involved direct coordination with terrorist leaders abroad, and some have been committed by lone wolves inspired by terrorists overseas or the views of those terrorists. But these threats are ongoing, and that is what we should not fail to understand. Consequently, we must be vigilant to guard against those threats. We know that we will face them again.

Several prominent terrorist attacks in the United States come to mind. We all remember the carnage at the Boston Marathon in April 2013, where two brothers detonated bombs at the finish line that killed an 8-year-old boy and two others and injured hundreds more. Although the brothers did not appear to have direct ties with terrorist organizations, they were motivated by radical Islamic beliefs.

We also remember the November 2009 shooting at Fort Hood, TX, where 13 people were killed and several dozen others were wounded. Incredibly, the Obama administration refused to categorize this as a terrorist attack, in spite of the fact that the shooter had traded emails with then senior Al Qaeda leader Anwar al-Awlaki. The shooter also later identified his extremist beliefs as a basis of his attack.

But those tragedies only continued the pattern followed by radical Islamic terrorists since Al Qaeda hijacked and crashed airplanes into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon that fateful day in 2001. Soon after 9/11, for example, British citizen Richard Reid attempted to detonate explosives packed in his shoe while on a flight to Miami in December 2001. He had previously trained at Al Qaeda terrorist camps in Afghanistan. Thankfully, he failed, but this attempted attack put us on notice that these terrorists were not finished with what happened on 9/11.

More attacks and plots followed, perhaps less well remembered after the passage of time. And the passage of time is our biggest enemy here, as we don't think about this often enough. But they still demonstrate the ongoing threat we face.

In July 2002, an Egyptian shot and killed two Israelis and wounded four others at the Los Angeles International Airport. Although the FBI did not find evidence linking the shooter to a terrorist group, the agency concluded the shooting was an act of terror.

In March 2006, another radical Islamic terrorist injured six people when he drove his vehicle into a group of pedestrians at the University of North Carolina. The attacker claimed to have conducted the attack in order to avenge the killing of Muslims around the world by our American Government.

Another example is the ''Fort Dix Six'' plot in May of 2007. In that case, six men planned to kill American soldiers at the military base in New Jersey but were arrested before they could do so. The men were inspired by jihadi videos.

In June 2009, a terrorist shot two recruiters at a military center in Little Rock, AR. One of the recruiters was killed, and the other was seriously wounded. The shooter told the judge in his case that he was a soldier of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

Later in 2009, three radical Islamic terrorists were arrested just before they were able to conduct suicide attacks in New York City. One of these terrorists drove all the way from his home in Colorado to strike the New York City subway system with homemade explosives hidden inside a backpack. He later admitted in court that he was trained by Al Qaeda to be a part of what they call a ''martyrdom operation.'' He further confessed that Al Qaeda officials ordered these suicide attacks from Pakistan.

Also in 2009, on Christmas Day, a terrorist often referred to as the Underwear Bomber attempted to blow up a bomb concealed in his underwear while on a flight over Detroit. Several days later, Al Qaeda affiliates in Yemen and Saudi Arabia claimed responsibility for that effort.

In May 2010, a terrorist tried to set off a car bomb in the middle of Times Square in New York City. He was arrested while attempting to flee the country on a flight to the Middle East. The bomber was trained and financed by the Pakistani Taliban.

More recently, the threat from radical Islamic extremism has sprung from the chaos in Syria. By now we are all familiar with ISIS, or the Islamic State. Last year, we witnessed the horrors of ISIS's brutal and barbaric beheading of American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, and aid worker Peter Kassig in Syria.

As FBI Director Comey explained to the Senate Judiciary Committee earlier this year, ISIS presents a new type of Islamic extremist organization. For one thing, ISIS exploits social media to promote its terrorist agenda and encourage people within the United States to commit terrorist attacks. As Director Comey explained, ISIS's propaganda machine is like a devil on somebody's shoulder saying: ''Kill, kill, kill;'' and ''if you can't come to Syria, kill somebody where you are. Kill somebody in uniform. Kill anybody.'' Those are the words Comey used in paraphrasing the message that comes from ISIS on social media.

ISIS's deadly message of terror is having a profound effect here in our country. Over the last year, the government has stopped numerous individuals in the United States who tried to travel to Syria to fight for ISIS. According to Director Comey, over 200 Americans have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria for this purpose. I fear that such individuals who successfully return home could recreate the Paris attack here in our country, given the training, the indoctrination, and the battlefield experience they received abroad. The Washington Post reported on November 16 that 66 men and women in the United States have been charged with crimes associated with ISIS, including both attempting to travel to Syria to join ISIS or planning attacks here.

Beyond ISIS's recruitment of Americans to fight in Syria, the Paris attack demonstrates the extreme dangers the group now poses here in North America. Look at what occurred just over the past year or so. In October 2014, a radical Islamic terrorist who could not obtain a passport to travel to Syria shot up the Parliament in Canada, killing a Canadian soldier on duty at the Canadian National War Memorial. The next day, a self-radicalized Muslim convert attacked four police officers on the streets of New York City with a hatchet after watching ISIS Internet propaganda.

In January of this year, the FBI arrested a person in Ohio for plotting to attack the U.S. Capitol with pipe bombs and guns. The terrorist also allegedly expressed a desire to support ISIS, and he had posted videos and messages on social media, supporting violent attacks by radical Islamic terrorists.

Later, in May of this year, two Islamic terrorists drove from Arizona to Garland, TX, to attack a conference center during an art exhibit. The center was hosting an exhibition of cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet Mohammed. The pair shot and injured a security guard before being killed by a police officer. ISIS subsequently claimed responsibility for that attack.

In June 2015, law enforcement officers in Massachusetts shot and luckily killed a knife-wielding member of a group of ISIS supporters who were plotting attacks here in the United States, along the lines of what Director Comey has said: Just go out and ''kill, kill, kill.'' Two other alleged terrorists were arrested and are being prosecuted.

Just this month, an American was arrested in Ohio for supporting ISIS. He allegedly posted online detailed personal information, including their addresses, of 100 U.S. military members. He had then allegedly called on fellow

terrorists to kill these military personnel in their homes and communities, along the lines of what the social networking message is from overseas to people in the United States, as Director Comey has reported to us: ''Kill, kill, kill.'' Just kill anyone.

More chilling than a lot of this is the video released earlier this week. On Monday, ISIS released a video warning countries against participating in air strikes in Syria. The video claimed that ISIS would attack these countries just as it attacked France last Friday. The video specifically threatened to attack this city, right here, Washington, DC.

According to the New York Times just this morning, ''at least three dozen people in the United States suspected of ties to the Islamic State were under heavy electronic or physical surveillance even before the Paris attacks.'' That ought to wake us all up to the dangerous environment that exists.

It is all too obvious that we will continue to face attacks from radical Islamic terrorists in the future. We ought to remind ourselves every day about this potential threat. So to help remind us both of that certainty and that we must be prepared for it, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the RECORD a long list of terrorist attacks in the United States that I prepared from public sources. The list may not include each and every attack by terrorists, but it does include a wide variety of attempted and planned attacks against our citizens. Because of space limitations on material submitted for the RECORD, a more complete and annotated list can be found on my website. That list also includes a separate list of individuals prosecuted in the United States for attempting to leave the country to fight for ISIS.

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

RADICAL ISLAMIC TERRORIST ATTACKS AND PLOTS IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE 9/11

I. SUCCESSFUL ATTACKS

July 4, 2002: Hesham Mohamed Hadayet, a 41–year-old Egyptian national, shot and killed two Israelis and wounded four others at the El Al ticket counter at Los Angeles International Airport. Although the FBI did not find evidence linking Hadayet to a terrorist group, the agency concluded the shooting was an act of terrorism because of Hadayet's stated anti-Israel views and opposition to U.S. Middle East policy.

March 5, 2006: Mohammed Reza Taheri-Azar injured six people when he drove a Sport Utility Vehicle into a group of pedestrians at the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. Taheri-Azar claimed to have conducted the attack in order to avenge the killing of Muslims around the world by the U.S. government.

July 28, 2006: Naveed Afzal Haq shot and killed one woman, and wounded five others, at the Jewish Federation building in Seattle, Washington. During the shooting, Haq spoke with a 911 dispatcher and said ''these are Jews and I'm tired of getting pushed around and our people getting pushed around by the situation in the Middle East.''

June 1, 2009: Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad shot two military recruiters at a Little Rock, Arkansas Army/Navy Career Center, killing one and seriously wounding the other. Muhammad had previously converted to Islam and spent approximately 16 months, beginning in 2007, in Yemen. Although no independent, public confirmation of Muhammad's ties to Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula exists, Muhammad wrote to the judge in his case stating that he was ''a soldier'' of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and undertook his attack as revenge for U.S. killing of Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan.

November 5, 2009: Nidal Malik Hasan, a U.S. Army Major serving as a psychiatrist, shot and killed 13 people and wounded several dozen others at Fort Hood, Texas. Hasan stated that his motive was jihad to fight ''illegal and immoral aggression against Muslims'' in Iraq and Afghanistan. Hasan had earlier exchanged 18 e-mails with Anwar al-Awlaki, an important, U.S.-born leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

April 15, 2013: Tamerlan Tsarnaey and his younger brother, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, detonated two bombs within moments of each other near the finish line of the Boston Marathon, killing three people and injuring hundreds more. Although the brothers were motivated by radical Islam to carry out the attacks, they did not appear to have had any direct ties to Islamic terrorist organizations.

October 23, 2014: Zale Thompson attacked four New York City police officers with a hatchet, injuring two of them (one critically) at a Queens, New York shopping district. The police shot and killed Thompson, and a bystander was injured in the process. Thompson appears to have been a self-radicalized Muslim convert who had posted ''antigovernment, anti-Western, anti-white'' messages online.

May 3, 2015: Elton Simpson and Nadir Soofi began shooting outside the Curtis Culwell Center in Garland, Texas during an art exhibit hosted by an anti-Muslim group called the American Freedom Defense Initiative. The center was hosting an exhibition of cartoon adaptations depicting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad. The pair shot and injured a security guard before being killed by a police officer. The Islamic Sate of Iraq and Syria subsequently claimed responsibility for the attack, though the group did not provide evidence of how it was involved with the shooters or in the attack.

July 16, 2015: Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez—who reportedly had been in various locations in the Middle East for nearly seven months last year—shot at government personnel in two military installations in Chattanooga, Tennessee, first through a drive-by shooting at a recruiting center, then by traveling to a naval reserve center and continuing to fire. Before being killed by police, Abdulazeez killed four Marines, and wounded another Marine, a Navy sailor, and a police officer. The Navy sailor died from his wounds two days later. The FBI is investigating the attack as an act of terrorism.

II. UNSUCCESSFUL ATTACKS AND PLOTS

December 22, 2001: British citizen Richard Reid attempted to detonate explosives packed in his shoes while on a flight from Paris to Miami. The airplane's crew and passengers subdued him, and the plane landed safely in Boston. Reid had previously received training at Al-Qaeda terrorist camps in Afghanistan.

May 8, 2002: Jose Padilla was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and subsequently accused of plotting to attack the United States with a radiological weapon (a ''dirty bomb''). He had previously spent several years in the Middle East, and the U.S. government produced evidence at his trial indicating he had attended an Al-Qaeda training camp in Afghanistan.

May 1, 2003: Iyman Faris pled guilty to providing material support to Al-Qaeda and providing information to Al-Qaeda about potential targets in the United States—including a bridge in New York City.

August 2004: A group of men in the United Kingdom, led by Al-Qaeda ''member or close associate'' Dhiren Barot, were arrested for being part of an Al-Qaeda plan to bomb the International Monetary Fund, New York Stock Exchange, Citigroup and Prudential buildings in the United States, as well as targets in the United Kingdom. Barot had earlier scouted the American targets while visiting the United States in 2000 and 2001.

August 2004: Shahawar Matin Siraj and James Elshafay were arrested after conducting surveillance at the Herald Square subway station in Manhattan. The pair were planning to attack the station with explosives in response to actions by American military forces in Iraq.

August 31, 2005: Kevin James, Hammad Samana, Gregory Patterson, and Levar Washington were indicted on charges to wage war against the United States through terrorist activities. The men planned attacks against targets including American military and Jewish institutions, located in Southern California.

November 24, 2006: Uzair Paracha was convicted of conspiring to help an Al-Qaeda operative member suspected of planning bombing attacks in Maryland to enter the United States. Paracha was later sentenced to 30 years in prison.

June 23 2006: Seven men, known as the ''Liberty City Seven,'' were arrested for being involved in a plot to blow up the Sears Tower in Chicago as part of an Islamic jihad. Attorney General Gonzales stated later that year that the plotters had promised to fight ''a full ground war against the United States.''

July 7 2006: Three men were arrested in Lebanon for plotting to bomb transit tunnels underneath the Hudson River in New York City. The men intended that the New York financial district would then be flooded. The FBI discovered the plot and gathered information on it through emails and chat-room postings on web forums used to recruit Islamic terrorists.

December 8, 2006: Derrick Shareef was charged with plotting to detonate hand grenades at a shopping mall in Illinois during the Christmas shopping season. Shareef was a Muslim convert who reportedly had discussed his desire to wage jihad against civilians and had also spoken of attacking government facilities.

2007: Sabrihan Hasanoff and Wessam Hanafi, beginning in 2007 and at the direction of Al-Qaeda members in Yemen performed surveillance on several potential targets, including the New York Stock Exchange, for future terrorist attacks in the United States. El-Hanafi forwarded the report to Al-Qaeda.

May 2007: Six men planned to kill American soldiers at Fort Dix, New Jersey, but were arrested before they could do so. This plot is popularly known as the ''Fort Dix Six'' plot, and the men appear to have been inspired by Jihadi videos

June 3, 2007: Four men were indicted for plotting to blow up jet-fuel tanks and a fuel pipeline at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City. Assistant Attorney General Kenneth Wainstein said that the men ''sought to combine an insider's knowledge of JFK airport with the assistance of Islamic radicals in the Caribbean to produce'' a ''devastating attack.''

January 28, 2009: Bryant Neal Vinas pleaded guilty to joining Al-Qaeda and developing a plan with Al-Qaeda leadership to conduct an attack on the Long Island Railroad in New York.

February 26, 2009: Christopher Paul, also known as Abdul Malek, was sentenced for conspiring to use weapons of mass destruction against targets in Europe and the United States. Paul, who had received terrorist training at overseas terrorist camps in Afghanistan, and had subsequently joined Al-Qaeda, had worked with an Islamic terror cell in Europe to prepare to attack targets in the United States.

May 20, 2009: Four men were arrested for plotting to bomb Jewish synagogues in New York City after they had planted what they thought were bombs near two synagogues. The men also allegedly planned to shoot down U.S. military planes operating out of Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York. The men were apparently angry over the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, and one told an FBI informant that he'd be interested in joining a Pakistan-based terrorist group ''to do jihad.''

September 2009: Daniel Patrick Boyd and Hysen Sherifi were charged with plotting to kill U.S. military personnel at the Quantico marine base in Virginia. They had undertaken reconnaissance of the base and had practiced attacking the base in July. Boyd, along with several other suspects, had earlier been charged with international terrorism charges in August, but those charges did not concern attacks in the United States. Prosecutors played a tape during Boyd's detention hearing where he decried the U.S. military, decried the struggle of Muslims, and mentioned the honor of martyrdom.

September 2009: Najibullah Zazi, and later Adis Medunjanin and Zarein Ahmedzay, were arrested for planning to conduct suicide attacks with homemade explosives in the New York City subway system. All three had received weapons training from Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and Zazi admitted in court that he was trained by Al-Qaeda to be part of a ''martyrdom operation.'' Evidence indicates that senior Al-Qaeda officials ordered the attacks. According to the indictment against Medunjanin, before being arrested for the planned subway attacks, on January 7, 2010, Medunjanin attempted to conduct an attack in New York City by intentionally crashing his car on the Whitestone Expressway.

September 24, 2009: Michael Finton, also known as Talib Islam, was arrested and charged for attempting to kill federal employees by detonating a car bomb at the federal building in Springfield, Illinois. He was arrested after he attempted to detonate what he thought was the bomb, but which was in fact a fake bomb. Finton reportedly idolized (and had written to) American-born Taliban member John Walker Lindh.

September 24, 2009: Hosam Maher Husein Smadi, an illegal immigrant from Jordan, was arrested for placing, with the intent to detonate, what he thought was a car bomb outside of the 60-story Fountain Place office tower in Dallas, Texas. FBI undercover agents met with Smadi over several months while posing as members of an Al-Qaeda sleeper cell. According to the FBI, Smadi ''stood out based on his vehement intention to actually conduct terror attacks in the United States.''

December 14, 2009: Ehsanul Islam Sadequee and Syed Haris Ahmed were sentenced for their earlier terrorism convictions in support of terrorism. Among other activities, Sadequee and Ahmed had driven to and taken videos—for use by ''the jihadi brothers abroad'' with whom the pair were connected via the internet—of targets in Washington, DC., including the U.S. Capitol, the World Bank, the Masonic Temple, and a fuel tank farm.

December 25, 2009: Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a Nigerian citizen, attempted to blow up the commercial airliner he was flying on over Detroit by igniting high explosives concealed in his underpants. Several days later, Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Yemen and Saudi Arabia claimed responsibility for the attempted attack. Abdulmutallab later plead to the charges against him and read a statement in court saying ''I attempted to use an explosive device which in the U.S. law is a weapon of mass destruction, which I call a blessed weapon to save the lives of innocent Muslims, for U.S. use of weapons of mass destruction on Muslim populations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and beyond.''

May 1, 2010: Faisal Shahzad attempted, but failed, to detonate a car bomb in Times Square in New York City. Evidence indicated that the Pakistani Taliban was behind the attempted attack, and that Shahzad was in contact with the group via the internet while living in the United States. Shahzad was attempting to flee the country through a flight to the Middle East when arrested.

May 2010: Paul and Nadia Rockwood, from King Salmon, Alaska, were arrested for lying to the FBI about having compiled a list of 20 domestic terrorism targets, including members of the U.S. military, the media, and two religious organizations. The couple had also begun to acquire components for mail bombs. Rockwood, who had earlier converted to Islam and was studying the writings of Anwar al-Awlaki, sought to ''exact revenge by death on anyone who desecrated Islam.''

October 20, 2010: Zachary Adam Chesser, a supporter of designated foreign terrorist organization Al-Shabaab, pleaded guilty to charges that included soliciting other jihadists online to murder U.S. citizens in the United States. Among other things, he pleaded guilty to taking specific, repeated steps to encourage jihadists to attack the writers of an American television show for the way the show had depicted Muhammad.

October 27, 2010: Farooque Ahmed, a naturalized U.S. citizen, was arrested for plotting to bomb multiple Washington, D.C. metro stations Ahmed believed he was conspiring with Al-Qaeda operatives in plotting the attacks.

November 26, 2010: Mohamed Osman Mohamud, a Somali-American, attempted to wage jihad by trying to ignite what he thought was a real bomb, but which was a fake bomb supplied by an undercover officer, at a Christmas tree lighting ceremony in Portland, Oregon. Among other statements Mohamud made regarding the attacks, he said ''I want whoever is attending that event to leave, to leave either dead or injured.''

December 8, 2010: Antonio Martinez, also known as Muhammad Hussain, was arrested after a sting operation for plotting to blow up the Armed Forces Career Center in Catonsville, Maryland. Martinez, a Muslim convert, was motivated to plot the attack because he was upset that the U.S. and other militaries were fighting Muslims.

February 24, 2011: Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari, a Saudi Arabian student in the United States, was arrested for planning and having begun to build bombs for use in various terrorist attacks in America. Targets of the attacks included former President George W. Bush's home, hydroelectric dams, nuclear power plants, nightclubs, and the homes of American soldiers who had been stationed in Iraq at the Abu Ghraib prison. Aldawsari described in his journal, as well as on blog postings, his desire for violent jihad.

May 11, 2011: Ahmed Ferhani, a native of Algeria, and Mohamed Mamdouh were arrested for plotting to attack Jewish synagogues in New York City. The pair were arrested after purchasing several handguns and one grenade. The two were said to be ''committed to violent jihad.''

June 23, 2011: Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif and Walli Mujahidh were arrested after purchasing machine guns and grenades for the purpose of conducting a suicide attack against a federal building housing the Military Entrance Processing Station in Seattle. The pair's motive was to conduct physical jihad in the United States, as they were upset about U.S. military activities in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Yemen.

July 27, 2011: Naser Jason Abdo, a U.S. Army Private who had been Absent Without Leave (AWOL), was arrested in a plot against Fort Hood, Texas. He was found with jihaclist materials, weapons, explosives instructions, and materials. The explosives instructions were from an Al-Qaeda explosives course manual.

September 28, 2011: Rezwan Ferdaus was arrested, following an FBI undercover operation, and charged for plotting to use a remote-controlled aircraft filled with explosives to attack the U.S. Capitol and the Pentagon. Ferdaus planned to commit violent jihad with the materials, and hoped to cause a ''psychological impact'' by killing Americans—who he referred to as ''enemies of Allah.''

November 20, 2011: Jose Pimentel was arrested for building and plotting to detonate pipe bombs in and around New York City. Pimentel's intended targets included U.S. military personnel who had served in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. postal facilities, and police. Pimentel was described as an ''Al-Qaeda sympathizer,'' though he is believed to have worked on his plot alone.

January 7, 2012: Sami Osmakac, a naturalized U.S. citizen from Kosovo, was arrested for plotting to use weapons and explosives ''to create mayhem'' in Tampa, Florida. He planned to conduct a car bombing, then take hostages, and to finally detonate a suicide belt he would be wearing. Osmakac told an FBI undercover agent that ''We all have to die, so why not die the Islamic way?''

February 17, 2012: Amine El Khalifi, a Moroccan who was illegally inside the United States, was arrested following an FBI sting operation for plotting to carry out a suicide bombing inside the U.S. Capitol building. When arrested near the Capitol, Khalifi was carrying what he believed to be a loaded automatic weapon and a suicide vest.

September 15, 2012: Adel Daoud was arrested, following an FBI undercover investigation, for attempting to detonate what he thought was a car bomb in front of a bar in Chicago. Daoud had earlier expressed his interest online in engaging in violent jihad in the United States or overseas.

October 17, 2012: Quazi Mohammad Rezwanul Ahsan Nafis, a Bangladeshi, was arrested following a sting operation for plotting to bomb the Federal Reserve Bank in Manhattan. He was arrested after attempting to detonate what he thought was a 1,000 pound bomb near the door of the bank. Nails undertook his plot on behalf of ''our beloved Sheikh Osama bin Laden.''

November 29, 2012: Raees Alam Qazi and his brother, Sheheryar Alam Qazi, both naturalized U.S. citizens of Pakistani descent, were arrested for plotting to attack New York City, possibly at Times Square. Raees, inspired by Al-Qaeda (members of which he had tried to contact) had recently traveled to New York to attempt to obtain explosives for the attack.

December 13, 2013: Terry Lee Loewen, an avionics technician, was arrested following an FBI sting operation for attempting to explode a car bomb in a suicide attack at the Wichita Mid-Continent Airport in Wichita, Kansas. Loewen is a Muslim-convert who had said to an FBI employee that ''I have become 'radicalized' in the strongest sense of the word, and I don't feel Allah wants me any other way.''

September 15, 2014: Mufid A. Elgeeh was charged with encouraging and helping prepare two other people to go to Syria and join

ISIS. He had also allegedly plotted to shoot U.S. military members in the United States who had returned from Iraq. Elgeeh was arrested after purchasing two handguns, ammunition, and silencers.

February 25, 2015: Abdurasul Hasanovich Juraboev was charged for offering online to kill the U.S. President if ordered by ISIS. He, along with Akhror Saidakhmetove, allegedly then planned to travel to Syria to wage jihad on behalf of ISIS.

April 2, 2015: Noelle Velentzas and Asia Siddiqui were arrested, following a sting operation, for plotting to detonate explosives in the United States. The two allegedly discussed possible targets online and had acquired both multiple propane tanks and instructions on how to turn the tanks into bombs. Siddiqui had allegedly contacted members of Al-Qaeda on repeated occasions.

April 10, 2015: John T. Booker was arrested, after a sting operation, for allegedly trying to detonate a car bomb at the Fort Riley military base in Kansas on behalf of ISIS. Booker allegedly had spent months discussing different plans of attack before deciding on a suicide attack against the base, and had begun acquiring components for a vehicle bomb before becoming the subject of the FBI operation. He also allegedly repeatedly stated that he wished to engage in violent jihad on behalf of ISIS.

June 12, 2015: David Wright and Nicholas Rovinski were charged with conspiring to commit attacks against persons inside the United States, which was intended to further ISIS's objectives and therefore constituted material support to that group. Wright and Rovinski also allegedly intended to behead a man who had organized a conference in Garland, Texas that featured cartoons depicting Muhammad. Moreover, Wright and Rovinski allegedly conspired with Usaamah Abdullah Rahim—Wright's uncle—who was shot and killed after attacking police officers. The FBI stated that Rahim had been under surveillance because he had bought fighting knives and spoken of imminently attacking ''boys in blue.'' Rahhim, when confronted by the police on a sidewalk, menaced the officers with a military-style knife before shooting him when he refused to drop the knife.

June 17, 2015: Fareed Mumuni and Munther Omar Saleh were arrested for allegedly conspiring to attempt to assist ISIS in committing a terrorist attack in the New York area. Mumuni and Saleh allegedly charged, with knives, at law enforcement officers who were trying to arrest them. Mumuni also allegedly told authorities that he had pledged his support to ISIS.

June 19, 2015: Robert McCollum, who changed his name to Amir Said Abdul Rahman Al-Ghazi, was charged with, among other offenses, attempting to provide material support to ISIS. He allegedly had pledged his support to ISIS via social media, took steps to create propaganda for the group, and had tried to persuade others to join ISIS too. He allegedly had also expressed his desire to conduct an attack on the United States, and had attempted to purchase an assault rifle.

July 13, 2015: Alexander Ciccolo was arrested on gun charges after purchasing two pistols and two rifles from an undercover FBI informant. His apartment allegedly was loaded with bomb-making equipment and jihadi paperwork. Ciccolo allegedly had planned to travel to a town with a state university where he could attack students at the college. Ciccolo was turned in by his father, who said his son was inspired by ISIS, had said he is ''not afraid to die for the cause,'' and reportedly characterized America as ''Satan'' and ''disgusting.''

July 28, 2015: Harlem Suarez was charged with attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction against a person or property within the United States. Suarez came to law enforcement attention following Facebook posts he made with Islamic extremist rhetoric and promoting ISIS. Suarez allegedly had told a confidential FBI source that he wanted to make a ''timer bomb,'' which was to include galvanized nails and for which he had purchased components, to be buried and detonated at a beach in Key West, Florida.

November 12, 2015: Terrence McNeil was arrested in Ohio for soliciting the murder of members of the U.S. military. He had disseminated ISIS rhetoric and detailed U.S. military personnel information for 100 military members, then called on fellow terrorists to kill the military personnel in their homes and communities.

Mr. GRASSLEY. These lists include successful attacks that harmed Americans as well as unsuccessful attempts that did not—often thanks to law enforcement's efforts. What is common to all the attacks is that they were undertaken by terrorists who coordinated with radical Islamic extremists, were inspired by them or by those who shared their views. The listed attacks should serve as a reminder that we must always be vigilant. We must never forget that radical Islamic extremists are waging war against us. We must always be prepared to fight this battle and to defend against their attacks.

I am grateful this Thanksgiving season for the people in this country who do the difficult work of protecting us from terrorists every day. We must continually strengthen our country's ability to win this war. We must ensure that our military and Special Forces have the ability to take the fight to the terrorists overseas, wherever they are lurking. We must ensure that our intelligence agencies have the tools needed to identify terrorists and their plots, while preserving the civil liberties that make our country very special. And we must ensure that law enforcement is able to use the lawful tools provided by Congress, consistent with our Constitution and approved by our courts, to help stop these terrorist attacks.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO BART AND CHERRY STARR

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor two great Americans, two wonderful people—Bart and Cherry Starr—for their numerous personal, professional, and charitable contributions to the Nation and the great State of Wisconsin.

We are all aware of Bart's extraordinary contributions on the football field as quarterback for the Green Bay Packers. Drafted in the 17th round in 1956, Bart proceeded to win 5 world championships, including victories in the first 2 Super Bowls. He was named the Super Bowl's Most Valuable Player for both games, but ever humble, Bart gave full credit to his teammates and to legendary coach Vince Lombardi for the team's historic success.

Over the years, Bart has received many honors. He was selected as a Pro Bowl Player four times and was named the NFL's Most Valuable Player in 1966. He was recognized in 1970 with the Gladiator of the Year Award for best exemplifying the character attributes of a citizen-athlete. And he has been inducted into multiple Halls of Fame: The Alabama Sports Hall of Fame in 1976, the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1977, and the Wisconsin Athletic Hall of Fame in 1981.

Bart's football legacy goes beyond technical skill. His excellence in leadership and strength of character earned him the respect of his coaches, teammates, and fans worldwide. He continues to be lauded as an example throughout the NFL. Every year, the Bart Starr Award is presented to an NFL player who demonstrates leadership and integrity on the field and in his community.

Bart considers his wife Cherry to be the most important member of the Starr family team. Cherry supported and inspired her husband as they raised their children, Bart Junior and Bret, and devoted herself to numerous charitable causes throughout their life together. Their gifts of time, financial support, and celebrity continue to be a part of a lifelong mission benefiting many charities and causes.

At the height of his career with the Packers, Bart and Cherry cofounded Rawhide Boys Ranch, a home for at-risk boys. Over the years, the Rawhide Boys Ranch has grown into a campus comprised of seven boys homes, a state-of-the-art high school named in honor of Bart and Cherry Starr, and numerous work experience facilities that expose youth to a variety of trades.

Bart and Cherry also served as honorary chairpersons for the Vince Lombardi Cancer Foundation for more than 44 years. Their work behind the scenes was central to raising more than $16 million for cancer research.

In addition, Bart and Cherry have been longtime supporters of Cornerstone Schools of Alabama. Cornerstone offers a Christ-centered education committed to academic excellence for Birmingham's inner city children whose families have limited school choice.

Finally, Cherry's passion for animals fuels their generous support over many years for the Greater Birmingham Humane Society.

Bart and Cherry are very proud of their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, but the accomplishment they value most, that they cherish most, is their 60 years of loving marriage. I am honored to recognize

Bart and Cherry Starr for their exemplary lives. May their humble leadership, sacrifice, and love for others serve as an inspiration for all of us.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise to speak once again on the topic of religious liberty. This is the sixth in a series of addresses I have given on this critical subject. In my previous remarks, I have discussed why religious liberty matters and why it deserves special protection from government interference. I have also detailed the history of religious liberty in the United States and its centrality to our Nation's founding. Likewise, I have debunked the erroneous notion that religion is a purely private matter that has no place in the public domain.

Last week, I discussed the status of religious liberty in contemporary American life. I argued that, in ways that are both alarming and unprecedented, religious liberty is under attack here in the United States. Today, I turn my attention beyond our borders to examine the status of religious liberty abroad. Again, my argument is straightforward: across the world, religious liberty is under serious attack.

My observations are particularly relevant as we approach Thanksgiving. Our Nation commemorates this special holiday in remembrance of our pilgrim ancestors who fled persecution in search of religious freedom. These brave men and women sailed unchartered waters and settled strange lands in order to build a society where they could practice their religion free from state interference. Their earnest efforts precipitated not only the establishment of a new colony, but the birth of a nation committed to the principles of religious pluralism.

For America's earliest settlers, this land stood as a symbol of refuge—a haven from the storm of religious oppression that lingered over Europe. Centuries later, victims of religious persecution across the world still look to our shores for sanctuary. They see America as John Winthrop once described it: ''As a city upon a hill''—a light that reaches across the oceans, giving hope to those still living in the shadows of religious intolerance.

Today our world needs that light more than ever. Nearly four centuries after the Pilgrims made landfall at Plymouth Rock, the state of religious liberty across the world is increasingly precarious. From brutal crackdowns on religious minorities in Central Asia to a growing wave of anti-Semitism in Europe; from the violent campaigns of Boko Haram in Africa to the nefarious specter of ISIS in the Middle East—religious liberty is under attack like never before.

Despite the rapid advance of democracy over the last century, the blessings of religious freedom are still inaccessible to a majority of the world's population. In fact, a recent Pew study finds that three-quarters of the global population ''lives in countries with high-government restrictions and significant hostilities surrounding religion.''

Think about that. In spite of the substantial progress our own society has made in securing individual rights and enshrining religious liberty in law, there are still billions of people across the world who are unable to exercise their religion freely and fully. There are still billions of individuals living under despotic regimes that not only fail to protect people from persecution, but that actively constrain the conscience of citizens through law. There are still billions of people who understand religious liberty as little more than a philosophical concept, much less a reality.

I wish I could offer these people hope. I wish I could say that the gradual march of progress will part the waters of religious intolerance, paving a clear path forward for religious liberty, but reality restrains my optimism. Around the world, hostility to religion is increasing.

Religious liberty abroad faces opposition from two sources: states and nonstate actors. While I would like to relate an exhaustive account of the war being waged on both fronts, time permits me to highlight only the most grievous examples of persecution.

I begin with state-sponsored acts of religious oppression. Far from being a relic of the past, government persecution of religious minorities is alive and well. First, consider the state of religious liberty in Asia. China is perhaps the world's leading instigator of religious persecution. Last year, in a nearly unprecedented crackdown on religious expression, the Chinese Government bulldozed or removed crosses from more than 400 Protestant and Catholic Churches. According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, many experts have characterized this growing tide of oppression against Christians in China as ''the most egregious and persistent since the Cultural Revolution.''

And Christian denominations are not the only groups facing oppression. Members of all faiths, including Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists, ''face arrests, fines, denials of justice, [and] lengthy prison sentences'' because of their religious beliefs. Practitioners of Falun Gong experience the most intense persecution. Sixteen years ago, the Chinese Government imposed an outright ban on the practice of Falun Gong. Since that time, the government has imprisoned believers in forced labor camps, subjecting them to psychiatric experiments and other heinous forms of torture. The government has even executed practitioners of Falun Gong, mutilating their bodies and harvesting their organs for profit. Our Nation can no longer turn a blind eye to these atrocities.

Nor can we ignore the plight of religious prisoners in North Korea, where Kim Jong-un has incarcerated thousands of his own citizens for their religious beliefs. These men and women are separated from their families and forced to work in concentration camps. While the government punishes followers of any faith, the country's Christians face the greatest persecution. If caught practicing their religion, Christians face imprisonment without trial. Many face execution.

In Southeast Asia, Myanmar is responsible for propagating religious bigotry, not so much by what it does but by what it doesn't do. Across the country, religious and ethnic minorities face increasing persecution at the hands of the Buddhist majority. Rather than intervene to protect these vulnerable groups from mistreatment, the Myanmar Government has stood idly by as an observer to the violence. As a result of the government's inaction, 140,000 Muslims and at least 100,000 Christians have been internally displaced.

In Africa and the Middle East, the situation is just as bleak. In Iran, despite President Rouhani's promise to extend greater protections to religious minorities, the number of individuals detained because of their religious beliefs has actually increased during his term. Baha'is, Christians, Jews, and Sunni Muslims throughout the country face perpetual persecution, arrest, beating, and imprisonment. Some are even executed for their beliefs. And of course, there is perhaps no government on earth more vocal in its anti-Semitism than Iran.

Meanwhile, in Saudi Arabia, the state prohibits all non-Muslim public places of worship. Any citizen who dares question the government's repressive policies is likely to face charges of apostasy, blasphemy, and even sorcery—a crime punishable by death.

In Syria, Bashar al Assad has abandoned all appearances of religious liberty by deliberately targeting Sunni Muslim civilians in a bloody civil war. As he massacres his own people, he does so on the basis of their religious affiliation.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to finish my remarks.

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

Mr. HATCH. In Pakistan the government consistently fails to protect its own citizens from religiously motivated violence, and the courts exploit repressive anti-blasphemy laws to prosecute religious minorities. Egypt's

courts convict and imprison citizens under the same pretext.

In Sudan the government harasses its minority Christian population and subjects Muslims and non-Muslims alike to the punishments of Sharia law. The state even executes citizens who convert from Islam to another religion.

Even in Europe, religious liberty is under attack, albeit in more subtle ways; take, for example, Switzerland, where a constitutional amendment placed a countrywide ban on the construction of minarets—a widely recognized symbol of Muslim prayer and devotion.

In another blow to Europe's Islamic population, France recently outlawed the wearing of burqas and niqabs in public. When a Muslim woman appealed the ban to the European Court of Human Rights, the court upheld the law.

What I have related here is only a small sampling of the manifold abuses taking place around the world. If I were to relate every instance of state-sponsored religious bigotry abroad, I would be speaking here for days.

And none of this is to mention the war against freedom being waged by non-state actors. In the past decade, we have witnessed an unprecedented rise of terrorist groups and other criminal organizations seeking to eradicate religious liberty altogether.

Take, for example, the rise of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region of Africa. This Islamic terrorist organization made headlines last year after kidnapping over 276 Nigerian schoolgirls. According to the Human Rights Watch, Boko Haram has since forced these young girls to convert to Islam and undergo severe physical and psychological torture. Many of these young women have been subject to forced labor, and others have been raped while in captivity.

Boko Haram's central mission is to annihilate all Western social and political activities, including any religion that isn't Islam. In its fight against religious freedom and other Western values, the group has conducted indiscriminate attacks on civilians and has even used children as suicide bombers.

The brutality of Boko Haram is only surpassed by the barbarism of ISIS. Far from being the ''jayvee team'' President Obama once described, ISIS has proven to be perhaps the most formidable terrorist network in operation today. I fear that too many underestimate the threat ISIS poses to religious freedom. This is an organization whose very raison d'etre is to establish a global Islamic caliphate and usher in the apocalypse.

As Islamic State militants carry out their mission, religious liberty is often the first casualty. In the barren world ISIS envisions, there is no room for dissent: either convert or be killed. Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims throughout the Middle East have been confronted with this impossible ultimatum. Refusal to give in to the Islamic State's demands has resulted in mass executions, extrajudicial killings, kidnapping of civilians, forced displacement, the killing and maiming of children, rape, and other forms of sexual violence. The savagery of ISIS has even gone viral as the group posts videos of grisly beheadings on the Internet. In almost every case, captors target their victims on the basis of religion.

As we are all too aware, the cruelty of ISIS is not confined to the Middle East. Just last week, three teams of ISIS militants carried out terrorist assaults throughout Paris, detonating suicide bombs at a soccer stadium and opening fire on innocent civilians at a concert hall. The violence injured more than 350 innocent bystanders and claimed at least 129 lives in what is considered the worst terrorist attack on French soil in the nation's history.

We could call these attacks ''senseless acts of violence'' because that is exactly what they appear to be, both in the scope of their brutality and in the scale of their indiscrimination. But I fear that dismissing these attacks as ''senseless'' too often hides from our view the radical rationale that motivates such violence. ISIS does not kill merely to feed an insatiable bloodlust; it kills because it wants to terrorize, shock, and intimidate other civilizations into submission. It kills because it wants to impose on all people a narrow-minded, medieval ideology of Islam—one that would rob us of our religious freedom and other fundamental rights.

Sadly, ISIS is not alone in its animus toward religious freedom. Nearly every terrorist organization that has vowed our destruction—be it Al Qaeda, Hamas or Hezbollah—seeks to strip us not only of our sense of security but also of the fundamental freedoms that make religious pluralism possible.

If we are committed to defending religious liberty overseas, we must confront the growing menace of Islamic extremism, and we must challenge those nations that engender religious intolerance through law. Today, by calling attention to the suffering of religious peoples throughout the world, I have demonstrated clearly and without question that religious liberty faces growing hostility abroad from both state and non-state actors alike. From the heavy hand of government to the violent campaigns of terrorist organizations around the globe, the right to worship according to the dictates of one's own conscience is under relentless attack.

With a fuller understanding of the threats facing religious liberty, the question now becomes: What is to be done? If religious liberty is under attack abroad, what can our Nation do to protect this precious freedom now and in the future?

First, we must recognize that protecting religious freedom abroad is not just a question of moral principle; it is a matter of national security. Often, violations of religious liberty abroad threaten our own safety at home. As a case in point, consider the role of religious intolerance in the Syrian civil war. Bashar al-Assad quickly disposed of religious freedom when he began deliberately targeting Sunni Muslims, murdering thousands of citizens on the basis of their religion. His brutal actions precipitated the formation of ISIS—an organization hell-bent on destroying other religions and entire civilizations in the name of Islam.

As ISIS gained in strength, it began to export its extreme ideology abroad, triggering several attacks throughout the world, including last week's coordinated assaults in Paris. Now, ISIS poses a formidable threat to the United States and all of our allies. Assad's blatant disregard for religious liberty not only escalated violence in the region but also catalyzed the formation of ISIS. As a result, the world is less safe.

Given the obvious nexus between protecting religious liberty and strengthening global security, I agree with the following assessment from the U.S. Commission on International Freedom:

In the long run, there is only one permanent guarantor of the safety, security, and survival of the persecuted and the vulnerable. It is the full recognition of religious freedom as a sacred human right which every nation, government, and individual must fully support and no nation, government, or individual must ever violate.

If we are committed to bolstering the security of other nations, then we must be equally devoted to strengthening religious liberty abroad. At the forefront of foreign policy should be a commitment to defend and advance religious liberty in countries where it is under attack. We should also be prepared to reevaluate our relationship with governments that fail to make religious liberty protections a priority.

Congress took concrete steps to prioritize religious freedom as a foreign policy objective when it passed the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. This law established the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. The Ambassador oversees the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, which monitors discrimination against people of faith and publishes an annual country-by-country report on the status of religious freedom abroad.

This historic legislation also created the U.S. Commission on International Freedom—an independent, bipartisan organization that closely follows religious persecution in other countries and offers recommendations to the executive branch and Congress on how best to promote religious freedom overseas.

As one of the only countries in the world to make religious liberty an explicit foreign policy objective, our nation is unique in its commitment to this preeminent freedom. As a legislative body, Congress can renew that commitment by continuing to support

the provisions of the International Religious Freedom Act. The future of religious liberty overseas depends on our willingness to strengthen it here in Congress.

Lastly, if we are committed to protecting religious liberty abroad, we must be ready to defend it here at home.

At the beginning of my remarks, I recalled the imagery of John Winthrop's ''City on a Hill.'' Throughout our Nation's history, several public figures have invoked Winthrop's allusion to capture a simple truth: America's special freedoms make her a light to other nations.

Through our robust exercise of religious liberty, we offer hope to people beyond our borders—men and women suffering under the yoke of oppression who look to our country for sanctuary. As our nation strives to be an example of religious freedom, we can offer greater hope to those persecuted for their religious beliefs, and by addressing threats to freedom of conscience here at home—including the attacks on religious liberty that I detailed in previous remarks—we can strengthen and beautify our City on a Hill, building upon the foundation laid for us by our Pilgrim forbears, so that the light of our Nation might shine before all mankind.

With this call to action, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in morning business for such time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2303

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, over the last month, in a series of terrorist attacks around the globe that have killed hundreds of people, ISIL has commenced a new phase in its war on the civilized world. We have seen attacks in Ankara, Beirut, and Baghdad, the bombing of a Russian airliner over Egypt, and, of course, the horrific scenes last Friday in Paris, where ISIL gunmen wearing suicide belts attacked innocent civilians at restaurants, bars, a soccer stadium, and a concert hall, killing, as we know, 129 people and wounding 352 others.

This evolution in ISIL operations further highlights the threat that they pose to countries beyond the Middle East, including the United States of America. We cannot and should not wait for ISIL to attack the United States before we finally, finally, finally acknowledge that we are a nation at war and that we must adopt a new strategy to destroy ISIL.

What we must also acknowledge is that while the threat posed by ISIL and our other adversaries is growing, our national security budgets are increasingly disconnected from our national security requirements. Regardless of what ISIL will do next or how the United States will decide to act, our national security budgets through fiscal year 2021 have been arbitrarily—I emphasize ''arbitrarily''—capped by the Budget Control Act.

To be sure, the recently passed Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 provides important relief from the sequester-level budget caps for fiscal year 2016 and 2017, and I am grateful to the Republican majority leader for leading that effort. Our national defense would be in far worse shape without that legislation. At the same time, that agreement is less optimal for next year and obviously does not seek to address the budget caps that continue for the next 4 years. Indeed, under the revised Budget Control Act, in constant dollars, we are actually on track to spend less on defense next year than this year. It has not taken long for world events, yet again, to show the inadequacy of this exercise. At roughly the same time we were locking in next year's defense budget caps, ISIL began demonstrating its capability to strike targets outside of Iraq and Syria and now at the very center of the western world.

Indeed, since the Budget Control Act of 2011 capped defense and other discretionary spending for the subsequent 10 years, absent any consideration of changing global threats or national requirements, let's consider what has transpired since 2011. Any semblance of order in the Middle East has collapsed. We are all tragically familiar with the carnage in Syria and Iraq, but Libya has also deteriorated into anarchy and safe havens for ISIL and its affiliates. Yemen has become the scene of a proxy war between Iran and the gulf Arab nations. General David Petraeus testified to the Armed Services Committee: ''Almost every Middle Eastern country is now a battleground or a combatant in one or more wars.''

From the outset, the Obama administration's policy was to withdraw from the Middle East. The President pulled all U.S. troops out of Iraq and put us on the path to do the same in Afghanistan, but as we expected, and as I predicted, evil forces have moved in to fill the vacuums that we have left behind. ISIL has captured large swaths of territories in Syria and Iraq and has spread across the region to Afghanistan, Libya, Egypt, and other countries.

As a result, we now have thousands of troops back in Iraq. The U.S. military has conducted over 6,000 airstrikes in Syria and Iraq to combat ISIL. We are increasing counterterrorism operations in North Africa and providing military assistance to Saudi Arabia and our gulf partners fighting in Yemen. The situation in Afghanistan has driven the President to further delay the drawdown of U.S. troops. The effectiveness of these policies is questionable, but their cost is not.

In Europe, we have seen Russian forces invade Crimea and intervene militarily in Ukraine. This is the first time since World War II that one government has invaded and sought to annex the territory of another sovereign territory in Europe. Since then, Vladimir Putin has grown bolder. He continues to modernize Russia's military. And most recently, of course, he has deployed Russian forces into Syria to prop up the Assad regime, even firing cruise missiles into the region from outside of it, as far away as nearly 1,000 miles.

Russia's actions have now forced the administration to bring back to Europe on a rotational basis one of the two brigade combat teams that it withdrew. As Russia continues its aggression in Europe and increases its involvement in the Middle East, the Secretary of Defense acknowledges that we need an entirely new strategy to counter Russia. All of this requires proper funding—all of it. All of it requires proper funding levels, but our defense agencies have not gotten that, even as they have been asked to do more to counter Russia.

The situation isn't limited to Russia and Europe. China is growing more assertive as well. It has built several land features in the South China Sea, equipped with military buildings, fort facilities, and even runways, all in an effort to expand Chinese territorial claims in the area. In addition to harassing other regional states, five Chinese navy ships were spotted in the Bering Sea off of Alaska during President Obama's recent trip to Alaska. Meanwhile, hackers in China continue to conduct cyber espionage and cyber attacks against our government and critical sectors of our economy. Russia, Iran, and North Korea are doing so as well, all in the past year.

Again and again, national security requirements have materialized after the Budget Control Act was passed, but we forced our military to tackle a growing set of missions with arbitrary and insufficient budget levels, revised periodically with whatever additional resources the Congress is able to scare up. The results speak for themselves. Since 2011, as worldwide threats have been increasing, we have cut our defense spending by almost 25 percent in annual spending. Not only has annual spending decreased, but so have the long-term budget plans of the Department of Defense. Each year the Department releases a 5-year budget. However, each year it has reduced its 5-year plan in an effort to closer align its spending to the Budget Control Act. As a result, while the short-term effects of these arbitrary budget caps are bad enough, the long-term harm they are doing is arguably worse. Our military is raiding its own future readiness, modernization, and research and development spending to pay its present bills and meet present needs. We are not making the kinds of investments in

our future warfighting capability to remain technologically superior to adversaries that are closing the gap with us.

What is even more troubling is that even as we made these reductions, our national security and defense strategies have stayed essentially the same. Day-to-day requirements for the military have not been reduced to match declining budgets. Independent analysis by defense experts at places such as the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments and the RAND Corporation have all pointed out that current budget levels and even the President's budget are insufficient to pay for our national security strategy given the current threat environment.

All of this applies equally to our other national security agencies beyond the Department of Defense. Protecting our Nation is not just the job of the U.S. military; it also depends on a strong and properly resourced intelligence community, Federal law enforcement, and homeland security agencies, and a diplomatic presence overseas that can project American leadership and resolve problems before they become threats to our people and our interests. Yet these other national security agencies have been dealing with the same fiscal challenges under the same worsening threat environment and with the same effects as our military. Not just our military, but the NSA, the CIA, the State Department, FBI—all of these agencies are unable to function effectively because of the effects of these budget cuts.

To continue on this way, especially after Paris, is not only absurd, it is dangerous. If we are serious about national security, if we are serious about meeting our highest constitutional responsibility of providing for the common defense, and if we are serious about heeding the frequent and urgent warnings of our Nation's most respected national security and foreign policy leaders, then we must change course immediately. We cannot continue to prioritize deficit reduction over national defense, allowing arbitrary budget caps to determine our national security needs.

This process ought to be simple. We must identify what we need to be safe, define those requirements clearly, and provide budgets to resource them. The two can't be disconnected. If we choose not to fight ISIL or deter Russian aggression in Europe or uphold freedom of the seas in Asia, then we can justify the cuts to the budget. But neither the Congress nor the administration wants to do that, nor should we. The only responsible thing to do, then, is to spend the money that is necessary to meet the national security requirements we have set for ourselves. And with the threats to our homeland growing closer, we can't afford to delay any longer.

That is why I have introduced commonsense legislation that is long overdue. Its goal is simple: to exempt national security spending from sequestration under the Budget Control Act. This exemption would not just apply to the Department of Defense; it would also include the security-related functions of our intelligence agencies, the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, and the National Nuclear Security Administration. By doing so, we will enable the President and Congress to build national security budgets based on national security requirements instead of arbitrary caps that entail greater risk to our Nation.

I know that some will express concern about the impact of this legislation on national deficits and the debt. I will match my record as a fiscal conservative with anybody's. I have spent decades targeting wasteful government spending, and I believe we must tackle our debt problem before it overwhelms generations. But we cannot afford to put the lives of our men and women in uniform as well as those of our citizens at greater risk, which everyone—all of our senior military leaders—has said we are doing. By holding to these budget caps, we are putting the lives of the men and women serving in the military today at greater risk. Don't we have an obligation to these young men and women who are serving in the military in uniform? Just because of arbitrary caps, are we going to put their lives in greater danger? Of course the world has become more dangerous. Of course there have been tremendous upheavals. And we are asking them to do the job with less than they need in order to do it most effectively and at the very risk of their own lives. This is disgraceful. This is disgraceful, that we should neglect the view of every national security expert and every one of our uniformed leaders. They have all said the same thing in testimony before the Armed Services Committee.

I have asked them: Does sequestration and the effects of sequestration put the lives of our young men and women in uniform at greater risk?

Answer: Yes.

History does not repeat itself, but I do remember in the 1970s when we slashed defense spending and the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army came over and said we had a hollow Army. We are now not approaching the hollow Army, but we certainly are approaching a point where we are unable to meet the new challenges that I just articulated in these comments, and we are putting the lives of the men and women in the military in greater danger. That is not what we are supposed to be all about.

We can't persist with the illusion that we will somehow balance the Federal budget and meaningfully cut the debt on the back of discretionary spending alone. Our defense and national security budgets are not the root of our spending problem. The real problem is rising entitlement costs and mandatory spending.

A Heritage Foundation report found that 85 percent of projected growth and spending is due to entitlement programs and interest on the debt. Reducing our debt will only be possible with real entitlement reform. Cuts to discretionary spending will not have a major long-term impact, but for years we have gone to that well because it is politically easier than reforming entitlement programs.

So the major sources of the debt are three: Medicare, Social Security, and interest on the debt. That is the problem we face. So we enacted arbitrary cuts on our Nation's national security capabilities in somehow trying to convince people that therefore we will reduce the debt. That is a lie. We don't have the guts to stand up here and do the right thing, which is entitlement reform. Instead, we continue on this mindless sequestration—mindless because it is a meat ax.

I am happy to say that we have identified $11 billion in this National Defense Authorization Act. As chairman of the committee, I have worked with Members on both sides of the aisle. We have identified $11 billion in savings and lots more to come. We can trim from the defense budget a lot of the waste and inefficiencies that are there, but to do it with a meat ax is the wrong way to do it. I encourage other committees to use their authorization processes to reform government and eliminate wasteful spending. However, to purposefully shortchange our national security agencies is obviously penny-wise and pound-foolish.

Just last week, all of us went home and celebrated Veterans Day. There is probably not an event that is quite like it in all of the things we do in this Nation. To spend time with our veterans and to see our Nation honor them is a remarkable experience and incredibly uplifting. It seems to me that year after year, there are more and more Americans who are applauding and appreciating the service and sacrifice of our veterans. We are reminded that what makes America great is the men and women who serve it, and those who have served we honor. These volunteers sacrifice their personal comfort, their families, and sometimes their lives for this country. They always put the mission first, and it is time we do the same. We must fully resource national security so that those who work to keep us safe day in and day out have what they need to accomplish what we have asked of them. If their mission is worth the ultimate sacrifice, what other policy agenda could be more important?

These young men and women are putting their lives on the line as we speak, and what are we doing? We are mindlessly cutting defense and their ability to defend this Nation and themselves. It is a shameful chapter. It is a shameful chapter and an abrogation of our responsibilities to these men and women.

So the next time Members are home in their home States and they meet these men and women in uniform and they support the sequestration, look the other way because they are not taking care of those men and women who are willing to sacrifice.

I am sorry if my words sound harsh, but in this world we are in today, to continue this mindless sequestration is an abrogation of our responsibility as their elected leaders.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Budget be discharged from further consideration of S. 2303 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; I further ask consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

What this is, for the benefit of my colleagues, is the elimination of sequestration for not only defense but all of our national security requirements and agencies of government that are suffering under this mindless sequestration.

I see my colleague from Rhode Island is going to object. All I can say to my colleague from Rhode Island is I am deeply, deeply, deeply disappointed in his objecting to doing the right thing for the men and women who are serving in the military.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REED. Madam President, reserving my right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. I think Chairman MCCAIN is headed in exactly the right direction, which is trying to eliminate sequestration. The real answer is to repeal the Budget Control Act because the scope of relief offered by the chairman is certainly broader than just the Department of Defense, but it doesn't include all the agencies that actually protect us and interfere with our opponents. For example, the Department of Treasury, in terms of trying to suppress terrorist financing, would be subject to sequestration in this legislation; the CDC would be subject to sequestration, even if there were a biological attack—and unfortunately our opponents, particularly terrorists, have talked about such an attack.

It is not really the issue of sequestration; it is limiting the scope of relief. I think we should, as my colleague suggests, stand up and say we can repeal the BCA. Then we can talk about budgeting according to the demands, according to our total national security picture.

Longer term, national security in this country is certainly bolstered immediately by the Department of Defense, Department of Treasury, State Department, et cetera; but without education, without many other efforts in our government, we will not be able to truly defend the Nation. So for that reason, Mr. President, I with great reluctance object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Objection is heard.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Peter William Bodde, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Libya; Elisabeth I. Millard, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Tajikistan; Marc Jonathan Sievers, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Sultanate of Oman; Deborah R. Malac, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Uganda; Lisa J. Peterson, of Virginia, 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 Kingdom of Swaziland; and H. Dean Pittman, of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Mozambique.

VOTE ON BODDE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Bodde nomination?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 95, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 309 Ex.]

YEAS—95

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

NOT VOTING—5

Graham	Rubio	Vitter
Nelson	Sanders	

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON MILLARD NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Millard nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SIEVERS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sievers nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON MALAC NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Malac nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON PETERSON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Peterson nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON PITTMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Pittman nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Mississippi.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WICKER. 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.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator SHAHEEN of New Hampshire and I be able to utilize up to 20 minutes for speaking in a colloquy.

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

(The remarks of Mr. WICKER and Mrs. SHAHEEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 2307 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

DODD-FRANK LEGISLATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, 7 years ago, Wall Street came closer to imploding than at any other time since the Great Depression. Wall Street had stacked the deck for themselves and against consumers by turning a banking system that in the past had helped families and businesses build their prosperity into a casino for Wall Street's own big bets. When things went badly, taxpayers were left holding the bag.

While our economy has slowly returned, the memory of the crisis is fresh in the minds of American families—millions of families who lost their jobs, millions of families who lost their homes, millions of families who lost their retirement savings.

For this reason, there is broad bipartisan support across America for not allowing the return of the Wall Street casino, with 9 in 10 likely voters saying it is important to ensure they are safe and fair for consumers and that they are designed to build the success of consumers.

Through the Wall Street reform bill, we ended predatory home lending practices. We stopped teaser rates that then had exploding interest loans. These loans went from 3 or 4 percent in the beginning, and then, after 2 years, would turn into 9 percent or 10 percent, ensuring that the family was unable to make their payments. We stopped the kickbacks that went to loan originators to steer their unsuspecting homebuyer clients into high-cost loans. We stopped the liar loans designed to fail just after originators got their commissions. In short, we restored home ownership and home loans as a powerful, wealth-building tool for the middle class in America. Indeed, over the course of the post-World War II history, home ownership has been the most significant wealth builder for the middle class. Wall Street turned it into a predatory, wealth-stripping experience, and we restored it to ensure the financial success of working families.

We ensured that banks and financial institutions have skin in the game, mandating they retain risk in the products they sell. We established the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, or CFPB, to prevent scams from stripping wealth from our working families.

Before we established the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, consumer protection was handled by the Federal Reserve. The Federal Reserve also handled monetary policy. Monetary policy was much more exciting, and perhaps they thought it was more up to their sophisticated educations. They took consumer protection and put it in the basement of the Federal Reserve, and they locked it up and then threw away the key. They never honored their responsibilities for consumer protection, allowing all of these predatory practices that we had to end through the Dodd-Frank legislation.

To date, the CFPB has returned more than $11 billion to 25 million wronged consumers. That is a pretty impressive record. Show me something else that has brought a little bit of justice and a lot of financial restitution to 25 million wronged American citizens.

The commonsense reforms we established laid the groundwork for a financial system that is not premised on elevating quarterly profit margins on Wall Street. It is not about the size of bonuses on Wall Street but is instead about providing a foundation for our businesses and families to thrive financially. That is building the future prosperity of America.

Nobody wants to repeat the financial collapse, the bailouts, and the economic recession. We spent 6 years digging out of the hole that was created. But despite the fact that to return to this model would be so destructive to American families, there are at this very moment colleagues of mine gathering in rooms in the Senate and in the House who are preparing policy riders to return us back to those dark days. They want to add policy riders to the financial year 2016 appropriations bills designed to turn back these improvements that restored home ownership for American families, that restored financial systems for small businesses. I wholeheartedly oppose attaching these policy riders to the spending bills. And the American people don't like it either.

So what is going on? One conversation is to design policy riders to reverse the improvements we made in mortgage guidelines, to ensure that mortgages did build the wealth of the middle class instead of preying on the middle class.

Second, there are conversations going on about policy riders designed to weaken the tools and authorities of the Financial Stability Oversight Council, or FSOC. During 2002, 2007, 2008, we didn't have anyone systemically looking at weaknesses in the system. I remember looking at a chart that laid out the vast growth in predatory teaser rate loans that started in 2003. As that chart surged upwards for those loans as a percent of all loans done in America, the number of prime loans came down just as dramatically. We now understand why. The originators were telling their customers: You don't want this prime loan—this low-interest rate locked in for 30 years. You want this teaser rate loan. You get a little bit of a lower rate in the beginning.

They never explained to their customer that their interest rate was going to go up dramatically just 2 years later to a level they wouldn't be able to afford, and yet that originator was getting undisclosed kickbacks.

I say this because had there been an FSOC in place, we would have been reviewing that chart and saying: Wait; what is going wrong? From 2003 to 2005, we have this huge surge in predatory lending. Why do we have this huge collapse of prime lending?

They would have talked to the Wall Street Journal. The Wall Street Journal ran an article, an analysis, a study that looked at this and virtually said that all those folks who are being steered into these subprime loans qualified for prime loans. This is the essence of a predatory practice. An FSOC would have seen that and said that something needs to be done. That is why we have it—to look at bubbles or possible bubbles in our economy or practices in our economy that are going to cause a future collapse and to remedy these problems before they happen. Despite that, we have folks right now trying to undo the creation of the FSOC or disable it from being able to do its job.

There is another group that is gathering to try to undermine the success or ability of having a watchdog—the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—on the beat, ending predatory loan practices from here forward.

They can't just go through statute, because as soon as they outlaw this practice over here, another one develops over here. There are newly invented strategies to continuously find new ways to turn solid, successful financial products into predatory products—misleading products, gouging products, products that explode in a couple years that consumers are not fully informed on. So we have to have a commission to be able to stop those practices.

It is the same thing we have in consumer products. We don't have detailed legislation that says: You can't design a toaster with this, this, this, and this. Instead, we have a Consumer Product Safety Commission that looks at it and says: These new products are unsafe, and for these reasons they can't be allowed. New products come in, they get examined, and they make sure we continue to have safe products. It should be the same for our financial products.

The CFPB has done an extraordinary job ending predatory practices and returning funds to ordinary working families. If you want working families to fail, then allow predatory products. If you want them to succeed, if you have a vision for America that involves the success of families, then let's end these financial wealth-stripping predatory practices. That means the CFPB has to be able to do its job. So it would be 100 percent the wrong direction to put these policy riders in the dark of night to dismantle the Dodd-Frank protections on these spending bills.

The Senate Democratic caucus is going to keep fighting for our American families. We are going to keep fighting for our American consumers. We are going to keep fighting for the success of individuals across this country and to ensure that the Wall Street casino stays closed.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

BUDGET AGREEMENT

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, 3 short weeks ago, many of us, many of my colleagues enthusiastically welcomed the budget agreement reached between the White House and congressional leaders of both parties. It was a budget agreement that put aside the short-term shutdown politics and gave us the opportunity to finally give American families and businesses the longer term economic certainty they need and deserve. It was a budget agreement that made balanced increases in both defense and nondefense discretionary spending—increases that were fully paid for. It was a budget agreement that was negotiated in good faith by Republican and Democratic leadership and the White House. It was a preview of what we might be able to accomplish if we put the politics of the moment, the partisan politics of the 2016 campaign, and other issues aside and actually focus on getting some things done.

Barely 3 weeks later, barely 3 weeks since bipartisan majorities approved the agreement in both letter and spirit, here we are again staring down a potential government shutdown we all thought we had avoided because there was some insistence here—some colleagues who are insisting on poisoning the appropriations bills with policy riders which they know are opposed and which would undermine the ability of the Federal Government to function.

Let's be clear. The policy riders we are discussing, the policy riders I am objecting to don't represent a good-faith policy debate. These are predominantly partisan political priorities that Republicans are otherwise unwilling to bring to the floor of this Chamber because they know they aren't popular with the American people. For example, in my view, we shouldn't be using the appropriations process to try to dismantle or sideline the Environmental Protection Agency and put clean air, clean water, and climate action at risk. If the majority chooses to make devesting cuts to Planned Parenthood, which more than 8,000 residents of my home State of Delaware rely on for health care and family planning, I think my colleagues should bring it to the floor in a separate bill so the American people know that is the focus of the legislation.

I join my colleagues today to make it clear that we are not going to use the appropriations process to pass narrow ideological riders that would not otherwise have been considered on this floor and have not made it through the appropriate process.

As the ranking member of the Appropriations financial services subcommittee, I want to be clear that it is particularly unacceptable to me to use the appropriations process to roll back many of the critical Wall Street reforms put in place over 5 years ago in response to the financial crisis that was devastating to the economy, to families, and to businesses throughout Delaware and the country. If the majority wants to bring a bill to the floor that rolls back some of the key consumer protections put in place in the Dodd-Frank bill, then let's have that debate. Frankly, it is a debate we at times have been engaged in on large- and small-scale issues.

The problem for my colleagues is that they don't have enough support in the Senate to pass these changes in a stand-alone bill. That is why they have taken the troubling step of jamming a 200-page bill—an entire banking bill loaded with controversial riders—right into a must-pass, last-minute government funding bill.

I ask my colleagues—it is my hope and my expectation that many of my Republican colleagues would say that I give honest and thorough consideration to new policy proposals, even ones I am disinclined to agree with. I am open to discussing ways to improve existing reforms so we don't unfairly burden, for example, small community banks that weren't responsible for the financial crisis. No legislation is perfect, but compromising and improving is what authorizing bills and policymaking bills are all about. But the examples I referenced are a few of many areas that should not be jammed into an appropriations bill at the last minute without being fully and carefully vetted by the authorizing committee.

It would be difficult for me today to address all the different policy riders that are in the various pieces of the appropriations bills currently under consideration. They range from education, to health, labor, natural resources, environment, civil rights, justice, housing, immigration, voting rights, telecommunications, to name just a few.

Our budgets—how we spend the taxpayers' dollars—are a reflection of our priorities. But there is a substantial difference between using the appropriations process to support a specific program, department, or Federal activity and using it to sneak around the legislative process and to jam new, big changes into last-minute appropriations bills.

Instead of manufacturing another crisis here in the days ahead, instead of having to look over the cliff of a government shutdown, let's get back to regular order, fulfill our responsibility to responsibly fund the government, and separately engage in positive discussions about how we can make the policy changes we need to ensure that our economy is competitive, that our country is innovative, and that our society continues to benefit from the work we all do here together.

PAUL RYAN has barely had time to set up his new office and settle into his new role and we are already back in crisis mode, walking back an agreement that, as I said at the outset, a majority of this Congress supported and a majority of America cheered.

I urge my colleagues to put the middle class and the stability and future of our economy ahead of partisan politics. Let's negotiate a clean and honest, a clear omnibus spending bill that is free of poison pill policy riders that only serve to divide this body and to unite special interests who at times work against us.

With that, I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

AQUADVANTAGE SALMON

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have come to the floor this afternoon to speak on an energy-related topic—one that I think the Presiding Officer and many will have interest in—and that is the issue of innovation within the energy sector.

Before I speak on energy, I wish to bring up an issue that has come about today with the announcement coming out of the Food and Drug Administration that they have approved an application for what they have called AquAdvantage salmon.

This is actually quite disturbing news to any of us who care about our wild species of salmon, our healthy wild stocks, and who are proponents of good amounts of fresh seafood in our diets, knowing that nutritionally it is a pretty extraordinary source of omega-3 fatty acids and good-for-you nutrients.

We have been trying to get the FDA to make good on their commitment to make sure that pregnant women and nursing mothers know and understand the guidelines out there in terms of what is safe to consume when it comes to fish because, again, when we are looking for that good, nutritious food source, it is pretty tough to beat Mother Nature. Yet, that is exactly what this approval from the FDA is trying to do, which is, effectively, not only trying to beat Mother Nature but messing with Mother Nature.

Again, as one who believes that the real thing is the best thing for our families, the best thing to serve at the dinner table, I find it very troubling. In fact, I am spitting mad today. I have calmed down a lot since I received this news this morning, but I can tell my colleagues that people back home are going to be mad about this for a long time.

For about 5 years now, the FDA has been considering this application for this genetically engineered salmon. Again, they are giving it a pretty nice name, calling it the AquAdvantage, that somehow or another this gives an advantage to the salmon. Well, it does. What it does is allow this genetically engineered fish—I don't even know that I want to call it a fish—this genetically engineered organism to grow twice as fast as any other salmon in the water.

So how does it get to grow twice as fast? Well, it doesn't happen naturally. It is not the way Mother Nature orders it. What they do is they start messing with it. This process, which has now been approved by the FDA, is a process that splices genetic material from a Chinook salmon, a king salmon, and it takes that genetic material and it integrates it with a pout fish and an Atlantic salmon. People might know about an Atlantic salmon, a farmed salmon. What is an ocean pout? Let me show my colleagues what an ocean pout is. An ocean pout is basically this eel-type of bottom fish. Those of my colleagues who know their salmon know about the Chinooks, the sockeyes, and the chums, and they know that this isn't anything close to a salmon, whether it is a wild Alaskan salmon or whether it is a farmed salmon. This is an eel. We are taking a splice from this, and we are taking a splice from an Atlantic salmon, and we are basically splicing this with a Chinook salmon. The resulting organism, this company claims, is going to grow to the size of an Alaskan king salmon in a shorter period of time than that found in nature. Freaky.

We call this combination ''Frankenfish'' because it is just not right. It is just not right. It disturbs me, quite honestly, that the FDA would sign off on the approval of a genetically engineered animal designed for human consumption. This is the first time ever.

The FDA is saying this is going to be safe: We are going to make sure it is safe. We are going to make sure that it doesn't interbreed with the wild stocks, and thus perhaps destroy them. We are going to make sure that it doesn't mix with them so that it doesn't transmit disease. We are going to make sure that it is separated so that it doesn't eat up all of the wild sources available for our Alaskan salmon.

They are going to make sure, apparently by doing this, because they are saying that with this approval, these AquAdvantage salmon can only be raised in land-based, contained hatchery tanks in two specific facilities in Canada and in Panama. We should all feel safer, I guess, because it is all going to be in Canada and Panama. There are no other locations under this application in the United States or elsewhere that are authorized to do this. Somehow or other, the FDA says they are going to maintain regulatory oversight over the production and the facilities, and they are going to conduct inspections to confirm that adequate physical containment measures remain in place. They will be working with the Canadian and Panamanian governments to be conducting inspections. Really? Do I feel safer about making sure that our wild and healthy stocks are going to be not infiltrated by the Frankenfish, by these genetically engineered organisms designed for human consumption, designed to grow twice as fast to get to the size of a king salmon, so that a company can derive the benefit of selling more of this fish.

Well, I am saying FDA should never have approved this—never have approved this. The fact is that the Alaska delegation, as well as members of other delegations in this body and on the other side, have pounded their fists for quite some time against this measure through the FDA. They know full well how much we object to it. At 7:55 last night my assistant got an email from the FDA saying that commissioner would like to talk to me about some imminent news. By the time the morning came around, the imminent news was already made public. Alaskans were already aware that this approval from FDA had come forth. It was not only me; it is my understanding that the head of the agriculture appropriations subcommittee—I met with him yesterday—didn't get a heads-up about it. The nominee was before us yesterday in the HELP Committee, and I actually put two questions to him about seafood. There was no heads-up that this was coming our way, just kind of, boom, lay it on the table.

I have to tell my colleagues, we have made no bones about the fact that this is wrong not only for Alaska and our wild stocks, it is wrong for our salmon stocks around the country, and it is something I am going to continue to fight.

I am not sure as we deal with this news today if we can get the FDA to reverse this. I am going to keep working on it. But at a bare minimum, people around this country need to know what they are serving their families when it comes to seafood. If this is going to be allowed into the markets, if it is going to be allowed on restaurant menus, then it needs to be labeled as such.

The FDA has said there will be draft guidance on voluntary labeling indicating whether food has or has not been derived from GE Atlantic salmon. So, basically, if you want to put a label on that says this is a fake fish, a fake salmon, you can go ahead, but you don't have to. It is only voluntary.

That is not good enough for this mom. That is not good enough for most who care about what their families are eating. So we are going to continue to press for mandatory labeling if the FDA is going to approve—wrongheadedly, in my mind—this genetically engineered fake fish for human consumption. They darn well better agree that labeling will be required because I am not going to eat it.

ENERGY INNOVATION

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, let me switch to a better topic, and that is one I know the Presiding Officer cares a great deal about; that is, the issue of energy and the importance of energy to our Nation's economy and to our overall health.

I have come to this floor many times to highlight what I believe are the shortsighted, anti-energy decisions that we have seen come from this administration. Whether we are talking about the Keystone XL Pipeline, more than 7 years of delay and the eventual rejection of that infrastructure, whether it is the burdensome rules coming out of the EPA that raise the energy costs or whether it is the actions from the Department of Interior that seek to halt resource development in Federal areas, this administration has rarely ever worked with us to promote responsible energy, mineral, and timber development.

In Alaska this ever-shifting Federal regulatory environment played a very key role in the recent decision by Shell to abandon 7 years of work and $7 billion of investment in the offshore Arctic. It was just this week we received word that another company, looking again at low oil prices but seeing this same deteriorating regulatory environment, decided to follow suit, and they are seeking to return their leases in the offshore.

The Obama administration has also canceled offshore lease sales in the State. It has hamstrung projects in our National Petroleum Reserve, which we absolutely need if we are ever going to refill our Trans-Alaska Pipeline. It has placed half of the National Petroleum Reserve off-limits, even though it was specifically designated for development. Of course we all know the situation in ANWR. This administration is trying to lock away 10 billion barrels of oil in the nonwilderness portion of

ANWR, which could be safely produced with development of just 0.01 percent of its surface area. The list goes on and on.

I told you I was going to move to more promising and more uplifting subjects than Frankenfish and what the administration has done to suppress our ability to access our energy resources. I do want to move to another area because I think this is an area and a focus that I would like to believe we can find support, not only working with the administration but working with colleagues and building some partnerships on both the public and the private side. This is in the area of energy innovation, where I believe there is greater hope for working together with this administration to make a real difference for our Nation. Innovation holds tremendous promise, not just for us as policymakers but also in terms of long-lasting benefits that it can deliver for not only the United States but around the world.

Innovation doesn't require more complex and costly regulations. It doesn't need to choose winners or losers in the energy sector. Instead, innovation offers a chance at common ground that will deliver results and help power our Nation for decades to come. No matter your motivation for seeking cleaner and more affordable energy, we should all be able to agree that without innovation—without pushing every day for that greater technology—our energy future and our economic prosperity are hardly secure.

The good news for us in this country is that the United States is the global leader in innovation. We hear this is a race and that America is falling behind, but I would contend that our strength and skill are unmatched. Our innovation, ideas, inventions and our products and processes have changed history and in turn changed the world.

The United States has led the way in research and development that has changed our lives and lives across the world for the better. Among Federal agencies, the Department of Energy, in particular, has played an important role in these efforts, and I think they can make even greater contributions, especially when it comes to vital basic research.

The DOE is hardly perfect. Many of us would make changes to the scope of its mission and improve its priorities if we were given the chance, but given that, the Department has also sparked innovation that has helped transform the global energy landscape. The most successful innovations give us more energy, reduce the amount of energy we use, as well as lower the cost we pay for energy. I think as we move forward we should keep those goals in focus and we will improve. Increasing access to energy, making it more affordable, and improving its environmental performance are the key factors that drive our innovation policy.

Those of us on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee are always talking about innovation and how best to promote it through reasonable Federal policies. We understand how critical it is to our Nation's future. That is why energy and the innovation part of energy is a key part of our broad bipartisan Energy bill that we reported through the energy committee by a vote of 18 to 4 back in July.

The bill also includes legislation that is authored by Senator ALEXANDER to renew some of the energy-related portions of the America COMPETES Act. We have agreed to authorize a 4-percent increase in funding for basic energy research each year, which I think puts us on a responsible path to double our Nation's commitment to it.

It is basic research that is at the heart of the mission of our system of national labs and also many of our research universities. The men and women in the research sector are pushing to make that fundamental discovery—to conduct the basic research that could find the next big thing for energy. This type of research should be a priority for us, and the Department of Energy should be committed to helping new discoveries transition to market viability.

Within this bipartisan bill we also reauthorize the ARPA-E Program, which solicits ideas that are too early for private sector investment but with bridge funding has the opportunity to transform the energy sector. ARPA–E is a true hands-on program that ensures awardees meet milestones toward the goal of market viability. ARPA–E hasn't been around that long, but it has been promoting some good ideas, strong ideas, and producing some good results.

Our bill also supports innovation in a number of other areas; specifically, energy efficiency, energy storage, and distribution; in vehicles it provides for hybrid microgrid systems; and for recycling, for geothermal power, for marine hydrokinetic, and for many other developing technologies.

Recently, we have also seen more reports of private individuals and companies who plan to invest in energy technologies with the potential to transform the way energy is produced, delivered, and consumed. This, too, will help drive energy innovation in this country.

Back in July, Bill Gates announced his personal commitment to invest $1 billion over 5 years to advance new energy technologies. He made that commitment based on his recognition that currently available energy options will not allow the world to achieve its much discussed climate goals in a way that also works to reduce the costs for people using energy. It is one thing to be working toward climate goals, but in doing so if all that we do is increase the cost to the consumer, that doesn't help us. His focus is as much on clean air and clean water as it is on lifting people around the world out of poverty.

I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Gates several weeks ago and look forward to seeing what comes out of his commitment. I am also following the possibilities that are coming out of venture capital and other private investments. I think these efforts augment the Federal research and development dollars, in many cases ensuring that promising technologies are not just set up on a shelf somewhere but are pursued to a successful and productive result.

Now you have heard me say it on the floor many times, but we in the State of Alaska are desperate to see energy innovation. Energy prices in many parts of Alaska are much higher than the prices paid by our friends in the lower 48. In some communities in Alaska it costs 40 to 50 cents a kilowatt hour for electricity. In certain parts of the State, over half of a family's budget goes just toward energy to keep warm and keep the lights on. Can you imagine what that means when over half of your family's budget—half of your income—is used just to keep your lights on and keep yourself warm? It doesn't leave a lot for anything else, such as educating your kids, feeding them or for health care. It is a huge issue for us. There are so many things that contribute to the high cost of energy. It is the big geography and the lack of a comprehensive and interconnected energy delivery system. We have tremendous energy potential in the State of Alaska, and unfortunately many of our communities are just not powered by it. We have natural gas in abundance, and yet our second largest community in Alaska doesn't have access to natural gas. We are trying to get it there, but that is our current reality.

Many communities in rural Alaska still rely on diesel to generate their power. Delivering the diesel, whether it is moving it up river by barge or flying it in by plane is hugely expensive. It is not sustainable. Innovation is essential to moving these rural communities—and even the not so rural communities—off diesel and onto more sustainable, locally generated, and less expensive energy systems.

What we are doing in Alaska is bringing some very innovative technologies to communities around the State through a variety of State-run programs that are largely financed by the revenues that are derived from our oil production. Think about that. We are a State that derives most of our revenues and income from oil. We are taking a nonrenewable energy source, taking the revenues from that and helping to facilitate our renewable resources—our resources that will be there for well into the future. These programs need to be financed. We are doing so much of it from our oil production. Responsible development of Alaska's resources has enabled our State to take the necessary steps to improve energy delivery in our remote communities. In many ways this is almost like a virtuous cycle, where current energy production helps fund the next generation of energy production and where we harness

today's energy to significantly improve the lives of our people.

What we are seeing in the State are several communities working with various State agencies to integrate wind, solar, and geothermal into their electricity delivery system in an effort to displace the power that is normally generated from expensive diesel. It is the microgrids that we are seeing that are coming to be found as the solution. We are home to more microgrids in the State of Alaska than any other State out there. That is largely because they are the only option for us. They are the only option for many of our communities that lie far outside any regional transmission grid. We have transmission grids in what we call the Railbelt area. But it is difficult when you have large geography and small population numbers. So you are going to have to figure out how you can literally power one village at a time or maybe you get lucky and you are able to cluster a few.

But knowing what, for instance, the island of Kodiak has done with being able to power a major seafood-producing port through wind, combined with their hydro resources and also utilizing batteries—that area in Kodiak is almost 100 percent powered by renewable resources. This, again, is one of the major seafood-producing ports not only in the State but in the country. So the energy that is needed for those processes is coming to us by renewable energy sources—almost 100 percent. The irony—and we were able to talk about this briefly in the energy committee this morning—is that in order to meet increased demand in Kodiak, they are going to need to expand one of their hydro facilities, Terror Lake, and so they have asked for assistance with that. If they cannot get the expansion, which some are objecting to because they don't want to see an expansion of that dam, what will happen? You go back to diesel. You go back to diesel. That is not the answer here.

So what we have been doing with pioneering of our microgrids is something that I think provides States and the Federal Government with ample opportunities to conduct research and develop solutions to better integrate renewable technologies into these microgrids. In order for renewable technologies to be effective in the State, innovative research and development is required, and I think the result of those efforts has made a dramatic difference in many communities.

Bringing renewables online in remote communities like Kodiak has displaced hundreds of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel, not only saving the people who live there hundreds of thousands of dollars but resulting in a cleaner environment overall.

I do think it is exciting to think about what a difference future innovations in renewable technologies and energy storage could mean for communities not only in a place like Alaska but really around our country and around the world. Whether it is through Federal research and development, whether it is through our State programs that are assisting our private capital, promoting innovation is a clear path to lower energy costs and a future with cleaner water and cleaner air.

We might not agree on every energy policy that comes to this Chamber, but I hope we can all agree that energy innovation is one key to ensuring our economic growth, our national security, as well as our international competitiveness. I look forward to working with colleagues in all of these areas.

With that, I see that my friend and colleague from Kansas—a gentleman who is always filled with thanksgiving and who has shared that with many of us today—is here on the floor, and so I will yield at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Alaska for her kind comments, her advice, and her help on several important issues we have worked on together. I hope she enjoyed the Thanksgiving meal we had—I guess it is called the Thursday lunch bunch.

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE AND GUANTANAMO BAY DETAINEES

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the French Government for taking aggressive and appropriate action to arrest and kill the terrorists responsible for last Friday's vicious attack in Paris that resulted in 129 killed and over 300 wounded. We all pray for the full recovery of those wounded and note that everywhere within our country we see the American flag at half staff, along with many displaying the flag of our ally France.

The good news today is that the mastermind of several terrorist plots and the plot that killed so many last Friday is dead. Abdelhamid Abaaoud is dead in the same fashion as his victims. So be it. Viva la France! Continuer le combat! Keep up the fight.

As our Nation memorializes those who perished in France, it is the absolute wrong time for President Obama and this administration to be putting forth a plan to relocate Guantanamo detainees to the U.S. mainland—the absolute wrong time.

Now we learn that the administration has delayed the much-publicized but secret plan to close Guantanamo and bring terrorists to the United States. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said, ''I don't have any additional guidance for you but the plan will come relatively soon.'' He has been saying that for some time. Others think the plan could even be released while the President is gone for the G20 meeting in Turkey. As a personal aside, I might suggest he try to move the terrorists there. The reason President Obama delayed the plan is that we had a terrorist attack in France. France has gone to war. The United States is on high alert. Apparently he has tossed this decision and public announcement regarding the plan to the Department of Defense, which has stated there is nothing imminent. Thank goodness for that.

Now, beyond the security threat this poses to our communities in Kansas and in South Carolina or Colorado—the sites which this administration has surveyed for potential relocation—there has been no intelligence assessment regarding the danger of moving enemy combatants from Guantanamo to the United States. That is amazing. The question is, How can the administration ask Kansans or Coloradans or South Carolinians or any Americans to paint a bull's-eye on their community without providing assurances that moving detainees to the United States will not pose a threat to them or our national security? It seems unfathomable, yet this President is proposing to do just that.

This President's unending affinity for Executive orders risks overriding his Attorney General's view of the law, the advice of those at the Department of Defense, especially those close to Fort Leavenworth, and military law enforcement. It goes against the will of the Congress, which voted in this body 91 to 3 to maintain a prohibition on moving detainees to the mainland.

There is absolutely no intelligence to support the move—none. In short, the Senate, Congress, Department of Defense, the Attorney General, and the American people have spoken.

Yesterday I wrote Department of Defense Secretary Carter to ask whether an intelligence report has been done to support the administration's claims that Guantanamo Bay is a recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. Some people believe that. Common sense tells you, however, that moving detainees to the mainland would be a greater recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. I asked if an assessment showed detainment in the United States would decrease recruiting or did an intelligence product show that national security threats would decrease if any enemy combatants are held in the United States. From my discussions with Members of this body on the Senate Intelligence Committee, the answer is that they have no comprehensive intelligence assessment.

Simply put, an assessment regarding the transfers of detainees to the mainland has not been done. So I have asked Secretary Carter and the Department of Defense to ensure that an assessment is completed. To do otherwise would be irresponsible and reckless. How can the President of the United States allow ISIS to paint a target on those who live near what would become Gitmo North? No community in the United States wants that label.

Fort Leavenworth, in particular, is not a suitable replacement for Gitmo.

It is the intellectual center of the Army. It hosts our Nation's best and brightest warfighters at the Command and General Staff College, which also hosts 100 international officers every year.

I want to remind my colleagues just how important Fort Leavenworth's mission is to the Army and to our national security and of the risk that this entire mission would be endangered by making it a terrorist prison.

Fort Leavenworth is home to the U.S. Army's Training and Doctrine Command Combined Arms Center. The Combined Arms Center oversees 13 schools, including the Command and General Staff College. Most recently, Fort Leavenworth was named the ''Army University,'' giving our intellectual center of the Army an official title. Since 1881, the Command and General Staff College and the Combined Arms Center have been engaged in the primary mission of preparing the Army and its leaders for war.

In order to accomplish critical missions, Fort Leavenworth develops and integrates Army leader development, doctrine education, lessons learned, functional training, training support, training development, and proponent responsibilities in order to support mission command and to prepare the Army to successfully conduct unified land operations in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational environment—a lot of words. It is a big mission, an important mission. To degrade Fort Leavenworth to a terrorist prison would have ominous repercussions to our professional military and the value it serves every American and our national security.

In addition, we must consider how our allies will respond to having enemy combatants so close to their top military leaders training at Fort Leavenworth. In my effort to reach out to Embassies tied to the school, all have expressed their deep support for the International Military Officers Division, its value to their military and security, and the importance of maintaining the program at Fort Leavenworth. There is every possibility that the countries that participate in the Command and General Staff College would reconsider their participation given the relocation of terrorists. This would bring negative consequences and represent a terrible detriment to the partnership building that takes place during their course work. It would mean a loss of international cooperation for American military education and our national security.

There are so many imperative factors that must be examined at Fort Leavenworth, in Colorado, and in South Carolina, factors that we cannot ignore. The fact that the FBI has nearly 1,000 investigations into ISIS activity within the United States and all 50 States, that ISIS released a video right after the attacks in Paris stating that the United States was next, and, most important, the fact that we are not dealing with everyday criminals—the detainees currently held at Guantanamo Bay are enemy combatants, terrorists, individuals with no remorse, and with a recidivism of 30 percent and a strong desire to return to the battlefield. The reality is, these individuals and the organizations they support pose the greatest risk to national security we face today.

This administration should not obstruct the will of Congress reflecting the voice of the American people, which has prohibited this White House from transferring detainees from Gitmo to the United States every year since 2009 when we first won this battle. We won the battle back then. Why do we have to repeat it now?

If the President believes he can act without consequences, he is wrong. Again, 91 Senators voted in favor of this prohibition just last week when we passed the National Defense Authorization Act. That is not just a majority, that is a veto-proof majority. Article II of the Constitution does not provide this President—any President—with the power to ignore the law.

Just the other night in a tele-townhall meeting, caller after caller asked if the President's actions are constitutional. The question was, How can the President do this when Congress has prohibited funding? In my view and that of the President's own Attorney General, if the President acts by Executive order, he is acting unconstitutionally.

I agree with our Founding Fathers such as George Mason who said ''When the same man, or set of men, holds the sword and the purse, there is an end of liberty'' and James Madison who said it is ''particularly dangerous to give the keys of the treasury and the command of the army, into the same hands.''

I have mentioned the Congress, the merits of Ft. Leavenworth, the Constitution, but what I have not mentioned yet are our servicemembers. We have asked so much of our men and women in uniform over the past 14 years. We have asked them to go into harm's way before every bit of equipment was ready. We have asked them to deploy and redeploy with almost no dwell time. We have asked them to extend their stays, and we have put them in more places across the globe than any period in history. They have done it all without hesitation or complaint because we have the best fighting force in the history of the world.

I am unwilling to ask them to take on the challenge of guarding enemy combatants in the United States and put their families at risk for harassment, kidnapping, or other tactics homegrown terrorists and foreign fighters have used or will use. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines do not live anonymously when their families are stationed with them, as is the case at Ft. Leavenworth.

I believe, along with many who have worn the uniform, that the attacks in Benghazi may have broken the Nation's promise to never leave a man in harm's way. On a personal note, when I signed up to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps, I was told that if I was in harm's way, I would never be left behind. That is what the Marine Corps could do for me. The Corps would have my back either by squad—if I got in harm's way—or they would send the platoon or the company or the battalion or the regiment or the division or the whole Marine Corps, and I believed that. I still believe it as the senior marine in the Congress. The Marines would have my back.

It has been the same for generations before me and hopefully generations after—that is, until now. If we are going to ask our men and women to fight ISIS or to put their families at risk, they have to know that we have their backs.

Until that bond is restored and we have a President who is willing to lead instead of following, our Nation remains vulnerable to every terrorist organization and cell in the world. We must put national security back as our top priority. It must be our first duty in Congress and by the Commander in Chief.

I stand on the floor because America's national security is my top priority. Bringing Guantanamo Bay detainees to the United States is not putting our Nation's security above politics, campaign promises, or anything else.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

FUNDING VETERANS PROGRAMS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the best way to fight this war on terrorism is to give the President of the United States the tools he has asked for and he needs. Part of that is fully funding support for veterans.

The Presiding Officer sits on the Veterans' Affairs Committee with me. He stood side by side with most of us on funding veterans programs.

Some of my colleagues haven't. They are happy to send people off to war and spend all the money we need but are not so generous when it comes to taking care of our men and women when they return. There are higher suicide rates, higher head injury rates, higher drug addiction rates, and higher unemployment than regular civilians. Yet people in this body, especially the tea party in the House of Representatives, sometimes don't seem to be able to find the money to spend to help veterans.

NOMINATION OF ADAM SZUBIN

Mr. BROWN. Another way to fight this war on terrorism and to help our efforts on fighting ISIS is to actually put the people in place in the U.S. Government who help us do that. I came to the floor today to join Senator CASEY—my friend from Pennsylvania who is

going to mention him too—and to support the nomination of Adam Szubin.

Adam Szubin has been delayed for more than 200 days by Republican obstruction in the Senate banking committee. Well, who is Adam Szubin? Adam Szubin has been nominated—listen to this job—to be the Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes at the Treasury Department. This isn't a low-level employee who has nothing to do with ISIS, fighting ISIS, and fighting terrorism; this is the No. 1 person in the Treasury Department—perhaps the No. 1 person in our whole government next to the Commander in Chief—who is in the position to fight terrorism and fight the kinds of financial crimes that ISIS depends on to fund its operations.

We had a hearing. Originally Mr. Szubin worked for the Bush administration for a number of years. He has been serving interim during the Obama administration, but my colleagues on the banking committee, my colleagues in the Senate, simply have refused to bring Mr. Szubin to a vote. He served Republican and Democratic administrations in senior positions. There is no question, zero question, that he is qualified for this position.

Let me tell you a little more about him. In 15 years he has distinguished himself as a tough, aggressive enforcer of our Nation's sanction laws—not against England or Germany—but against countries such as Iran, Russia, North Korea, against money launderers, against terrorists, against narcotraffickers, the source of a good bit of the money for terrorist groups such as ISIS.

Republicans say the administration is not doing enough; Barack Obama won't stand up. Well, the Republicans are blocking this appointment that would give the President the tools he needs to fight terrorism.

Again, more about Mr. Szubin, he earned his undergraduate and law degrees with high honors, he was a Fulbright scholar in Israel before joining the Department of Justice. As I said, he served with President Bush and with President Obama; he was counsel to the Deputy Attorney General. He worked as trial attorney on the Terrorism Litigation Task Force. He received the Department of Justice Special Commendation Award for his work countering terrorism. For 9 years he directed the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control. Many of us first came to know him then—in both parties—as a thoughtful policymaker and superb lawyer. Both parties respected him until Barack Obama nominated him; then Republicans seemed to forget how good he was and how qualified he was.

The Anti-Defamation League in this letter described him as an ''intellectual heavyweight who has worked effectively with global partners to amplify the effects of U.S. sanctions.''

The United Against Nuclear Iran, a group that strongly opposed the President's deal with Iran, supports Mr. Szubin to be promoted, to be confirmed by the Senate.

Many of my colleagues on the banking committee said: We are not going to confirm Szubin because he was for the Iran nuclear deal. Well, he worked for the President of the United States, who was negotiating it. Of course, he was for it. But are they going to oppose him because they don't like what his boss did or are they opposing him because they don't like much of anything President Obama did?

The fact is that group after group, whether they are for the Iran nuclear agreement or against it—it really doesn't matter—supports Mr. Szubin.

His mentor, Bush Under Secretary Stuart Levy—his mentor and his predecessor, not immediate predecessor but predecessor—was confirmed by the Senate 3 weeks after his nomination. But you know what, both parties then with President Bush recognized that you confirm somebody who is central to the war on terrorism. Republicans then believed that.

Today, with a Democratic President, even though Adam Szubin is supported by darn near everybody—with his qualifications, with his support and work in two administrations—they don't want to bring him forward for a vote. I am not even sure why. I hear all kinds of reasons, none of them really on the record, none of them official, from my colleagues. Oh, they don't like President Obama or this guy must be a bad guy because President Obama appointed him or he was part of the government when the nuclear agreement with Iran was negotiated. All of these reasons simply don't pass a straight-face test. This is a critical national security post, and it needs to be filled permanently and quickly.

Mr. Szubin heads what is, in effect, Treasury's economic war room. It manages U.S. efforts to combat terrorist financing and fight financial crimes. Again, ISIS, ISIL, gets a good bit of its funding through illegal activities like that. If the U.S.—and if Mr. Szubin has the full range of powers that we have given him in the Congress, he can help us fight that kind of financing, stop that kind of financing for ISIS.

He is helping to lead the charge to choke off their funding sources to prevent them from developing additional capacity to strike more targets around the world. He is working to hold Iran to its commitments under the nuclear deal and to lead a campaign against the full range of Iran's other destructive activities. He is supported by the Global Jewish Advocacy and, as I said earlier, by the Anti-Defamation League and by United Against Nuclear Iran.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the documents from the organizations I just mentioned.

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

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, November 4, 2015.

AJC STATEMENT ON ADAM J. SZUBIN NOMINEE FOR UNDER SECRETARY OF TREASURY FOR TERRORISM AND FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Jason Isaacson, AJC Associate Executive Director for Policy, today issued the following statement on the organization's behalf:

AJC has worked with, and admired the dedication and effectiveness of, the Under Secretary-designee for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, Adam Szubin, whose nomination is now before the Senate Banking Committee.

At a time when Iran and its terrorist proxies are ever more active and empowered, and when other terrorist threats to the United States and its allies are escalating, it is urgent that Treasury have in this critical position an experienced, creative, tireless watchdog, who has the know-how and the authority to lead U.S. efforts to track and choke off the financial lifeblood of terror.

As Acting Under Secretary, Adam Szubin has demonstrated that resolve and that skill—to the benefit of America's security and that of our allies. We look forward to his continued public service.

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE,
New York, NY, September 9, 2015.

Hon. RICHARD SHELBY,
Chairman, Banking Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. SHERROD BROWN,
Ranking Member, Banking Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHELBY AND RANKING MEMBER BROWN: On behalf of the Anti-Defamation League, we write in support of President Obama's nomination of Adam J. Szubin to serve as Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes, Department of Treasury.

As director of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), Mr. Szubin has earned a reputation as an intellectual heavyweight who has worked effectively with global partners to amplify the effects of U.S. sanctions. OFAC has been dubbed America's war room, a front line for the United States and its allies against terrorists and tyrants. It is a critical part of the effort to engage global partners to amplify the impact of sanctions and to innovate in the way that the U.S. targets violators.

OFAC's effectiveness, under Mr. Szubin's leadership, has exemplified the balance between working quietly behind the scenes or through diplomatic channels and sending strong public messages around the world about America's robust commitment to crack down sponsors of tcrror like Iran.

But Mr. Szubin has done much more than simply ably administer and enforce U.S. sanction against terrorism, weapons proliferation and rogue states. He has continued to expand and innovate how sanctions are devised and implemented as he has done with respect to sanctions on Iran and Russia.

As Members of Congress have debated how to balance diplomacy and sanctions, leaders on all sides of the debate are unified in their assessment that the strong, vigorous enforcement efforts by committed professionals like Adam Szubin have been one of the most potent and effective tools against the funding of terror and the isolation of rogue regimes.

We urge the Committee to act promptly and favorably on Mr. Szubin's nomination.

Sincerely,

JONATHAN GREENBLATT,
National Director.

[From the United Against Nuclear Iran, Nov. 3, 2015]

UANI SUPPORTS SENATE CONFIRMATION OF ADAM SZUBIN AS UNDER SECRETARY FOR TERRORISM AND FINANCIAL CRIMES

AMBASSADOR WALLACE AND SENATOR LIEBERMAN EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR CONFIRMATION

NEW YORK, NY—United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI) CEO Ambassador Mark D. Wallace and UANI Chairman Senator Joseph I. Lieberman issued the following statement today regarding the Senate confirmation of Adam Szubin as Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Crimes in the U.S. Department of the Treasury:

''UANI was a leading opponent of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear agreement with Iran. The administration's success in blocking bipartisan and majority opposition to the JCPOA on Capitol Hill should not be the basis to oppose the confirmation of Director Szubin as Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Crimes. Simply put, he is the best person for the job, a true expert, a dedicated public servant and fully committed to serve his country. He has shown those traits over two successive administrations—a rare feat in Washington. On behalf of UANI, and in the strongest possible terms, we support Director Szubin's confirmation. We respectfully call on all of our Senate friends who were rightfully frustrated by the administration's tactics related to the JCPOA to put those concerns aside and support the confirmation of Director Szubin.''

Mr. BROWN. He has support across the political spectrum—or at least he did until he was nominated by this President.

I serve on the banking committee with Chairman SHELBY. I sit next to him as the ranking member. I like Senator SHELBY. I work with Mr. SHELBY day-by-day on many things. He has described Mr. Szubin as ''eminently qualified.'' He has served with distinction in senior national security roles—I will say it again—for 15 years under Presidents of both parties. He is well regarded around the world for his intellect, courage, and expertise. He deserves the strong backing of the Senate.

Republicans in Congress need to stop holding our national security apparatus hostage to political demands. They should allow—we should allow Adam Szubin and other national security nominees to be approved as soon as possible.

Again, strip the partisanship away. Do what is right: Confirm Adam Szubin; confirm these other national security people.

They aren't controversial. The only thing controversial about these nominations is that Barack Obama made them. Well, the last time I checked, he was elected President of the United States twice, including my No. 1 swing State in the country—the hardest one to win, the one that both parties fight for in every election. He carried my State twice. He carried my State by over 100,000 votes.

He is the President of the United States. He appointed Adam Szubin, who is eminently qualified, who has had support from both parties. Why don't my colleagues confirm him, giving him the full range of powers to fight ISIS, to keep ISIS from getting the resources and the financing they are getting now to launch these terrible terrorist crimes against innocent men and women all over the world?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business.

The Senator is recognized.

ISIS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the recent terrorist attacks around the world—including, of course, the horror of Paris—but also to talk about what undergirds that, and that is the threat posed by ISIS. Some use the acronym ISIL; Daesh is another phrase that has been used to describe this vicious terrorist group. But I think we need to—at the same time as we are trying to prevent terrorist attacks—focus on the broader policy to destroy ISIS.

We know it has been 4½ years since the people of Syria began protesting against the repressive regime of Bashar al-Assad. As we also know, that conflict escalated rapidly and was coupled with a dysfunctional and sectarian government in Iraq, especially starting from the capital of Baghdad. The fighting and unrest created space for extremism to grow and to take root.

About 1½ years ago, we saw the emergence of the group we now know as ISIS. This group poses a very serious threat to our national security as well as to the security of many parts of the world. There is no question that ISIS is a clear threat to the security of our partners in the region and—as we know most horrifically, in the last few days—in Europe.

They also have a desire to attack the U.S. homeland. We know that. We have to remember that this is a group that originated as an Al Qaeda offshoot. They share the same motivations or at least similar motivations, and they, of course, share the same brutality, if not worse.

In recent weeks, ISIS has claimed responsibility for horrific attacks outside of Syria and Iraq. They claim responsibility for the bombing of a Russian airliner that went down over Egypt in the Sinai, killing all of its passengers—Russian passengers. ISIS suicide bombers attacked a market in Beirut, Lebanon, last week, just before Paris. Then, of course, came Friday night, the 13th. This was, as has been reported, a coordinated, ruthless, and despicable attack in Paris that killed 129 innocent civilians.

So what this horror—and we could list other examples, but these most recent events remind us—what this horror reminds us, is what our job is in Congress and across our country, but especially when it comes to the role of the U.S. Federal Government. We have at least two responsibilities in this area. No. 1 is to prevent terrorists from coming into the United States of America; and second, but related, is to destroy ISIS, without a doubt. To do both of these will continue to be difficult and challenging. Anyone who comes up with a simple proposal or a commentary that makes it seem simple really doesn't know what they are talking about, really doesn't understand the complexity of this. I even doubt their commitment to it when they give one-line answers to difficult challenging problems.

Last year, I was blessed, in June of 2014, to have the chance to go to Normandy. Senator LEAHY, the senior Senator from Vermont, organized a visit to Normandy on the 70th anniversary of D-day. For someone representing any State—in my case representing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, from where so many Pennsylvanians and, of course, so many Americans died on the beaches of Normandy or died within days of that battle—it was deeply moving to be in Normandy, to listen to presentations from those who had lived through the horror of Normandy and those who were coming back to celebrate the fact that they had served and were alive after these 70 years.

We were able to see the beaches. We saw the cemetery. I walked down to the cemetery, and the first grave I happened to look at was one of a Pennsylvania soldier, just fortuitously when I was looking at the first marker, the first grave.

One of the themes of that visit, of course, was France, the people of France thanking the United States, thanking allies and expressing gratitude in so many different ways, in heartfelt ways, at the leadership level, from President Hollande, all the way down. And one of the best images of that gratitude was displayed in this picture. I will put it up on the easel. This is an enlarged version of what was on a brochure. You can see it, and it is written in two languages, of course. The translation is ''70th Anniversary of the Liberation of France,'' in English and French, and the date—June 6, 2014, commemorating the 70th anniversary.

What you may not be able to make out from a distance is the image. It is, of course, a beach, and it is the image of a little girl. She has an orange plastic pail and a green plastic shovel—an image we all understand—a child going on to the beach to play in the sand. She is in a yellow dress, with her back towards us, and she is moving towards the beach.

What is so moving about this expression of gratitude by the people of France is that the shadow that emanates from that little girl is not her shadow. Rather, it is the shadow of an American GI, or what I believe to be an American GI, and I am not sure anyone could contest that. It is a profound and

very moving and very powerful expression of gratitude that all of us can understand: that this little girl would not be able to be on that beach to play in freedom—or any of the other places that were under attack during World War II—were it not for the bravery of American soldiers, the commitment of the American people, and the work that was done to undergird that effort by the allies against the axis powers.

It is a very powerful reminder of the contribution of that soldier depicted by the shadow and the freedom that little girl can enjoy because of that sacrifice—a profound sacrifice, a sacrifice you cannot even describe if you had volumes of books to write about it. I was moved because it was a wonderful expression of gratitude to the people of the United States by the French people.

I was thinking about that in the aftermath of this horror. Folks all over the United States and around the world were expressing solidarity with the people of Paris and the people of France, and it gave us the chance to try to give back to them in the aftermath of their tragedy, a year or so after they had expressed gratitude to us. This relationship between our two countries is very strong and goes back to the beginnings of our Republic, even back to the days of the Revolution.

That image of that little girl probably couldn't be expressed or presented were it not for what happened in World War II and what happened on the beaches of Normandy. Again, we were able to achieve that result by working with allies the world over. It would not have been possible were it not for the work of people around the country sacrificing—the soldiers and their families, the factories, the spouses who worked in the factories while soldiers were overseas. There was a lot of good work done then by the Congress to support the war effort. We have to figure out a way here to get back to that kind of sacrifice, that kind of commitment.

There was a reminder recently of what a Member of this body said around that time, about 1945. Senator Arthur Vandenberg from the State of Michigan delivered a seminal speech in January 1945 on this floor. Senator Vandenberg was a Republican, an avowed isolationist and a strong opponent of President Roosevelt. But on that day he said:

> We cannot drift to victory. We must have maximum united effort on all fronts. . . . and we must deserve the continued united effort of our own people.

It is Vandenberg's example of setting aside partisan politics for the good of our Nation that gives us this expression: Politics stops at the water's edge. We have all heard that expression. If we haven't, we should educate ourselves, and if we have heard it, we should remind ourselves of it. But I am afraid when we debate foreign policy and security policy, there is often a dismissal of that basic lesson he taught us. I am afraid we have lost sight of his legacy that politics must stop at the water's edge when it comes to our security, whether that is the fight against terrorism itself or whether that is a military campaign against ISIS.

This fight against ISIS demands our attention, but it also demands our unity. Unity is not just a nice expression, something we should hope for. The challenge demands it. If we are not unified, it is going to be very difficult to defeat ISIS or any other threat, frankly. We must not do oversight by sound bite when it comes to this policy. We can engage, as some have done—not everyone but enough to be concerned in both Houses of Congress—in categorical condemnation of the President's policy on virtually everything in the international arena. That doesn't move the ball down the field. It also doesn't absolve the President of accepting and incorporating critiques of the policy—specific critiques of what we should be doing or are not doing or might want to consider. But categorical condemnation doesn't help anyone. It doesn't solve the problem. It just divides people and prevents us from having that essential unity to make sure the strategy works.

I have been critical of a number of the President's policies on the international stage. I haven't always agreed with him. But if one is going to disagree with the President or disagree with a colleague about something as important as a strategy to defeat what most people believe is the biggest threat to the civilized world, you should be very specific. Unity demands that you be specific. We don't have time for just words and finger pointing. We need a bipartisan approach to this challenge.

So we do need bipartisanship. We need sober and serious deliberation, and we also need spirited debate. I am not advocating that someone doesn't criticize the policy or engage in a very heated exchange with someone who has a different point of view. But it has to be a debate, and it has to be an engagement that yields a result. And the result is a policy and a strategy that is going to be effective and that has some degree of substantial unity.

A lot of our allies look at the squabbles here in Washington and wonder how serious we are about this fight. If all we do is just comment and answer reporters' questions, maybe go to a hearing once in a while, that is OK, but this policy is going to take a lot more than that. Some of our allies look at our failure to unite behind a common strategy and wonder whether the United States will be an enduring partner for as long as it takes to eliminate ISIS from the planet—not just to defeat them on the battlefield but to destroy them. A lot of these allies, I am afraid, are wishing for more Senator Vandenbergs or at least more Vandenberg-Roosevelt days, when someone could disagree almost violently about domestic policy or even an aspect of our security, but at some point you came together and said: We are going to move forward with this strategy and work together.

In November of last year, the President outlined a multipart strategy to address the threat posed by ISIS. He spoke about the airstrike campaign in Iraq and Syria, which now involves 11 countries and has yielded more than 8,000 airstrikes as of last week. Those strikes have taken out ISIS leaders. They have taken out financiers, bomb makers, foreign fighters and foreign fighter recruiters.

Of course, most recently—just last week, just before the horrific news about Paris—we were told the man responsible for the beheadings of ISIS hostages had, in fact, been killed. That was a good result for the civilized world. We also heard from the President at that time—and since that time—of a 60-plus nation coalition.

Most recently, there have been hits on the tanker trucks bringing oil out of ISIS-held areas for sale on the black market, hits on communications equipment or weapons caches, and they have helped protect opposition fighters who cleared the way for significant territorial gains, especially by the Kurdish Peshmerga forces—great fighters in this battle. Reports now indicate that ISIS territorial holdings in Iraq and Syria have been diminished by as much as 25 percent in roughly the last year. CENTCOM's assessment—this isn't an assessment by a politician; this is CENTCOM—indicates that the refinery in the city of Tikrit has been largely retaken, as has been the city of Sinjar and a main road connecting ISIS strongholds in Raqqa and Mosul. These airstrikes are denying ISIS safe haven and significantly hindering their ability to move freely around areas where they operate.

So what have we heard over and over? Airstrikes alone will not win this. I agree with that. I get that. But airstrikes are moving the ball down the field in the sense that they are giving the opportunity to fighters on the ground and helping in other aspects of the strategy. So we have to continue the airstrikes. I hope people around here don't start saying: Well, airstrikes alone don't do the job; so let's stop the airstrikes. No, we have to continue them and, if necessary, for years—many years.

But this strategy is not just a military strategy. The President also outlined an effort to counter the financial networks that support ISIS, which gets funding from multiple sources. We know them: illicit oil sales, trafficking in antiquities and other goods, extortion of the local communities, and outside donations. The Department of Defense is targeting financiers for kinetic strikes, a fancy way of saying you are going to be taken out if you are a financier. Treasury has sanctioned a number of senior ISIS leaders and facilitators, cutting off access to the U.S. financial system. The strategy also includes measures to address foreign fighter recruitment and travel. We

are also working to expose ISIS's hypocritical propaganda which many Muslim leaders around the world have said is inconsistent with their religious values. It is clear there can be no enduring defeat of ISIS without remedies for the governance issues which created this space for extremism to fester.

In Iraq we are working to create an inclusive government that has a capability to counter ISIS. In Syria we need a negotiated political solution that ensures Bashar al-Assad—whose continued presence in Damascus has been a recruiting windfall for ISIS—has no role in the future of Syria and has to go. I have said that many times. I appreciate the fact that Secretary Kerry and his team have recognized these underlying problems and have worked to address them.

So while the administration has taken important steps, we know it is not enough. We know that. Recent events require an intensification of our efforts. I have critiqued this Syria policy for years and will continue to press the administration to do more on ISIS financing. We have to make sure ISIS can't pay their people's salaries. We have to cut off their financing so they can't operate, so they can't pay for propaganda, so they can't buy weapons, so they can't buy ammunition, and so they can't make the horrific IEDs that kill innocent civilians and soldiers. So we must continue this debate as Members of the Senate with the administration. Part of making sure we get the financing challenge in the right place is to confirm Mr. Adam Szubin, who would play a substantial determinative role in the Treasury Department.

So what do we do? It has been very difficult to get people focused on a bipartisan strategy. There is a lot more we can do. I believe the establishment of a bipartisan study group, comprised of experts and former government officials from both sides of the aisle, will be useful at this juncture. This group should be authorized by Congress, appropriated a modest amount of money for supporting its work, similar to the Iraq Study Group formed in 2006. The group should evaluate the nature of the ISIS threat as well as the conditions in Iraq and Syria that have allowed it to grow and evolve, and it should evaluate the military and nonmilitary options available to the United States to address this threat and the underlying conflicts and governance issues. There is a lot this group could do and contribute to what would be a stronger, bipartisan, unified policy. There are many outside experts whose careers of service in the Middle East, and civilian, military, and intelligence roles, offer a wealth of expertise. This group could conduct its work over a 6- to 9-month period and report back to Congress with its findings. If they could do it faster, we would certainly authorize and encourage them.

Initiating a bipartisan study doesn't mean we should press pause on our current efforts. Members of Congress need to continue supporting our soldiers, bringing the fight to ISIS with intensity and focus. We need to continue our efforts to reach a negotiated political transition in Syria and to encourage inclusivity and good governance in Iraq. If a Sunni soldier doesn't feel a part of his own government, they have to support a unifying government. We need to continue to press the growing humanitarian crisis emanating from Iraq and Syria, but I believe our efforts to defeat ISIS and our long-term goal of countering violent extremism would benefit from a serious bipartisan expert study group.

In closing, I will once again invoke the words of Senator Vandenberg. In the speech he gave in the 1940s, he said: ''Here in the Senate we do not have perpetual agreement between the two sides of the aisle, but we have never failed to have basic unity when crisis calls.''

''We have never failed to have basic unity when crisis calls.'' Crisis has called, right now. We know that. The crisis is ISIS and terrorism. We have to destroy ISIS and prevent terrorism from coming to our shores. We don't have time for politics. We don't have time for people talking in sound bites and pretending they are doing oversight. We need bipartisan work that will bring people together on a unified strategy. I urge my colleagues to reflect on the spirit of Vandenberg's seminal speech and to find a unified path forward that supports our long-standing partners and protects the security of this great Nation.

I will conclude with a picture. This is a picture of a little girl who can walk on a beach in freedom because of the bravery and sacrifice of our soldiers in World War II. If we are worthy—worthy of that sacrifice—we had better get our act together, come together—both parties—and make sure we have a bipartisan policy. We don't have time for finger-pointing. We have to come together and make sure we do all we can to have a sound, serious, bipartisan effort against ISIS and against terrorists. I believe that is a mission worthy of a great nation and certainly worthy of the sacrifice of the people who are on the battlefield right now—our soldiers, our fighters, as well as soldiers from around the world—and certainly worthy of the sacrifice that led to the beautiful expression of gratitude that the French people gave us just last year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I look forward to working with my colleague from Pennsylvania on that sound bipartisan policy he is talking about, and I want to talk a little bit about that today. He mentioned Senator Vandenberg, who famously said that partisanship ends at the water's edge. I think he would have been surprised by President Obama's comments beyond the water's edge in Turkey yesterday, where he attacked Republicans who dared to talk about the need for us to ensure that we know who is coming to our shores and specifically with regard to refugees and having a proper vetting process in place. In fact, the House of Representatives—with over 40 votes from Democrats—I understand just voted on legislation today, which is a veto-proof majority, to say we ought to tighten requirements for people who want to come to our shores.

So we do need to work together. We do need to ensure that partisanship does not get in the way of working together as Americans to solve these problems. The partisan speech from across the ocean, well beyond our shores, was an example of where we are not meeting the standards Mr. Vandenberg set out.

As we all know now, last weekend ISIS terrorists killed over 130 innocent people in a series of very well-coordinated attacks in Paris. I would say these attacks did not occur in isolation. They were one but a series of attacks that occurred within a 24-hour period. Sometimes we forget the context of these attacks. The series of attacks left 43 people dead in Beirut, 18 people dead in Baghdad, countless wounded—all ISIS attacks. In the preceding month, ISIS took credit for a downed Russian airplane, claiming the lives of 224 innocent civilians. In September, Islamic extremists murdered nearly 50 in Yemen.

In fact, if we look back over the period of last year, several hundred civilians have been killed in nearly 30 attacks—incidents spanning the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, Asia, and North America. It is impossible to deny the growing threat that this extremism poses to our Nation, our allies, and our shared values and global stability.

Despite all of its great qualities, technology has bridged the oceans that once separated us from foreign turmoil and brought this threat to our communities and to our homes, the places we feel most safe. These attacks must serve as a wake-up call, not only about the nature of the enemy we face in ISIS but about the chaotic and dangerous state of the world and the dire need for American leadership to address it.

The attacks in Paris were not a ''setback,'' as the President said. They were a continuation of terrorist acts. They were a tragedy and a warning—a warning that if we fail to take a leadership role in combatting extremist behavior everywhere it resides, we will confront another tragedy here, on our shores.

We cannot develop a successful strategy to defeat ISIS unless we understand its true nature. There has been a lot of talk this week about Syrian refugees and whether they should be properly vetted. Of course they should, but we need to take a broader look at this issue and have a broader discussion about the roots of the problem: Why are these refugees streaming into Europe and coming here? We need to look

at not just the roots of the problem but what is the comprehensive strategy to address that problem.

We can't develop a successful strategy to defeat ISIS unless we understand its true nature. The President's insistence on downplaying the extremist threat and viewing each act in isolation is a fundamental flaw in his national security policy, in my belief. Referring to ISIS as the ''JV team,'' as it seized nearly one-third of Iraq, publicly stating that ISIS has been ''contained'' just hours before the attack in Paris, and then referring to those attacks as a mere ''setback'' are all symptomatic of this failed policy, in my view.

I think this is a time for moral and strategic clarity. I think of Roosevelt and Churchill in World War II. I think of Kennedy and Reagan in the Cold War. Times of crisis require seeing threats as they are and not as we might wish them to be. Nothing would make me happier than if the President of the United States would provide this clarity.

We now know that the Paris attacks were planned in Syria, organized in Belgium, and carried out in France. This revelation is yet another confirmation of a key fact many of us have been saying for years: ISIS is a global threat with global reach and ambitions. It is motivated by a radical Islamist ideology that while rejected by the majority of Muslims, nevertheless holds great appeal to too many Muslims around the world. This ideology rejects any form of government that is not based on a radical interpretation of Sunni Islamism and holds that it is the duty of all Muslims to wage jihad against those who do not share their views—including of course the United States, including of course Israel, including of course the apostate regimes, as they call them, like America's Arab allies all through the Middle East.

The President continues to insist that the limited scale and scope of the administration's strategy to counter ISIS is working, but ISIS is not just a nuisance to be managed. It is a global threat to be defeated. Rather than containing ISIS to a geographic region, the conflict in Syria and Iraq has served as an incubator for terrorism. The territory ISIS holds provides a safe haven for these terrorists to train, organize, gather resources, and project power. Tens of thousands of foreign fighters from Europe, the United States, and around the world have flocked to the frontlines of the global jihad, and many return home with the training and resources necessary to carry out monstrous attacks. Meanwhile, a flood of refugees fleeing atrocities and persecution in Syria have provided ISIS operatives a community in which they can easily hide. Indeed, it appears at least one of the Paris attackers was someone who disguised himself as a refugee to get into Europe.

This enemy is cunning and knows it cannot defeat us on a conventional fight on the battlefield, so it is employing asymmetric warfare to attack our values and degrade the collective security of our nations. They know they have access into every home and are using modern media technologies to exploit a disenfranchised minority. Their audience spans the globe. Think about this: If they only reach 0.0001 percent of the global population, then they have an army of over half a million potential terrorist recruits.

More intelligence cooperation between the United States and our allies is absolutely necessary to track suspected ISIS terrorists and prevent them from hiding their presence and launching attacks. The United States should also increase the scale and intensity of military operations against ISIS targets. If we can give the French the intelligence to be able to attack key ISIS targets in Syria, then why haven't we used that intelligence ourselves to degrade the enemy? We must intensify the use of our military. We must intensify U.S. Special Operations forces and local allies. We must defeat ISIS forces on the ground and retake territory.

As I have argued for a couple of years now, we cannot ignore the broader conflict in Syria and must lead our allies in pursuing a comprehensive strategy to not just defeat ISIS but to also achieve a negotiated resolution of the Syrian conflict.

Over 4 million people have fled Syria. The Government of Syria has murdered over 200,000 of its own citizens. I saw an interview today where someone was asking one of the refugees from Syria what their preference was—to go to Europe or to go to the United States. The refugees said what most refugees said: I want to go home, but I need a safe haven there.

We should have a no-fly zone in Syria and provide for people the ability to stay in their own country. Military force alone will not solve this problem. Obviously, we need to do more and engage the Muslim world in this effort, but it can shape the parameters of an acceptable solution.

These measures are all important, but they all stem from the recognition of something far more fundamental. In the absence of U.S. leadership, chaos and instability ensues. It takes active American leadership to reassure our allies, to deter our enemies, and to uphold the international order upon which global stability and prosperity depend. We should not be the world's policemen; I agree with that. It is more like being the world's sheriff, where you bring together a posse of like-minded nations. Whether it is the NATO countries with regard to Ukraine or whether it is our Sunni allies with regard to what is happening in the Middle East, we must be the sheriff who pulls the posse together. In the absence of that, in the absence of that leadership, we will not meet this challenge.

In the Middle East, the chaos we see is not just contained in Syria, and it is not just confined to ISIS. As the United States prepares to provide billions in sanctions relief agreed to in the Iran nuclear deal, Iran has been very busy. Iran has sent ground troops into Syria as part of a new joint offensive with Assad, Russia, and the terrorist group Hezbollah. Iran has tested a ballistic missile, they have arrested several American citizens living in Iran, and they have threatened to wipe Israel off the map of the Middle East. Ayatollah Khamenei has now banned any further negotiations with the United States of America.

Meanwhile, Russian forces are conducting combat operations in the Middle East for the first time since 1941. Russia has launched a sustained air campaign—not really against ISIS, as Putin claims, but almost entirely against U.S.-backed rebel groups and other moderate groups opposed to both ISIS and Assad. There is discussion of them targeting ISIS more. I hope that is true. In Europe, Russian forces continue to occupy portions of eastern Ukraine and continue to occupy Crimea. After a brief lull, violence is once again rising, as Russian efforts to undermine the democratic pro-Western government of Ukraine persist. Russia also continues to wage an unprecedented information war that leverages all elements of national power to confuse, demoralize, and mislead.

In the meantime, hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing conflict in the Middle East stream into Europe, threatening to overwhelm Europe's ability to vet and process them and create opportunities for terrorists to evade detection and conduct attacks like those we saw in Paris.

In the Pacific, China is building artificial islands in international waters to reinforce its claims in the South China Sea.

This is the world that unenforced redlines and leading from behind have created. It is a world where the very structure of international order is under siege and where the direction of our collective future is brought into question. Of course, this trend is not irreversible, but the United States must first step out of the shadows.

Ronald Reagan spoke memorably about peace through strength. We must be unambiguous in our support of our allies, and we must be clear-eyed and resolute in standing up to our foes. This is the path to peace and security for us and for the world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

PRESIDENT'S REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PLAN

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I appreciate very much the remarks of Senator PORTMAN. I think he is touching on some critically important issues that all of us need to fully understand. As always, his insights are valuable and worthy of serious consideration by all.

I would also briefly note that I do believe—and I spoke about this several weeks ago—there is a need for this country, as Senator CASEY noted, to develop a bipartisan strategy, particularly with regard to how we deal with the rising spasm of extremism in the Middle East. It is a fact. It is happening. We as a country have to be able to work together in a bipartisan way to decide what action we may choose to use—whether it is military force, whether it is technological advancement, whether it is working with allies—to do whatever we can to increase more stability, more peace and tranquility, and less terrorism and violence. It is a big matter, and I am not at all confident that we have a strategy. In fact, we don't have a strategy that anyone can recognize as effective in this region, as a number of witnesses before the Armed Services Committee have testified, including former Secretary of Defense Bob Gates, who served under both President Bush and President Obama.

This President seems to have his own plan. He refuses to listen. As he traveled around the world recently talking about the attacks in Paris, I think it stunned our allies. This is not a healthy situation. There are millions of refugees. Good leadership, responsible leadership, should have anticipated this danger, and when it developed, have a sound strategy that deals with it in a humane way. It cannot be the strategy of the United States and Europe that when instability occurs anywhere in the world, when instability occurs in Syria or other places in the Middle East, the solution is for everybody to come to Europe or the United States. This is not healthy for those countries, it is not part of the historical tradition, and for reasons I am going to touch on, it is very bad policy.

I think Senator PORTMAN is correct that we are not where we need to be militarily, strategically, and in other ways, to help bring about a situation in which people can return to their homes and be with their families and not have to be running all over the world, marching through Europe, not knowing where they are going to go, in countries that will not and cannot support them. It is not sound policy.

I want to address the economic and security threats imposed by the President's refugee resettlement plan and talk about it in some detail and explain why the more effective and compassionate solution is to resettle the region's refugees in safe zones in the region rather than flying them into the United States or Europe or other places around the globe.

Each and every year, the United States issues green cards to roughly 1 million immigrants. We admit approximately 500,000 foreign students. We distribute work visas to approximately 700,000 foreign workers and grant approximately 25,000 requests for asylum. Asylum is when a person arrives in our country and says: I can't go home because I will be in danger. A refugee is when somebody is in a foreign country—not their own country—and comes to our Embassy or to the UN and says: I am threatened here. I am not safe. I want to be a refugee and go elsewhere. If they are accepted, they are a refugee. If the others are accepted after they come to our country—perhaps illegally—they are asylees. We have brought in another 70,000 refugees on top of that each year in recent years.

The fact is, refugees are among the most costly immigration programs for several reasons. Refugees are instantly eligible for all Federal welfare and entitlement programs. Most are low-skilled and frequently lack any formal education and many—most don't speak English.

There is great cost involved in this. One estimate from an expert is that for every 10,000 refugees admitted, there will be a lifetime cost to the U.S. Treasury of $6.5 billion. This year, we are now going to accept 85,000. The President says he will accept 100,000 next year and maybe more. Now, 100,000 is 10 times $6.5 billion added to the debt of the country, because no extra money is being appropriated for Medicaid and for food stamps. The money is going to be added to the debt. It is not healthy. It is very expensive.

There are enormous security concerns as well. We have seen a number of refugees implicated in terrorist activity inside the United States. We wish it weren't so, but it is a fact. Yet, in this environment of increasing Federal debt, wage stagnation driven by excess labor supply, and ISIS terrorists trying to infiltrate as refugees, President Obama has announced a unilateral expansion of the refugee program to begin admitting many more Syrian refugees. This is at a time when 83 percent of the voters say projected growth in immigration should be curbed, according to Pew polling.

The President persists in his plan even though his own officials, testifying before the Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest, conceded there is no database in Syria with which to vet refugees.

The administration briefed us last night, and they publicly stated: We are going to use biometric techniques. In the United Sates, what does that mean? It means they take your fingerprint and run it against the NCIC—National Crime Information Center—and see if you have warrants for your arrest or if you have been convicted of anything. You can't do that in Syria. You can take their fingerprints, but there is no database to run it against. So that is just puffing. That is spin. You can't run fingerprints in Syria, because there is no database to run them against. As his officials further concluded, there is no way to prevent refugees from radicalizing after their entrance into the United States, as has happened, unfortunately, with Somali refugees.

It is an unpleasant but unavoidable fact that bringing in large unassimilated flows of migrants from the Muslim world creates the conditions possible for radicalization and extremism to take hold. This is what they are seeing in Europe.

The FBI Director tells us there are now active ISIS investigations in all 50 States. They have a terrorist investigation involving ISIS in every State in the Union today. I think there are 900 open cases.

Our subcommittee has identified dozens of examples of foreign-born immigrants committing and attempting to commit acts of terror on U.S. soil. It is happening every day. Preventing and responding to these acts is an effort encompassing thousands of Federal agents, attorneys, and prosecutors and billions of dollars in costs. They are directing their efforts away from bank fraud and Medicare fraud and toward watching terrorists. Their ability has been limited by restrictions on their ability to conduct surveillance. In effect, we are voluntarily admitting individuals at risk for terrorism and then on the back end trying to stop them from carrying out bad, violent designs.

The former head of the Citizenship and Immigration Services union, which represents immigration workers who handle the casework on these evaluations for admission, issued this warning more than a year ago. This is important. This is the man who represents the individuals who do the work every day, and he got frustrated and he told the truth. This is what he said:

> It is also essential to warn the public about the threat that ISIS will exploit our loose and lax visa policies to gain entry to the United States.
>
> Indeed, as we know from the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, from the 9/11 terrorist attacks, from the Boston Bombing, from the recent plot to bomb a school and courthouse in Connecticut, and many other lesser-known terror incidents, we are letting terrorists into the United States right through our front door. . . . Applications for entry are rubber-stamped, the result of grading agents by speed rather than discretion. We've become the visa clearinghouse for the world.

We can't properly vet the people coming now. Yet we are still talking about adding more and more people to it.

Senator CRUZ and I sent the administration a list of 72 individuals charged with or convicted of terrorism-related offenses in just the last year. We wanted to know something. We asked for the immigration histories of each one of these individuals. Isn't that a good thing to know? We are policymakers. We are supposed to decide how to conduct immigration issues. As we evaluate how to improve our immigration situation, shouldn't we know how these terrorists—who have been arrested, charged, or convicted—got into the country?

Well, stunningly, the administration has just refused to respond. They didn't

respond because they don't want the public to know. They think if they can ignore these requests, then people will not know and will not begin to question how things are being conducted. Congress should not acquiesce to the President's refugee funding request when he refuses to even publicly disclose the immigration history of these 72 terrorists, many of whom are involved with and directly connected with Al Qaeda and ISIS.

An outright majority of the public opposes resettling Syrian refugees in the United States. In fact, voters across all parties wish to see a reduction of Middle Eastern refugee settlements. It is in the data. That is what people think. They are worried about this issue. Why shouldn't they be? We have had our own problems. We have had 9/11, we have had the Boston bombers, and many other instances, such as Chattanooga, and look at what is happening in Europe. I don't think the American people are mean or unkind. They are just rightly concerned. They want to protect their families, their Nation, and their interests, and I think we should consider their concerns.

The safe and proper course is to focus on regional resettlement. One report says that for the price of placing one refugee in the United States, 12 can be helped in their homeland. Our goal must be to help refugees find safety and help them return to their homes, not for us to depopulate the region.

How serious is this? Only this strategy will protect the security of the United States and the West, protect the finances of our country from further debt, and protect the long-term stability and safety of the Middle East itself. That is what our goal should be, and our President is not focused on this issue. It has been raised in committee after committee and nothing has been accomplished. He just sticks with the plan he has.

What then is Congress to do to stop the President from carrying out a plan the voters oppose and Congress has not approved? The answer lies in the power of the purse. Each and every year the President submits a request to Congress to fund his Refugee Admissions Program. Only with these funds can the President carry out his plans. Congress, which has been run over time and again by this President, must not write the blank check the President is asking for. He can also bring in more refugees than he has currently indicated. Secretary Kerry has told the Judiciary Committees of the House and Senate they just may well bring in more than this.

My colleague Senator SHELBY and I outlined in a joint statement that the answer is for Congress to include in the year-end funding bill a clear requirement that the President must submit his annual refugee plan to Congress for approval. Senator SHELBY is on that Appropriations Committee. Under this plan, Congress must approve how many refugees are brought in and from where.

Mr. President, is it time to wrap up?

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Chair and ask for 1 additional minute to wrap up.

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we are facing a humanitarian crisis of monumental proportions. In large part, it is because the President has mismanaged the situation in Syria. He is the Chief Executive, he is the Commander in Chief, the military does what he says, and this has not been good. It just has not been good. It has caused danger, it has caused innocent people to be killed, it has caused people to have to flee, and it has also allowed the surge of ISIS and Al Qaeda-type terrorist organizations in Syria to be able to create an entire state of their own and to export their terrorism.

We have to create safe zones in Syria and other places in the region where people can stay in their homes, and we need to work to end this fighting as soon as possible so people can go back home permanently. It cannot be the position of this country that we just bring in millions of people because of the dangers abroad. It just does not make common sense.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, as my colleague from Alabama prepares to leave, I want to wish him and his family a happy Thanksgiving holiday and I look forward to seeing him in 10 days.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, Senator CARPER is one of our most delightful colleagues. He is always gentlemanly and calls us to consider and think on the higher things. I thank my friend from Delaware for that and his service.

ISIS

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, it has been quite a week. I think we have all learned a bit about Syrian refugees, the challenges they face, and the potential challenges they create for us in this country. One of the things we have learned is that it is not easy to come here as a refugee to this country. In fact, it is pretty difficult. It is not something one can do easily. If you want to come over thinking that you might wait a couple of weeks or a couple of months—you might wait a couple of years. You have to go through a vetting process with the United Nations. You go through a vetting process overseas with the U.S. folks. You have to have your information go through any number of databanks to determine whether you are a person of special interest and could potentially be a problem. It is a long process.

I will be honest. If I were a bad guy over there, one of these ISIS folks trying to get into the United States and create mayhem, there is no way I would want to wait 2 years, go through a refugee program, and probably get bounced out somewhere along the line through all these background checks and access to intelligence databanks and personal interviews. I think I would find another way to get here, and there are other ways to get here. We have been talking about that more recently today and yesterday.

One of the potential ways to get here is through what is called the Visa Waiver Program. It is an agreement we have with 38 different nations. The Visa Waiver Program started a number of years ago, and it has now grown to include 38 countries. It started off as a travel facilitation program, kind of like the TSA precheck or the global entries we have at the airports here in the United States. It started off as a travel facilitation program, and over time it has turned into an information sharing partnership with 38 different foreign countries. The idea is to make it a little easier for folks who we believe are trusted travelers to get into this country from several dozen nations. One of the things we don't focus on very much in this program is we believe it is to our economic advantage to facilitate travel and tourism for those visiting our country. That is hard to argue with. It also facilitates tourism and traveling to the other 38 countries.

We didn't just enter willy-nilly into this agreement with these other 38 other countries. There are certain requirements we have in terms of access about the people who would like to come to this country under the Visa Waiver Program. We have any number of different kinds of access to intelligence data files and databases, and we insist on that before we allow these countries to participate. If they don't want to do that, they are not part of the Visa Waiver Program.

If they change their mind during the course of our relationship with them as part of the Visa Waiver Program and become not very good partners in this, we bounce them out, they are no longer part of the Visa Waiver Program, and then those people have to go through the regular visa process.

Anyway, that would provide another option. It is probably a more favored option for somebody who is anxious to get over here from Syria or for anybody who wants to do mayhem. That might be an option if they live in one of those 38 countries. People can go to U.S. consulates all the time in other countries. They ask to come here. Sometimes they ask to come here on a visa. It could be a tourism visa. A lot of people want to come to the United States as a tourist. It could be that they want to come here to study. Those may be perfectly legitimate, but in some cases they may not be. Folks come here in many other ways.

We had an interesting hearing today in the Senate's Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. We had two witnesses from the Federal

Government, and then we had five witnesses from a variety of different backgrounds. One of the things we asked were: Where do the real threats lie for our country? It could be Syria. It could be ISIS people from Iraq. It could be folks who have been radicalized from other countries who have gone to Syria to fight and have become jihadists and want to somehow get into our country and create not just mischief but mayhem. Everybody who testified said the primary concern should not be the Refugee Resettlement Program. Why would anybody want to go through that? It wastes 2 years. Maybe they will get through it, maybe not. If you are lucky, you get through it 2 years later.

The 2,000 people or so who have come through that program from Syria this year, I am told they were mostly women and children, older men—very old men. Out of the 2,000, in terms of the folks who are male and of fighting age, only about 2 percent fall into that category. They all have to provide family connections of the people they are related to and will be reunited with over here. That is part of the deal for getting in. It is not like every refugee who comes here would even be someone who would be expected to be of fighting age.

One of the other things most of the folks agreed on was that one of the greatest concerns we ought to have for folks getting into our country and doing mischief here would not necessarily be folks from other countries. The concern is about the folks who are already here and may be natives to the United States who have become radicalized. We heard that again and again and again. That is a major concern, and that is something we have to be serious about.

One of the best ways we can reduce the likelihood that folks living here would be radicalized and want to be a part of the ISIS army overseas or right here is to do what we are trying to do as a country; that is, to degrade and destroy ISIS militarily. And that would be not just us by ourselves—us using our air superiority, us using our ability to gather and disseminate intelligence, with direct strikes, and to provide help to the people on the ground, to the boots on the ground—not us—but to help other countries that are doing that sort of thing.

My guess is—and this was confirmed by most of our witnesses today—that the folks who most likely want to be a homegrown jihadist, be affiliated with ISIS, and do their job here in this country as opposed to over in Syria want to be on the winning side. They are not interested in affiliating with a loser. So the question is, What can we do to make sure that ISIS is degraded and destroyed?

I will mention a couple of things that happened in the last couple of weeks that would suggest to me that at long last the coalition of 60 nations is beginning to get its act together and make progress on the ground. Over the past year ISIS has lost 25 percent of its safe haven in Syria and Iraq. Our coalition has conducted more than 8,000 airstrikes against ISIS. We have killed ISIS fighters at a rate of 1,000 fighters a month.

The Iraqi Security Forces have now liberated Tikrit, which is a city in Iraq that is Saddam Hussein's old hometown. It has been liberated from ISIS now. About 70 percent of Tikrit's pre-ISIS citizens have been returned to the city.

With Syrian Kurdish forces on the ground and the United States in the air, the Syrian town of Kobane was kept from falling to ISIS, despite the fact that most analysts thought the town would fall within days earlier this year.

Just last week in Iraq, Kurdish forces supported by the United States in the air took back the key town of Sinjar from ISIS. That strategic town sits on the top of a key roadway that connects ISIS's stronghold in Mosul with ISIS's capital in a place called Raqqa.

Now these Iraqi Kurds are working with the Syrian Kurds, an Arab coalition, and the United States to fully sever that key supply line and isolate Mosul and Raqqa.

In August, a U.S. drone strike killed a fellow named Junaid Hussain, one of ISIS's online propagandists who had helped to direct the homegrown attack at Garland, TX, last May.

Just last week, a U.S. drone strike also killed Jihadi John, ISIS's chief executioner. Jihadi John has publicly executed dozens of people, including at least three Americans—James Foley, Steven Sotloff, and Peter Kassig.

Last week, an American airstrike took ISIS's leader in Libya, a guy named Abu Nabil.

Now, is that the ball game? No, it is not. Is that encouraging? Yes, it is. It has to be discouraging to folks with ISIS, and it has to be discouraging to fans here in the United States. The idea is to degrade them and ultimately destroy them, and I am encouraged that we finally seem to be on the right track to accomplishing that.

The other thing we heard from our witnesses today is that there is a Federal program run by the Department of Homeland Security called the Office of Community Partnerships Countering Violent Terrorism. The idea there is to work with the Muslim communities throughout the country—and there are a number of them—to counter the social media message that some find so alluring that is put up by ISIS. Part of the ability to compete with that and to degrade that message is to degrade ISIS on the ground.

The other way to do it is to do what the Department of Homeland Security is doing in conjunction with Arab communities and Muslim communities throughout our country and in conjunction with, for example, the district attorney in Minneapolis, to develop a good partnership in saying: Let's see if we can't convince our young people living there not to want to go to Syria, not to want to go to fight, not to want to go anywhere, but just to live their lives and not to be jihadists in this country. It is a good program. It seems to be bearing fruit. It has been well accepted, I am told, by many in the Muslim community. We are being asked to help fund that through the appropriations process, and it is very important that we do.

I will close where I started. It has been a bit of a wild and crazy ride this week. Every now and then I feel—when I was raising my kids, my boys, I would just say, why don't we just take a deep breath and chill for a little bit, and then figure out what to do. Given everything that has come across in the media and the scare that has been visited on so many people, it is probably a good time for us to just take a deep breath and to think about some of the things that I have said, some of what we learned in our hearing today.

There are threats to this country that are real. They are probably not posed by the refugee problem. We are reminded by the Pope that we have an obligation to follow the Golden Rule and treat other people the way we wanted to be treated. We have an obligation, as we were reminded just two months ago by the Pope on the other side of the Capitol when he addressed a joint session of Congress. He told us to remember Matthew 25: When I was hungry, did you feed me? When I was thirsty, did you give me a drink? When I was naked, did you clothe me? When I was a stranger in your land, did you take me in?

He posed to us sort of a moral dilemma and certainly reminded us that we have a moral obligation to the least of these in our society. We also have a moral obligation as leaders here in the Congress to make sure that we are not only trying to be true to that moral obligation to the least of these but the obligation that we have to protect the people of this country.

The question for us as we approach Thanksgiving—maybe in the spirit of Thanksgiving—is that it possible for us to be true to both of the moral imperatives, to the least of those in our society and, frankly, outside this country, and the moral imperative to our country men and women to protect them. I think we can do both.

As we leave here today to head for our homes and for Thanksgiving, I am encouraged we can do both, and that if we are smart about it, we will do that.

I wish the Presiding Officer and all of our pages and all of the staff here a blessed Thanksgiving holiday. Thank you all for your service. I will see you in about 10 days. God bless you.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BONNIE CARROLL

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, the Presidential Medal of Freedom is our Nation's highest civilian honor, presented to men and women who have made ''an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant endeavors.''

It is the highest honor a civilian of the United States can achieve. In all, the recipients have included seven Presidents, nine Supreme Court Justices, countless Members of Congress, First Ladies, military leaders, lawyers, artists, athletes, civil rights leaders, and doctors. It is the list of the best of America. It is a diverse list. The recipients come from all backgrounds and all walks of life. They all have one thing in common. They have dedicated their lives to achieving excellence in serving causes greater than themselves.

On November 24, next week, Bonnie Carroll, a proud Alaskan, will join this honor roll when she is presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom at a White House ceremony. It is certainly an exciting time for all of us in Alaska. We are so proud of Bonnie, who just happens to be here tonight in the Gallery.

Let me tell you a little bit about Bonnie Carroll, a woman of determination, perseverance, honor, and strength. You can't talk about Bonnie without talking first about how she met her husband Tom, which in many ways—in tragic ways I will get to—led to the great work she has done for a grateful nation.

In 1988, Bonnie was working at the White House when news broke that three whales were trapped in the ice off the coast of Alaska. Now I know this doesn't happen in the Presiding Officer's State that often, but in Alaska we have certain challenges that other States don't. She picked up the phone to see what could be done, and on the other line was her future husband, Alaska Army National Guard COL Tom Carroll, who worked with many others to help rescue the whales. This was part of the love story between Bonnie and Tom and part of a story so unique that what happened up in Alaska actually caught the attention of Hollywood. You can see their love story portrayed in the film ''The Great Miracle.''

For the Carrolls, the story didn't end with the saving of the whales. Unfortunately, their story is in many ways happy but also did not have a so-called Hollywood ending—unfortunately, far from it. After they were married in 1992, COL Tom Carroll of the Alaska National Guard died in an Army C–12 plane crash in the mountains of Alaska. Seven other top Alaska National Guard members were tragically lost that day. It was a horrible tragedy for America, for Alaska, for the Carroll family, and for all the other families who suffered tragic loss that day in Alaska.

After the crash Bonnie realized there were no organizations established in this country to help people like her who had lost loved ones—military members and family members who had lost military members in tragedies such as the day of that crash. What she did after that was amazing. What she did was heroic. She took her deep grief and put it to use for the rest of us.

Just 2 years after her husband's tragic death, Bonnie founded the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, also known as TAPS. The idea for TAPS came in part as a result of her consultations with former Senator Ted Stevens, another great Alaskan and great American, who would also tragically die in a plane crash in Alaska. This is why Bonnie is being honored by the President next week. Since 1994, her organization, TAPS, has offered support to 50,000 surviving families of our military members whom we have lost. Fifty thousand surviving family members and caregivers have benefitted from the services of TAPS, which Bonnie founded. Think of the grief and think of what she has done across America to soothe grieving families.

TAPS provides a variety of grief and trauma resources, including seminars for adults and a summer camp for children in Alaska to help families heal and to help them work through their grief. I heard many of these stories, and you can't help but be touched and moved by the power of what TAPS does to help Americans, family members of our military, work through some of the most difficult times. For years those of us in the military and those of us in Alaska have known how Bonnie's work and the work of TAPS has been healing families throughout this country, for those we have lost—our heroes who have been defending this country. We have known in the military, we have known in Alaska, and as of Tuesday the world will know when Bonnie is presented with this incredible honor at the White House.

As she puts it: ''Out of an Alaskan tragedy came hope and healing for tens of thousands of our military families.''

For the work that she does with the families of our heroes who have made the ultimate sacrifice for all of us, Bonnie Carroll is utmost deserving of this great honor. She is a great Alaskan, a Great American, and she has made us all very proud.

Congratulations, Bonnie.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. 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.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ACTION ON IMMIGRATION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, a year ago today, in a nationwide address, President Obama announced a series of measures to improve our broken immigration system. He outlined efforts to focus scarce resources on identifying and deporting those people who pose a danger to our communities, to modernize our legal immigration system, and to provide temporary relief from the threat of deportation for hard-working, law-abiding members of our communities. For many, the President's announcement offered at last a hope for stability. It acknowledged the longstanding presence and contributions of immigrants to our country.

But the President's announcement also underscored the real human consequences of the House of Representatives failing to allow a vote to reform our immigration laws. Importantly, it highlighted the impracticality of deporting 11 million undocumented immigrants. Many of them have strong family ties in the United States and a deep desire to become fully integrated in our country. They are mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters. To suggest that we can simply remove them is unrealistic and it would conflict with fundamental American values.

The President's Executive action is no substitute for legislation. He reminded critics of that very fact during his address, pointing out that the commonsense, responsible solution to the problems in our immigration system is to pass a comprehensive reform bill. A year later, the Republican-led Senate has failed to debate, let alone pass meaningful immigration reform. Instead, it has repeatedly taken up divisive and partisan proposals that do not reflect a desire to fix what we all agree is a broken system.

These political gimmicks are not serious attempts to address an issue as important as immigration and could not be more different from what the Democratic-led Senate accomplished in 2013 when we passed a bipartisan immigration bill supported by 68 Senators. During the Senate Judiciary Committee's consideration of the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act, I convened multiple hearings, and we heard from 42 witnesses. Government officials and individuals representing a range of perspectives—including law enforcement, civil rights, labor, faith, business, and State and local governments—testified about the challenges confronting our current immigration system.

We heard the powerful testimony of witnesses such as Jose Antonio Vargas and Gaby Pacheco who pressed the urgent need for immigration reform. The compelling stories of DREAMers, young immigrants brought to this country as children, who have grown up as Americans and have every desire to make meaningful contributions to their communities, continue to inspire.

Many of them have qualified for the temporary relief provided by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, program, which has established a path for them to become our next generation of teachers, engineers, public servants, and doctors. Our Senate-passed, comprehensive bill included the DREAM Act, an important measure that would have provided a long-lasting solution to the problems these courageous young individuals face, acknowledging that they deserve to be part of our Nation's future.

The Senate-passed bill would have addressed many of the injustices in our current immigration system. It was a remarkable example of all that we can accomplish when we actually focus on the hard job of legislating. But the Republican-led House of Representatives blocked that effort. It stubbornly refused to even allow a vote on that bill. Given that lack of action, I understand the President's frustration and motivation. His Executive action was a response to what we all acknowledge is a broken system, but it is no substitute for comprehensive immigration reform.

Following the President's announcement, the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on the Executive action program and heard the testimony of Astrid Silva. Hers is a fundamentally American story. It is similar in many ways to those of our parents and grandparents. It is a story of a family looking to find a better life. Astrid qualifies for the President's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, DACA, program. And her parents would be eligible for the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents, DAPA, program because her younger brother is a U.S. citizen. For more than 20 years, Astrid's family has been working hard and contributing to their local community. They are the kind of family we want to have as our neighbors and coworkers. Their stories remind us that their dreams, along with those of so many others affected by our dysfunctional immigration system, hang in the balance, and underscore the need for a permanent legislative solution.

Some in Congress claim that the President's executive action undermined the prospect of achieving comprehensive immigration reform. But I remind them that the President's action—prompted by congressional inaction—is not an excuse for continued congressional inaction. We must keep working to find a permanent legislative solution that provides today's immigrants with an opportunity to prosper and contribute to our country. As families across the Nation gather next week around the table to give thanks, we will all count our family members and their security among our greatest blessings. Our fight for comprehensive immigration reform is at its core a fight to help reunite families and provide the security that we all want for our loved ones. I urge Republicans to return to the cooperative and bipartisan approach of 2013 and work on comprehensive immigration reform legislation. The American people support immigration reform. It is the right thing to do, and it should not be delayed any longer.

REFORMING THE EB–5 REGIONAL CENTER PROGRAM

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I have championed the EB–5 Regional Center Program for many years. I have done so because I have seen its ability to generate investment and create jobs in distressed communities. But the program is facing some pressing challenges. Reports of rampant fraud and abuse raise serious concerns and threaten to cripple the program's integrity. The incentives Congress established to invest in high unemployment and rural communities are also routinely abused, undermining a core objective of the program—to spur growth and create jobs in underserved areas. The Regional Center Program is set to expire on December 11. It should be reauthorized, but we should not extend it blindly. There is bipartisan consensus that the program is in dire need of reform, and we cannot squander this opportunity.

I have long sought reforms to the Regional Center Program. Last Congress, my EB–5 amendment to Comprehensive Immigration Reform provided the Department of Homeland Security additional authority to revoke suspect regional center designations or immigrant petitions. It also provided for increased reporting, background checks, and securities oversight. My amendment was unanimously approved in the Judiciary Committee, but unfortunately the improvements it contained have all had to wait, as the House of Representatives failed to allow a vote on the bipartisan immigration reform bill that passed the Senate last Congress.

In the past year, only more concerns have emerged. In January, I joined Senators GRASSLEY, CORKER, JOHNSON, and others in requesting that the Government Accountability Office, GAO, audit the EB–5 program. The GAO report released in August detailed fraud vulnerabilities within the program and questioned its economic impact. Separate reports from the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Intelligence and Analysis and Office of the Inspector General highlighted additional issues that need to be addressed.

I am also troubled by the fact that the incentives Congress created to promote EB–5 investment in rural and high unemployment areas have been rendered meaningless. Investors are provided a discount if they choose to invest in rural or high unemployment areas, known as targeted employment areas or TEAs. At present, however, the most affluent neighborhoods in the country routinely qualify as TEAs by selectively stitching together otherwise unrelated census tracts. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Johnson rightly described this practice as gerrymandering. I do not suggest that affluent areas should not benefit from EB–5; they should. But they should not qualify for incentives intended to benefit high unemployment and rural areas. These areas typically do not have access to significant capital and often struggle to create jobs.

Secretary Johnson himself called for significant reforms to strengthen the Regional Center Program. In a letter to the Judiciary Committee last April, he asked for authority to quickly act on criminal and national security concerns, additional protections for investors, enhanced reporting and auditing, improved integrity of TEAs, increased minimum investment amounts, and more.

I have now worked for over 2 years to develop legislation that would provide a necessary overhaul of the Regional Center Program. In June, I was joined by Chairman GRASSLEY in introducing this reform-oriented legislation, S.1501. Since then, Chairman GRASSLEY and I have worked with House Judiciary Chairman GOODLATTE on a bicameral bill based on S.1501.

This bicameral bill would provide the Department with the authorities and investigative tools necessary to address national security concerns and fraud. The reforms include further expanding background checks, conducting a more thorough vetting of immigrant investors and proposed investments, and providing for the ability to proactively investigate fraud, both in the United States and abroad, using a dedicated fund paid for by certain program participants. The bill would provide greater protections for investors and clarity and shorter processing times for project developers. It would also raise minimum investment thresholds so more money goes to the communities that need it. And it would help to restore the program to its original intent, by ensuring that incentives to invest in distressed and undercapitalized areas are restored.

Such reforms would answer the concerns raised by Secretary Johnson, the Department's inspector general, the GAO, and others, instilling both confidence and transparency in the program. I believe these reforms would result in a secure EB–5 program that creates American jobs and promotes economic growth throughout our country. We cannot continue to leave the Department ill-equipped to administer this job creation program. We know what is needed to fix it. And we should fix it now.

NOMINATION OBJECTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to any unanimous consent request at the present time relating to the nomination of Thomas A. Shannon, Jr., of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Ambassador, to be an

Under Secretary of State, Political Affairs.

I will object because the Department of State has still not responded to almost a dozen investigative letters dating back to 2013. In addition, on August 20, 2015, my staff met with Department officials in an effort to prioritize material for production. The Department has failed to comply with its commitments, producing material late, failing to provide all requested material, and even failing to provide material to the Senate Judiciary Committee contemporaneously with providing the same documents to Freedom of Information Act, FOIA, requestors. These are the same complaints that I raised on September 30, 2015, when I placed a hold on Brian James Egan of Maryland to be legal advisor of the Department of State. Apparently, the Department simply does not understand its obligation to respond to congressional inquiries in a timely and reasonable manner.

Two and a half years ago I began a broad inquiry into the government's use of special government employee programs. I did not single out the State Department on this issue. To the contrary, I wrote to 16 different government agencies.

Two and a half years have passed since I began my inquiry, and the State Department has still not produced the materials I have requested or certified they do not exist.

In addition to the investigation of the Department's special government employee program, I am also investigating the Department's compliance with the FOIA as it pertains to Secretary Clinton's private server that was used to transit and store government information.

The Minority Leader has questioned whether the Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction extends to these matters. I would note that the special government employee designation is an exception to Federal criminal conflict-of-interest laws. Those laws are within the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee, as is FOIA.

During the course of my investigation, a former State Department employee—Mr. Bryan Pagliano—declined to speak to the Judiciary Committee about his work on Secretary Clinton's email server.

He pled the Fifth Amendment.

We keep hearing that the FBI's inquiry is just a security review and not a criminal inquiry; yet this witness cited his Constitutional right against self-incrimination to avoid talking about his work on the email server. And he is relying on the Fifth Amendment to withhold his personal emails as well.

So naturally we are searching for other ways to get information before deciding whether it might be appropriate to seek an immunity order for his testimony. The most likely source of information without forcing the witness to testify would be his emails.

Yet the Department has failed to produce any in response to my request and the request of Chairman JOHNSON of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

As a further example of the Department's continued intransigence, I requested all SF–312 ''Classified Non-Disclosure Agreements'' for Secretary Clinton, Ms. Huma Abedin, and Ms. Cheryl Mills on August 5, 2015. My staff met with Department personnel three times since that letter and participated in dozens of emails and phone calls in an effort to acquire these documents. In addition, after the Department complained that it had received too many requests from me, my staff produced a prioritized list of requests to assist the Department in producing responses. At number three on that list were the SF–312 forms, and at number one are the official emails of Mr. Pagliano.

Notably, during conversations with my staff on the subject, Department personnel stated that they could not locate those forms with the exception of only page 2 of Ms. Abedin's SF–312 exit form. On November 5, 2015, the Department produced SF–312 entrance forms for Secretary Clinton, Ms. Abedin, and Ms. Mills to a FOIA requestor but failed to provide the same to the Committee. Clearly, the documents exist.

In addition, I am also looking into several State Department inspector general and whistleblower reports that suggest that the State Department does not hold its own employees accountable for human-trafficking and prostitution violations.

Earlier this year, the Judiciary Committee led the effort to pass the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, and I have sent letters to DOJ and DHS—and not just the State Department—to ensure that Federal employees are held accountable for soliciting prostitutes.

Last week, the minority leader questioned my use of Judiciary Committee resources to conduct these investigations, suggesting that my work in this area is somehow taking away from the committee's other work.

Back in September, the Justice Department sent me a letter complaining that I have sent them almost 100 oversight letters containing more than 825 questions and document requests—in 2015 alone.

Since then, my office has sent 11 additional oversight letters to the Justice Department, containing more than 65 questions and document requests. So perhaps the minority leader should ask the assistant attorney general for legislative affairs at DOJ whether my committee is not doing enough DOJ oversight.

The continued intransigence and lack of cooperation make it clear that the Department did not care enough about their Foreign Service officer candidates to ''get in gear'' and begin to produce responses to my oversight letters. Accordingly, I have released my hold on these officer candidates and have escalated to Mr. Shannon.

The Department of State's refusal to fully cooperate with my investigations is unacceptable.

As I have noted before on the floor of the Senate, the Department continues to promise results, but there has been very little or no follow-through. The Department's good faith will be measured in documents delivered and witnesses provided.

My objection is not intended to question the credentials of Mr. Shannon in any way. However, the Department must recognize that it has an ongoing obligation to respond to congressional inquiries in a timely and reasonable manner.

REMEMBERING NOHEMI GONZALEZ AND THE VICTIMS OF THE PARIS TERRORIST ATTACKS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is with a heavy heart that I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Nohemi Gonzalez, a 23-year-old senior at California State University, Long Beach who was tragically killed during the recent terrorist attacks in Paris.

Nohemi grew up in Whittier, CA with her mother, Beatriz, who described her as ''very strong and independent,'' even graduating high school early because she couldn't wait to go to college. At Cal State, she chose to study industrial design—recently taking home a second place prize in an international design competition. She was thrilled to be achieving one of her dreams of studying at the Strate School of Design in Paris this semester.

Nohemi's professors laud her as a very gifted student—curious, determined, and incredibly caring. She took on a leadership role as a teacher's aide and shop technician for the department of design. Classmates remember Nohemi as a mentor and tutor, someone who encouraged everyone around her to strive to be the best versions of themselves. Friends say she was a blessing and always had an upbeat, cheerful attitude. She always looked on the bright side.

I want to send my deepest, heartfelt condolences to Nohemi's mother, Beatriz, her stepfather, Jose Hernandez, and to all who loved her. While there are no words to express how sorry I am at this tragic loss, I hope they can take comfort knowing that Nohemi's beautiful legacy will serve as an inspiration for us all.

I also want to send my thoughts and prayers to the members of the Palm Desert-based band, Eagles of Death Metal, who were playing at the Bataclan concert hall the night of the attacks. As they grieve the death of their British merchandise manager, Nick Alexander, and representatives from their record company, Thomas Ayad, Marie Mosser, and Manu Perez, I know there has been an outpouring of love and strength from the caring Desert community. I hope that brings them some comfort in this very difficult time.

The people of France have suffered tremendously, and I want them to know that Americans mourn with them. They stood by our sides after the attacks on September 11, 2001, and we stand with them now in the face of these horrific attacks.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to bring attention today to the 108,000 foster children in our country who right now are waiting to be adopted. Of these, more than 14,000 are in California.

These are children who cannot safely be reunited with their biological families and are without a permanent place to call home through absolutely no fault of their own. These are children who are waiting for a family, wanting to belong, and needing our help. Of these children, more than 20,000 age out of the foster care system every year. They are sent on their way and expected to make it on their own. This is unacceptable.

What do we know about their outcomes? It isn't good. Around half of foster youth graduate high school, and less than three percent earn a college degree. Around a quarter will become homeless after aging out of the foster system. Many will find their way into the justice system.

Now, imagine a different outcome. Children are meant to be in a family. All children deserve love, safety, and permanency. No child is unadoptable.

November marks National Adoption Month, and November 21st is National Adoption Day. This highlights not only the need to find loving homes for children who are waiting, but celebrates those who have opened their hearts and chosen to build their families through adoption. Children in foster care are not just in need, they are waiting for a family to give their love and to share their joy.

In 2014, more than 50,000 children were adopted from foster care. What adoption means to youth who have been through foster care is best said in their own words.

From Athena, a young lady in Pasadena, CA, who was adopted from foster care: ''Adoption is very dear and important to me. As an older youth in the system, you expect to have no support, let alone adoption as an option. But being a part of a family was all I ever wanted and deep down it is what most foster youth want because it means love, stability and a place for one to grow and excel in.''

And from Cassidy, an adopted teenager in California: ''If you take a chance on a foster child by adopting them, you give them a chance to be who they were born to be. Let's make 'aging-out' a term no longer needed in the English language.''

Darnell, an older teen adopted in California, explains what finding a permanent family means to him: ''Adoption means I have a second chance at life, I know I am loved and have a safe place to call home. When strangers take you into their home and love you just for who you are; you can relax and live a regular life.''

All children in foster care deserve this second chance at having their forever family and a safe and loving home. I encourage those who are interested in learning more about adoption from foster care to visit www.adoptuskids.org.

This is also a time to celebrate the many volunteers and mentors who provide a positive, stable relationship for a child going through a time of vast uncertainty. There may not be a simple solution, but we do know what gets us closer.

Programs that provide comprehensive resources—tutoring, mentoring, mental health services, and adults that build meaningful relationships with youth leads to improved outcomes, including higher rates of permanency.

Focused family finding efforts that reach out to extended family members and others who have played a role in the life of the child gets results. That means fewer youth who age out of the system.

We can and must do better because 20,000 of our Nation's foster children aging out of the system each year is simply unacceptable. These are our most vulnerable, the ones recovering from trauma, abuse, and neglect. The ones who are at high risk of being sold into child sex trafficking and a number of other terrible outcomes.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure a better future for foster youth in our country and, as Cassidy, a teenager who was adopted from foster care in California says, make the term ''aging out'' one that we no longer need to use. Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO JAY S. FISHMAN

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a distinguished and outstanding business leader, Mr. Jay S. Fishman, as he steps down as chief executive officer of The Travelers Companies on December 1, 2015.

I met Jay during my first term as chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Jay reached out to the committee in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. After handling claims and helping people rebuild their homes and businesses, Jay was interested in shaping public policy for how this country handles natural catastrophes. He proposed many innovative and thoughtful ideas on how to protect policyholders and taxpayers from what he called ''the next big one.'' I then watched as Jay deftly managed his company during the financial crisis, not merely weathering the storm, but thriving while many of his competitors were seeking help from the government in the form of taxpayer bailouts. Jay never asked what the government could do to help Travelers; he always asked how Travelers could help us to develop better public policy based on the expertise that he and his colleagues could provide.

Jay will continue to serve Travelers as executive chairman as he contends with the challenges that come with the diagnosis of ALS. He has handled the diagnosis with great dignity and a steadfast resolve to engage, which will surprise no one who knows him. I know he will work relentlessly to promote research that will extend and eventually save lives of people who are stricken with this terrible disease.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this exceptional man, a man who passionately engaged in business and public policy, who has led a truly remarkable career and left an indelible impact on those people who were lucky enough to work for him and with him during his long career.

NOMINATION OF DR. ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

NOMINATION OF DR. ROBERT CALIFF

Today we are reviewing the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to serve as Commissioner of Food and Drugs. Dr. Califf, congratulations on your nomination. Welcome to you and to your family members who are here. I enjoyed having the opportunity to visit with you in my office.

If confirmed to lead the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as its Commissioner, you will be in charge of steering the agency responsible for assuring the safety and effectiveness of our nation's medical products and protecting our country's food supply. That is a huge job. The FDA affects nearly every single American and regulates about a quarter of all consumer spending in the United States—over $4 trillion annually. It is responsible for product areas as diverse as prescription drugs for humans and animals, medical devices, biologics, cosmetics, over-the-counter medications, food, and tobacco. That is a vital mission, and we all want to make sure that the right person is leading it.

The president has nominated you to do that job, and like every full-time nominee, you've been through an exhaustive process to make sure that you do not have any conflicts of interest or other problems in your background.

Before the president even announced your nomination, there was an extensive vetting process by the White House and the FBI. You also submitted paperwork to the Office of Government Ethics, which carefully reviewed your financial information and found that, with several recusals which you have committed to do, there would not be any remaining conflicts of interest that would prevent you from doing your job. The form you submitted is public and includes every source of income over $200 and every asset worth more than $1,000, and every potential conflict that the Office of Government Ethics determined would require a recusal.

You answered 37 pages of questions from our committee, including some confidential questions on financial information, and responded to written follow-up questions. Your responses included over 3,000 pages of articles and lectures my staff reviewed and that any member of the committee could review.

You were nominated on September 17. My staff has spent two months carefully reviewing everything you submitted and has not found anything that would call into doubt your ability to lead the FDA fairly and impartially.

You come here today with impressive qualifications. You are one the nation's leading cardiologists and have been a professor at one of the nation's top medical schools for over 30 years. You are an expert on clinical research and have been recognized by the Institute for Scientific Information as one of the top 10 most cited medical authors, with more than 1,200 peer-reviewed publications. You have experience managing large organizations, including in your current position supervising all of the FDA's work on medical products and tobacco, and in your past work as the founding director of the Duke Clinical Research Institute.

Moreover, you have conducted scores of important clinical trials, and you have advised and worked on research with some of the nation's leading pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies. So you understand how research gets done in the real world, where there are opportunities for the FDA to help address challenges, and where the FDA needs to get out of the way.

I'm eager to hear about your priorities, and how you intend to manage an organization as large and diverse as the FDA. I also think everyone on this committee will have some questions for you. Here are a few of mine.

First, I would like to hear what you will do to help ensure that affordable drugs are available to American patients. The FDA's job, of course, is not to set drug prices. It is to make sure that drugs are safe and effective. And I hope you'll agree with me on that. But FDA can help the market lower drug prices by approving generic drugs and other products as quickly as it possibly can, so there is more choice and competition in the market.

There are thousands of applications for generic drugs sitting at the FDA, awaiting approval. Addressing this backlog will allow lower-cost drugs to be available for patients. Approval times have gotten worse instead of better. In 2011, the FDA published the median approval time on its website, and it was 30 months. Since then, the FDA has stopped publishing the statistics online, but the Generic Pharmaceutical Association surveyed its members and estimates that the median approval time is now about 48 months. This is despite generic drugmakers agreeing in 2012 to give the FDA approximately $1.6 billion in user fees over 5 years, nearly $1 billion of which the FDA has already collected. I'm eager to hear what you think the FDA can do to improve.

Second, there has never been a more exciting time to lead the agency. We know more about biology and medicine than ever before, and that's not likely to stop anytime soon given advancement of regenerative cell therapies, 3D printing, and the president's Precision Medicine Initiative—which is aimed at developing our knowledge so that medical treatments and devices can be tailored to individual patients. For example, Smith & Nephew, a device company I toured in Memphis a few weeks ago, uses 3D printing to make tools that doctors use in approximately 25% of knee replacements.

Your job, if confirmed, will be to make sure that FDA regulation is appropriate. Too much regulation could reduce investment in these areas in its track, and not enough regulation could lead to patients getting therapies that are not safe or effective.

Your job also will be to make sure the FDA keeps up with science and relies on the expertise outside the FDA when appropriate. Doing that will require you to manage a large and complex organization—not just on the big policies that make headlines, but on the less flashy stuff like hiring and training scientists on the agency's core mission, and integrating information technology in the right ways.

There is work to be done. Medical products take more time and money to discover, develop, and reach American patients than ever before, and we hear stories about drugs and devices that are available to patients outside the U.S. before they become available here, often because it is difficult for manufacturers to navigate the FDA's often unclear approval requirements. It often takes over a decade to develop a drug that gains marketing approval in the U.S., and, according to one recent study, the costs have nearly tripled in the last ten years. In 2003, it cost an inflation-adjusted $1 million in capital and out-of-pocket expenses; in 2014, it cost over $2.5 billion.

In this Committee, we are working on legislation to help get safe cutting-edge drugs, medical devices and treatments into Americans' medicine cabinets and doctors' offices more quickly, and we hope to move on that by the end of the year. I want to hear what you think the FDA can do to build its capacity and fix the impact of its regulations so that the FDA is a partner in innovation, rather than a barrier.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing your testimony on these important issues.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the University of California, Santa Cruz on its 50th anniversary and recognizing the outstanding faculty and staff for their immense contributions.

For 50 years, UC Santa Cruz has educated, inspired, and helped shape the futures of generations of young people, fostering an environment to produce not only good scholars but also good citizens.

Modeled after historic institutions like Oxford, from its earliest days, students have been encouraged to ask questions—to learn how to think for themselves and debate the status quo inside and outside the classroom. Today the university counts among its alumni some of the world's most prolific and influential leaders on everything from organic farming to ocean health, from women's rights and medical research.

A half century after its founding, UC Santa Cruz is a world-renowned research facility at the center of many critical scientific breakthroughs, such as producing the first working draft of the human genome, helping global researchers develop a vaccine for the Ebola virus, and playing a leading role in cancer genome research. The university is also home to one of the world's top marine mammal research centers. Its internationally recognized faculty includes 14 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 26 fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and recipients of the Presidential National Medal of Science and the Benjamin Franklin Medal from the Franklin Institute, one of the oldest and most prestigious science awards in the world.

Anyone who is lucky enough to have visited the UC Santa Cruz campus is immediately struck by its beauty. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and redwood forests, the campus offers students a spectacular backdrop to their education. Students hike trails to class, elephant seals can be heard in the background, and stunning sunsets can be seen from university grounds. These breathtaking surroundings have attracted a creative and passionate student body that has proudly embraced environmental, social, and political causes—and a sense of humor. In 1986, the students selected their now-famous official mascot—the Banana Slugs.

Since 1965, UC Santa Cruz has created an atmosphere of discovery and activism, shaping minds, pushing the frontiers of knowledge, and making our world a better place. I congratulate Chancellor George Blumenthal and the faculty, staff, alumni, and students of UC Santa Cruz on this 50th anniversary and wish this extraordinary institution continued success in the future.•

TRIBUTE TO MARY CRAWFORD

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, in honor of National Adoption Month, I want to recognize one member of Montana's community who has opened her home and heart to be an adoptive parent. Mrs. Mary Crawford is what I believe one of the best Montana has to offer.

As an original cosponsor of a resolution to designate November as National Adoption Month and November 21 as National Adoption Day that passed the Senate unamiously this week, I could find no better time than this to honor Mary. This month we honor selfless individuals like Mary who have dedicated themselves toward comforting, protecting, and improving the lives of children they have welcomed into their homes.

Like most foster parents who later become adoptive parents, the process isn't easy, but the resolve of both Mary and husband to continue to provide a loving home for nine children is nothing short of admirdable. Mary has provided a family which has made a huge difference in these childrens' lives—giving them a family for life, beyond just their childhood years. These children are safe today in the arms of loving, adopting parents because of Mary.

Montana has kids who are ready and waiting to be adopted. In fact, there are 415,000 children currently in the U.S. Foster Care System, and 108,000 of those are waiting to be adopted. Mary has taken tremendous steps in providing six children with a forever home to give them the stability and love that she and her husband could provide.

I am unbelievably proud to have a citizen like Mary Crawford in the great State of Montana. I am thankful for the love and support she has shown these children.●

RECOGNIZING THE NEVADA INDIAN COMMISSION

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 50th anniversary of an important entity to our great State—the Nevada Indian Commission. I am pleased to see this commission, which contributes so much in support of Nevada's Native American community, reach this significant milestone.

The Nevada Indian Commission has been a positive force in communities across our State. The commission continues to serve as a forum for Nevada's Native American population, bringing important issues affecting this community to light. I am grateful to have the Nevada Indian Commission serving as an important liaison between Nevada's 27 tribal communities and our State's government.

The Nevada Indian Commission was established in 1965 as a means to maintain a positive quality of life for our State's Native Americans. Those that serve on the commission work to bring greater awareness of Nevada's many tribes' cultures, values, and customs. The commission devotes countless hours to improving education, employment, heath, well-being, and socioeconomic status by advocating on behalf of Nevada's Native Americans, while communicating with local officials. The commission has five board members working to strengthen economic opportunity and community development. I am thankful for their leadership and for the great things they are doing for this community.

The Federal Government has unique and important responsibilities to tribes and their people. That responsibility is something I take seriously as one of Nevada's Senators, which is why I have supported policies in Congress focused on promoting tribal self-governance and self-determination. Just recently, the Senate passed a resolution recognizing November as National Native American Heritage Month. As a proud original cosponsor of this resolution, I was pleased to see it pass to celebrate the heritages and cultures of Native Americans and their contributions to the United States and Nevada.

For the past 50 years, the Nevada Indian Commission has proven its unwavering dedication to our state. The hard work of those that have served this Commission has greatly contributed to the positive impact the Native American community has had across Nevada. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Nevada Indian Commission on its 50th anniversary and thanking the commission for all it does for the Silver State.●

CONGRATULATING PROFESSOR ANA DOUGLASS

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Professor Ana Douglass on receiving the 2015 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Nevada Professor of the Year award. This accolade is truly prestigious, attained by only the most influential of Nevada's educators. The Silver State is truly fortunate to have Professor Douglass working at Truckee Meadows Community College, TMCC.

The State Professors of the Year Awards Program, sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation, recognizes educators who go above and beyond in their career. These professors have an extraordinary dedication to undergraduate teaching as proven through their relationships with students, approach in helping their students learn, contributions to undergraduate education, and support from students and colleagues at their institutions. These educators' unwavering commitment to their students is unparalleled and has not gone unnoticed.

Professor Douglass is the first faculty member of a Nevada community college to receive this prestigious award. She has served at TMCC for 19 years, working not only as an English professor, but also as a leader among her peers. As a teacher, Professor Douglass is dedicated to motivating her students to be the best they can be by challenging them in their studies. She is also a mentor to many hardworking students, serving as an example of excellence in education for the TMCC community.

As the father of four children and as the husband of a teacher, I understand the important role educators play in enriching the lives of Nevadans. Ensuring students throughout the Silver State are prepared to compete in the 21st century is critical for the future of our country. The State of Nevada is fortunate to be home to educators like Professor Douglass.

I ask my colleagues and all Nevadans to join me in thanking Professor Douglass for her dedication to enriching the lives of Nevada's students and congratulating her on receiving this award. I wish her well in all of her future endeavors and in creating success for all students who enter her classroom.●

CONGRATULATING THE LEWISTON HIGH SCHOOL BOYS' SOCCER TEAM

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, at the end of the fall season, we see the culmination of youth athletics across the country. In each sport, whether it is field hockey, football, soccer, or the like, we as parents and spectators see the aggregation of hard work, sportsmanship, and perseverance come together to produce outstanding championship athletes. Today I wish to draw attention to all of the talented Maine youths who won athletic championships across the State this year. In particular, I would like to congratulate the members of the Lewiston High School Blue Devils boys' soccer team, who on the path to their undefeated regular season and recent state championship victory have demonstrated remarkable levels of teamwork and sportsmanship.

The Blue Devils' achieved victory through an impressive display of talent and teamwork. Throughout their regular season the team scored a total of 114 goals, consistently demonstrated their strong defense, and earned recognition when USA Today ranked them 22nd in the country. The team's display of unity, patience, and determination in the state final against Scarborough High School was a fitting conclusion to a stunning season of hard work.

During two prior seasons, the Blue Devils earned their way to the State finals but each time returned home without the win. Following their defeat last November, Lewiston High School coach Mike McGraw vowed to his team that they would return and they would win. This year, that promise was fulfilled.

But the story of the Blue Devils' win is not solely one of raw athletic talent and training. This is a team with a long history and deep friendships that have spanned many years and continents. A number of the players originally hail from Somalia and have known each other and played soccer together since they were children in a refugee camp in Kenya. Others—native Mainers and immigrants alike—have bonded and shared their passion for the sport since grade school. This fraternal bond between the players and the supportiveness of the Lewiston community is a fine example of Maine citizens from diverse ethnic, religious, and experiential backgrounds coming together to achieve victory while championing Maine's spirit and America's highest ideals of inclusiveness and unity.

I wish to join the city of Lewiston and the entire Maine community in congratulating the Lewiston High School boys' soccer team for their well-earned success. They demonstrated impressive athletic ability, incredible determination, loyalty to their coach and one another, and have highlighted the richness that multiculturalism brings to our communities. The Blue Devils have earned their title as champions in more ways than one.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIGADIER GENERAL BOB HARTER

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, today I acknowledge COL Bob Harter of the United States Army Reserve as he is promoted to brigadier general, effective November 8, 2015. The Harter family has long roots in Alaska; Bob's grandparents moved to Fairbanks in the early 1940s, and Bob's father, LTC Robert Harter, retired, was raised in Fairbanks, leaving Alaska to attend

the United States Military Academy in 1961. Bob lived in Alaska in the mid-1970s, when Bob's father was stationed at Fort Wainwright. While Bob has spent the last 27 years serving his country both at home and abroad, he has always maintained his Alaskan residence and remains the son of a proud Alaska family. In fact, both Bob and his father travel to Cordova, AK, every summer to spend time on the family boat, fishing and enjoying ''the last frontier.''

BG Bob Harter is the incoming director of the Office, Chief Army Reserve, OCAR, Staff. He was previously assigned to the Army's chief of staff transition team, where he provided a total force perspective for GEN Mark Milley, the newly assigned chief of staff of the Army. As the director of the OCAR Staff, Brigadier General Harter will be responsible for synchronizing the actions of the 400-person Army Reserve headquarters based out of Fort Belvoir, VA, in support of the chief of Army Reserve's priorities.

A graduate of Virginia Tech, Brigadier General Harter began his military career in 1988 as an artillery officer, assigned to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, ACR, in Bad Hersfeld, Germany.

While assigned to the 11th ACR, Brigadier General Harter participated in multiple border security missions prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification. Colonel Harter also deployed with the regiment to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in support of Operation Desert Storm.

Upon returning from Desert Storm, Colonel Harter transferred to the Ordnance Corps and was reassigned to Fort Campbell, KY, where he served as a group maintenance officer; battalion operations officer, S3; and as commander, 584th Direct Support, DS, Maintenance Company.

In 1999, Brigadier General Harter transferred from the Active component to the Reserve component, entered the Active Guard and Reserve program, and was assigned to the 99th Regional Readiness Command in Pittsburgh, PA, as a training chief for a readiness team, with a follow on assignment to the 55th Sustainment Brigade, Fort Belvoir, as the brigade support operations officer.

In 2006, Brigadier General Harter transferred to the 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command and, in 2007, deployed to Balad, Iraq, for one year. While in Iraq, Brigadier General Harter served as the 316th's distribution management chief, responsible for synchronizing logistics support to the more than 150,000 military members operating in Iraq.

Upon redeployment from Iraq, Brigadier General Harter attended the National War College at Fort McNair, Washington, DC, and was subsequently assigned as branch chief in the Force Protection Division, J8, of the Joint Staff. While in the J8, Brigadier General Harter was responsible for vetting the mine-resistant ambush protected, MRAP, and counter improvised explosive device requirements in support of Central Command, CENTCOM, operations.

In 2011, Brigadier General Harter became the executive officer for the chief, Army Reserve, and, in 2013, assumed duties as the Office, Chief Army Reserve assistant chief of staff.

Brigadier General Harter's awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and the parachutist and air assault badges. Brigadier General Harter is a graduate of the National War College. He lives in Stafford, VA, with his wife, Erin, also a Virginia Tech graduate, and his three children: Anna, 20, currently a sophomore at the University of Virginia; Bobby, 16; and Jack, 14.

It is only fair and proper to acknowledge the unwavering support of his wife, Erin, and their three children, as they enabled him to work tirelessly on his assigned duties throughout his career and will undoubtedly continue to do so for many years to come. Let us thank them all for their sacrifices and wish them continued success in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND SCOTT FISHER

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, this weekend the interior Alaska community will honor the Rev. Scott Fisher, the rector and senior pastor of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in downtown Fairbanks on the occasion of his retirement. St. Matthew's is not just any church. It is one of the three oldest churches in Fairbanks, a beautiful log building overlooking the Chena River. It is a diverse congregation, the spiritual home of the Athabascan community of interior Alaska. And Scott Fisher is not just any pastor. All who know Scott would agree that he reflects all that is good and all that is holy. Easy to talk to and calming in manner, Scott is respected by people of all faiths for his strength, compassion, and humanity.

There is an old plaque on the door of St. Matthew's that reads: ''To all who are joyful and thankful—to all who mourn and need comfort—to all who are weary and need rest—to all who are friendless and wish friendship—to all who pray and to all who do not but ought—to all who sin and need a Savior and to whosoever will—this church opens wide the door and in the name of Christ the Lord says welcome.'' And under Scott Fisher's leadership, that was so. This is a church where newcomers feel welcome immediately.

The Rev. Scott Fisher has served as rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church since June 1991. He arrived in Alaska, through the legendary Bishop William Jones Gordon, Jr., as a volunteer layworker in October 1970 and lived in the interior villages of Chalkyitsik, Stevens Village, and Beaver before leaving for seminary under Bishop Gordon's direction in the summer of 1973. Receiving his M.Div. from the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, in Austin, TX, he returned to the interior of Alaska, working for the church in Fort Yukon and Beaver before moving into the diocesan office. He was an assistant to the bishop, traveling and working extensively throughout the interior and Arctic coast, before coming to St. Matthew's in the summer of 1991.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Scott Fisher for the powerful contribution he has made to life in interior Alaska and to wish him well in retirement. I know that I speak for the entire community in telling you that your departure leaves a large hole in our hearts, and we shall miss you.●

CONGRATULATING BEATRIZ R. PEREZ

● Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I would like to offer congratulations to Ms. Beatriz R. Perez, chief sustainability officer and vice president of the Coca-Cola Company and the winner of the Canadian-American Business Achievement Award. For more than 20 years, the Canadian American Business Achievement award has highlighted the deep relationship between the United States and Canada, the importance of free trade between the countries, and recognized individuals who have been leaders in their fields of enterprise.

Ms. Perez has served in her current role at Coca-Cola since 2011. Previously, she helped direct major marking operations for the Atlanta-based beverage giant. In addition to her work at Coke, Ms. Perez spends a great deal of time giving back to the Atlanta community as a trustee for the Save the Children Foundation and a board member for Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

At Coca-Cola, working with the company's top leaders and nonprofits from around the world, Ms. Perez directs efforts that seek to build cooperation in the ''golden triangle of government, business and civil society.'' Ms. Perez is working with local governments around the world to continue the company's stewardship of natural resources through the development of water projects in nearly 100 countries, working with communities to advance and empower economic opportunities for women, and continuing the company's efforts in the distribution of more than 10 billion fully recyclable PlantBottle™ packages across 24 countries, which eliminates the need for the equivalent of more than 200,000 barrels of oil.

In 2014, Ms. Perez was named as one of the 10 Most Powerful Women in Sustainability by Green Building & Design magazine. She has been featured as one of the 25 Most Powerful Latinas on CNN en Espanol and in People en Espanol, and is a member of the American Advertising Hall of Achievement

and the Sports Business Journal's Hall of Fame. Ms. Perez earned her bachelor's degree in Marketing from the University of Maryland and currently resides in Atlanta, GA.

I applaud Ms. Perez's efforts and am proud to have her and the Coca-Cola Company call Georgia home.●

TRIBUTE TO BETTY RUSSELL VANDIVER

● Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I am pleased today to recognize Betty Russell Vandiver, wife of former Gov. Ernest Vandiver, who served as first lady of Georgia from 1959 to 1963. When Mrs. Vandiver became first lady, Central State Hospital in Milledgeville served as Georgia's only State hospital for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled. In the late 1950s, Central State Hospital was home to more than 12,000 clients, many of whom had been abandoned by their families at an early age.

Upon visiting the hospital, Mrs. Vandiver became very concerned about the plight of the clients and their living conditions. She determined that she would devote much of her time and energy as first lady to raise public awareness of the needs of Georgia's mentally ill and developmentally disabled.

One of Mrs. Vandiver's initiatives to show care and concern for the clients at Central State Hospital was to work with the Georgia Municipal Association to create a statewide Christmas gift collection drive known as the Mayors' Motorcade, which was established in 1959 and expanded years later to support the clients of the State's regional hospitals. Each year, caring Georgians support the Mayors' Motorcade by donating gifts to cities participating in the program.

Through Mrs. Vandiver's efforts, thousands of clients residing at Georgia's State hospitals have received Christmas gifts and visits from city officials at special Motorcade events.

Today it is my pleasure to honor Mrs. Vandiver for having the vision to create the program as a way of providing not only gifts but also raising public awareness about the needs of Georgia's mentally ill and developmentally disabled.●

REMEMBERING CHIEF VERNON ASHLEY

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate and reflect on the life and legacy of Vernon Ashley who passed away on November 10, 2015.

Vernon Ashley was born on January 15, 1916, at the mouth of Wolf Creek along the banks of the Missouri River near present day Fort Thompson, SD. In 1946, after serving in the Army Air Corps during World War II, Vernon was elected tribal chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe. As chairman, he was credited both with helping to author the tribe's first constitution and bylaws and for working to preserve tribal lands for his people during the Federal Government's flood control projects of the 1940s and 50s. He was a servant to his people of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe and to his fellow South Dakotans. After nearly 10 years of working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Vernon went to work for South Dakota as the first Indian Affairs coordinator, serving in that role under three different Governors. He was a fluent Dakota speaker whose Dakota name was Sinkpe, which means muskrat. This past July, the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe honored him by making him a chief.

The eagle bone whistle was traditionally used by some Plains Indian warrior societies. When Vernon and his fellow veterans were honored at his memorial services, several people heard the sound of the eagle bone whistle even though no one was playing one. Therefore, may the sound of the eagle bone whistle be with us, too, when we need to be inspired to be brave and do what is right for the people we serve.

Chief Vernon Ashley will be remembered by all for his humility, for being a man of faith, and for his friendship to so many. With this, I welcome the opportunity to recognize and commemorate the life and legacy of this good friend of mine, a great leader, Chief Vernon Ashley. Thank you.●

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.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 11:45 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2262. An act to facilitate a pro-growth environment for the developing commercial space industry by encouraging private sector investment and creating more stable and predictable regulatory conditions, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 12:05 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1210. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to provide a safe harbor from certain requirements related to qualified mortgages for residential mortgage loans held on an originating depository institution's portfolio, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1737. An act to nullify certain guidance of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection and to provide requirements for guidance issued by the Bureau with respect to indirect auto lending.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 12:18 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 2036. An act to suspend the current compensation packages for the chief executive officers of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, and for other purposes.

H.R. 208. An act to improve the disaster assistance programs of the Small Business Administration.

H.R. 639. An act to amend the Controlled Substances Act with respect to drug scheduling recommendations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and with respect to registration of manufacturers and distributors seeking to conduct clinical testing.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 2:22 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 3996. An act to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 2:33 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, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4038. An act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH) reported that he had signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

S. 799. An act to address problems related to prenatal opioid use.

At 2:45 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 95. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 1210. An act to amend the Truth in Lending Act to provide a safe harbor from certain requirements related to qualified mortgages for residential mortgage loans held on an originating depository institution's portfolio, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 1737. An act to nullify certain guidance of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection and to provide requirements for guidance issued by the Bureau with respect to indirect auto lending; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar;

H.R. 3762. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016.

The following bill was deemed read the second time, pursuant to the order of November 19, 2015, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 4038. An act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 4038. An act to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, and for other purposes.

S. 2329. A bill to prevent the entry of extremists into the United States under the refugee program, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, November 19, 2015, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bills:

S. 799. An act to address problems related to prenatal opioid use.

S. 2036. An act to suspend the current compensation packages for the chief executive officers of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, 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–3612. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Flutriafol; Pesticide Tolerances'' (FRL No. 9933–61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–3613. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''2-Propenoic Acid, Polymer with Ethenylbenzene and (1-methylethenyl)benzene; Tolerance Exemption'' (FRL No. 9936–48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–3614. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Protection of Military Installations''; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3615. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Photovoltaic Devices From the United States'' ((RIN0750–AI41) (DFARS Case 2015–D007)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3616. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Eliminate Data Collection Requirement'' ((RIN0750–AI73) (DFARS Case 2015–D031)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–3617. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Commencement of Assessment of Annual Charges'' (Docket No. RM15–18–000) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–3618. A communication from the Administrator and Chief Executive Officer, Bonneville Power Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's Annual Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC–3619. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances; Withdrawal'' ((RIN2070–AB27) (FRL No. 9936–98)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3620. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Prevention Significant Deterioration; Plantwide Applicability Limits for Greenhouse Gases'' (FRL No. 9937–25–Region 3) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3621. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Algal Toxin Risk Assessment and Management Strategic Plan for Drinking Water''; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–3622. 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 ''Final Rules for Grandfathered Plans, Preexisting Condition Exclusion, Lifetime and Annual Limits, Rescissions, Dependent Coverage, Appeals, and Patient Protections under the Affordable Care Act'' (TD 9744) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3623. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Medicare Program; Comprehensive Care for Joint Replacement Payment Model for Acute Care Hospitals Furnishing Lower Extremity Joint Replacement Services'' (RIN0938–AS64) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3624. 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 ''Transitional Amendments to Satisfy the Market Rate of Return Rules for Hybrid Retirement Plans'' ((RIN1545–BL62) (TD 9743)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3625. 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 ''Qualified Student Loan Bonds'' (Notice 2015–78) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3626. 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 ''Extension of Guidance in Notice 2013–7 for Participants in the HFA Hardest Hit Fund'' (Notice 2015–77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3627. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates'' (Notice 2015–80) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 18, 2015; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–3628. 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 2015–0134—2015–0149); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–3629. A communication from the Deputy Director, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Rules for Grandfathered Plans, Preexisting Condition Exclusions, Lifetime and Annual Limits, Rescissions, Dependent Coverage, Appeals, and Patient Protections'' (RIN0938–AS56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–3630. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Agency Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3631. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations

Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Freedom of Information Act Procedures'' ((CBP Dec. 15–16) (RIN1651–AB05)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3632. A communication from the Chairman, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's consolidated report addressing the Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA or Integrity Act) and the Inspector General Act of 1978 (IG Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3633. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Housing Improvement Program'' (RIN1076–AF22) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–3634. A communication from the Director of the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Collaborative Action, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Secretarial Election Procedures'' (RIN1076–AE93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

EC–3635. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Exempting Mental Health Peer Support Services from Copayments'' (RIN2900–AP11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–3636. A communication from the Chief Impact Analyst, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Expanded Access to Non-VA Care through the Veterans Choice Program'' (RIN2900–AP24) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–3637. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3638. A communication from the Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency's fiscal year 2015 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–3639. A communication from the Chief of the Policy and Rules Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Expanding the Economic and Innovation Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions; Office of Engineering and Technology Releases and Seeks Comment on Updated OET–69 Software; Office of Engineering and Technology Seeks to Supplement the Incentive Auction Proceeding Record Regarding Potential Interference Between Broadcast Television and Wireless Services'' ((ET Doc. No. 13–26) (ET Doc. No. 14–14) (GN Doc. No. 12–268) (FCC 15–141)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 16, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–3640. 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; Atlantic Herring Fishery; 2015 Management Area 1A Seasonal Annual Catch Limit Harvested'' (RIN0648–XE292) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on November 17, 2015; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–107. A petition by a citizen from the State of Texas urging the United States Congress to propose an amendment to the United States Constitution which would clarify that a declaration of martial law, or a suspension of the writ of habeas corpus, does not prevent presidential and congressional elections from proceeding as scheduled and does not perpetuate a term-limited or a defeated presidential or congressional incumbent in office beyond the expiration of the term to which that incumbent was last elected; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. McCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

Air Force nomination of Col. Robert J. Becklund, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Frank D. Emanuel, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Arlen R. Royalty, to be Major General.

Navy nomination of Capt. Michelle C. Skubic, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDs on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators .

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

Air Force nominations beginning with Donnette A. Boyd and ending with Paul D. Sutter, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2015.

Air Force nominations beginning with Maria J. Belmonte and ending with Deveril A. Wint, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on September 9, 2015.

Air Force nomination of Alan D. Murdock, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of David M. Jackson, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Tarnjit S. Saini, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Olga M. Anderson and ending with Eric W. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 28, 2015.

Army nominations beginning with Jimmy C. Davis, Jr. and ending with Robert E. Wichman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 28, 2015.

Army nomination of Spencer T. Price, to be Colonel.

Navy nomination of Jessica L. Morera, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Kari J. Tereick, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Joshua C. Andres and ending with Bethany R. Zmitrovich, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on October 28, 2015.

Navy nomination of Calvin M. Foster, to be Captain.

Navy nomination of Tara A. Feher, to be Lieutenant Commander.

By Mr. THUNE for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Coast Guard nominations beginning with Peter J. Brown and ending with Joseph M. Vojvodich, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on May 14, 2015.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

*Suzette M. Kimball, of West Virginia, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey.

*Victoria Marie Baecher Wassmer, of Illinois, to be Under Secretary of Energy.

*Cherry Ann Murray, of Kansas, to be Director of the Office of Science, Department of Energy.

*John Francis Kotek, of Idaho, to be an Assistant Secretary of Energy (Nuclear Energy).

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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. BENNET (for himself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2305. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the issuance of exempt facility bonds for qualified carbon dioxide capture facilities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself and Mrs. McCASKILL):

S. 2306. A bill to require the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to undertake remediation oversight of the West Lake Landfill located in Bridgeton, Missouri; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2307. A bill to promote the strengthening of the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2308. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of church pension plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 2309. A bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service the U.S. Civil Rights Network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEE, Mr.

RUBIO, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2310. A bill to allow a State to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2311. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration, to make grants to States for screening and treatment for maternal depression; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. KING, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. CAPITO):

S. 2312. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to make improvements to payments for durable medical equipment under the Medicare and Medicaid programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. PETERS):

S. 2313. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to facilitate program-related investments by private foundations; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. UDALL, Mr. ROBERTS, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. NELSON, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 2314. A bill to provide for the conversion of temporary judgeships to permanent judgeships, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2315. A bill to provide protection for consumers who have prepaid cards and mobile accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2316. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the requirements for reissuance of veterans benefits in cases of misuse of benefits by certain fiduciaries to include misuse by all fiduciaries, and to improve oversight of fiduciaries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. SCHATZ):

S. 2317. A bill to amend title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to strengthen minority-serving institutions; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BARRASSO:

S. 2318. A bill to reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund for 10 years, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 2319. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. FLAKE:

S. 2320. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create Universal Savings Accounts; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2321. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 regarding reasonable break time for nursing mothers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 2322. A bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide that over-the-road bus drivers are covered under the maximum hours requirements; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2323. A bill to clarify the definition of nonimmigrant for purposes of chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER):

S. 2324. A bill to provide for transparency, accountability, and reform of the National Flood Insurance Program; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2325. A bill to require the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to establish a constituent-driven program to provide a digital information platform capable of efficiently integrating coastal data with decision-support tools, training, and best practices and to support collection of priority coastal geospatial data to inform and improve local, State, regional, and Federal capacities to manage the coastal region, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 2326. A bill to designate the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, located in the State of Washington, as the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, to establish the Medicine Creek Treaty National Memorial within the wildlife refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2327. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Act of 1986 to strengthen the earned income tax credit and expand eligibility for childless individuals and youth formerly in foster care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2328. A bill to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2329. A bill to prevent the entry of extremists into the United States under the refugee program, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. BOOKER:

S. 2330. A bill to allow the Attorney General additional time to process background checks for alien firearm purchases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2331. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to make invalid and unenforceable predispute arbitration agreements with respect to controversies arising under provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 319. A resolution designating November 29, 2015, as ''Drive Safer Sunday'' ; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 320. A resolution congratulating the people of Burma on their commitment to peaceful elections; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. Res. 321. A resolution honoring the 70th anniversary of the founding of CARE; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. COATS, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SASSE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PAUL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. Con. Res. 25. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should submit the Paris climate change agreement to the Senate for its advice and consent; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 108

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 108, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve access for students to Federal grants and loans to help pay for postsecondary, graduate, and professional educational opportunities, and for other purposes.

S. 391

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 391, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 551

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 551, a bill to increase public safety by permitting the Attorney General to deny the transfer of firearms or the issuance of firearms and explosives licenses to known or suspected dangerous terrorists.

S. 578

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S.

578, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 667

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 667, a bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children.

S. 849

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 849, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for systematic data collection and analysis and epidemiological research regarding Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease, and other neurological diseases.

S. 927

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) were added as cosponsors of S. 927, a bill to provide regulatory relief for certain financial institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 954

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 954, a bill to establish procedures regarding the approval of opioid drugs by the Food and Drug Administration.

S. 993

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 993, a bill to increase public safety by facilitating collaboration among the criminal justice, juvenile justice, veterans treatment services, mental health treatment, and substance abuse systems.

S. 1133

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1133, a bill to amend title 9 of the United States Code with respect to arbitration.

S. 1392

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1392, a bill to require certain practitioners authorized to prescribe controlled substances to complete continuing education.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1431, a bill to provide for increased Federal oversight of prescription opioid treatment and assistance to States in reducing opioid abuse, diversion, and deaths.

S. 1455

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1455, a bill to provide access to medication-assisted therapy, and for other purposes.

S. 1513

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1513, a bill to reauthorize the Second Chance Act of 2007.

S. 1719

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1719, a bill to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a National Family Caregiving Strategy, and for other purposes.

S. 1849

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1849, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a Medicare payment option for patients and eligible professionals to freely contract, without penalty, for Medicare fee-for-service items and services, while allowing Medicare beneficiaries to use their Medicare benefits.

S. 1855

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1855, a bill to provide special foreign military sales status to the Philippines.

S. 1890

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1890, a bill to amend chapter 90 of title 18, United States Code, to provide Federal jurisdiction for the theft of trade secrets, and for other purposes.

S. 1893

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1893, a bill to reauthorize and improve programs related to mental health and substance use disorders.

S. 1913

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1913, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish programs to prevent prescription drug abuse under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 1926

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1926, a bill to ensure access to screening mammography services.

S. 1944

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1944, a bill to require each agency to repeal or amend 1 or more rules before issuing or amending a rule.

S. 2021

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to prohibit Federal agencies and Federal contractors from requesting that an applicant for employment disclose criminal history record information before the applicant has received a conditional offer, and for other purposes.

S. 2035

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2035, a bill to provide for the compensation of Federal employees affected by a lapse in appropriations.

S. 2045

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2045, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

S. 2055

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2055, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to national health security.

S. 2097

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2097, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide for payment for Medicaid services furnished by Ryan White part C grantees under a cost-based prospective payment system.

S. 2099

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2099, a bill to provide for the establishment of a mechanism to allow borrowers of Federal student loans to refinance their loans, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for employer-provided educational assistance to employer payment of interest on certain refinanced student loans, and for other purposes.

S. 2145

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr.

BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2145, a bill to make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2016.

S. 2152

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 2152, a bill to establish a comprehensive United States Government policy to encourage the efforts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa to develop an appropriate mix of power solutions, including renewable energy, for more broadly distributed electricity access in order to support poverty reduction, promote development outcomes, and drive economic growth, and for other purposes.

S. 2185

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 2185, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the fight against breast cancer.

S. 2196

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2196, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the non-application of Medicare competitive acquisition rates to complex rehabilitative wheelchairs and accessories.

S. 2200

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2200, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to strengthen equal pay requirements.

S. 2240

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2240, a bill to improve the control and management of invasive species that threaten and harm Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, and for other purposes.

S. 2284

At the request of Mr. DAINES, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2284, a bill to suspend the admission and resettlement of aliens seeking refugee status because of the conflict in Syria until adequate protocols are established to protect the national security of the United States and for other purposes.

S. 2295

At the request of Mr. COTTON, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS) and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 2295, a bill to extend the termination date for the authority to collect certain record and make permanent the authority for roving surveillance and to treat individual terrorist as agents of foreign powers under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 and for other purposes.

S. RES. 310

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mrs. ERNST) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 310, a resolution condemning the ongoing sexual violence against women and children from Yezidi, Christian, Shabak, Turkmen, and other religious communities by Islamic State of Iraq and Syria militants and urging the prosecution of the perpetrators and those complicit in these crimes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2818

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2818 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2819

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2819 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2822

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2822 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2825

At the request of Mr. ENZI, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) and the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2825 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2826

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2826 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2852

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2852 intended to be proposed to H.R. 2577, a bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2307. A bill to promote the strengthening of the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, on November 21, the world will mark the 20th anniversary of the Dayton Agreement, which ended the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina that began in April 1992.

Last July, the Senator from New Hampshire and I had the privilege and distinct honor of being part of a delegation of House and Senate Members to visit Srebrenica as part of the official U.S. delegation to remember the genocide in Srebrenica on its 20th anniversary. So a few months later in November, we commemorate a happy occasion, a positive development in the history of Europe and in international relations, the Dayton Accords.

I commend a bipartisan duo for securing approval within the United States. President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, and Speaker Newt Gingrich, a Republican, were both instrumental—along with a host of others—in persuading on a nonpartisan basis Americans and American Congressmen to support this agreement, which involved a bit of risk for the United States. It involved troops of the United States going into this area and risking their safety in order to make this accord work. So I appreciate this, and on the 20th anniversary of that agreement and their leadership, I commend them.

The Dayton Agreement was part of a response to a conflict that helped the international community transition from a world divided between East and West in order to meet post-Cold War challenges.

I wish to mention three accomplishments of the Dayton Accords and then Senator SHAHEEN will speak for a few monuments about that aspect. Then we will talk about some legislation that she and I have had the honor and privilege of working on together as a result of this trip that she and I took, along with others, to commemorate this tragedy in Srebrenica.

Back to the Dayton Accords, among the accomplishments is a successful and robust peacekeeping force under NATO, which actually replaced the U.N. peacekeeping group with a NATO command group. It was deployed for the first time, and NATO also intervened out of area for the first time to make peace.

Secondly, persons were held accountable for war crimes on an international basis—crimes against humanity and genocide. This is the first time this had happened since World War II.

Third, international cooperation on demining and a concerted search for missing persons became essential parts of post-conflict recovery.

Dayton also put the OSCE on center stage—the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, of which I am a committee chair representing the United States of America. The Accord mandated that the OSCE oversee arms control efforts and develop confidence-building measures within Bosnia and regionally and make it possible for a country divided and almost destroyed by war to hold elections in a reasonably Democratic manner.

So let's celebrate that accomplishment, and I am sure the Senator from New Hampshire will have some more important insights to offer at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am very pleased to be on the floor with my friend and colleague from Mississippi to talk about Bosnia-Herzegovina and about our trip to commemorate the horrible massacre in Srebrenica that occurred in 1995. As Senator WICKER has said, that was a very moving trip for us.

One of the things that was very particular to New Hampshire that I found hopeful was listening to the very young mayor from Srebrenica, the current mayor, whose name is Camil Durakovic. He had actually spent a number of years in New Hampshire and had gone to Southern New Hampshire University. His family had fled after the massacre in Bosnia and came to New Hampshire. He went back in 2005 and was elected mayor. One of the things he talked about was the need to work with Serbia, to work across the ethnic and religious lines in Bosnia to achieve peace. It was, as Senator WICKER said, so heartening to think that we were actually able to get these Dayton Accords that ended that long conflict in Bosnia—very bitter and bloody—and see some real progress.

One of the things we talked about on the flight back with President Clinton and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright was what we could do to help Bosnia continue to progress and move forward, because one of their challenges is economic. This is a country that has a very high level of education, and it has a lot of young people who need opportunities for the future. So we talked about whether there was a way that we in Congress could look at trying to provide some economic help for Bosnia in the future.

We came back and looked at how we could work together to come up with an idea that might be successful. What we came up with—and it was another tremendous bipartisan effort—was to look at the enterprise funds that were done after the fall of the Soviet Union and some of the Eastern European countries. Enterprise funds were funds passed by Congress with bipartisan support that helped those fledgling private sector economies begin to recover after the fall of the Soviet Union.

So we took that model—a U.S. enterprise fund—and focused on Bosnia-Herzegovina, and this is the legislation that we are going to be introducing. I don't know how Senator WICKER feels about it, but I think this offers real opportunity to Bosnia because we can leverage a very small amount of public resources through the private sector, through other local funds that might be available in Bosnia, and see real progress on the economic front that will help create jobs that will help those young people stay in the country and build a strong country.

So for my friend from Mississippi, I think this is a very good way to provide some of the assistance they are going to need. Would the Senator agree?

Mr. WICKER. I certainly agree with my colleague from New Hampshire, and I commend her for her leadership in getting this legislation drafted.

It is an opportunity to provide a very meaningful chance for Bosnians and Herzegovinians to live the good life and remain in the area, but it is also in the absolute national security interests of the United States of America. We can't tend to everything, but we saw 20 years ago—25 years ago and forward—with the war in the Balkans what could happen and what almost happened to security in all of Europe. We know this has been a flash point down through the decades and even the centuries. To the extent that we can address some things that we didn't get done at Dayton, this will help people in the region and the former Yugoslavia and also help the United States of America.

The Dayton Agreement was a crowning achievement, but it didn't provide Bosnia with a constitutional framework and political structures that could effectively govern on into the 21st century. And the Senator from New Hampshire and I certainly saw that. We were meeting with the tripartite head of the government after the ceremony we attended.

Dan Serwer of Johns Hopkins University recently observed:

> We imposed the Dayton Accords, but we imposed what the ethic nationalist warring parties told us they could live with. It is therefore unsurprising that one way or another, ethnic nationalists have dominated Bosnia almost continuously, making it ungovernable, since 1995.

So we are hoping the Bosnians and Herzegovinians can address this issue, and while they are doing that, our legislation would establish an enterprise fund directed by a board of American investment professionals capable of leveraging both public and private funding to provide entrepreneurs access to the same kinds of loans and investment opportunities afforded to small- and medium-sized businesses here in the United States.

By strengthening the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this legislation would help create space to continue moving forward on the political reforms I just alluded to. As the Senator said, it would establish an enterprise fund modeled after U.S. programs that supported central and eastern European economies after the fall of the Berlin Wall, with approximately $10 billion of public and private funding.

I would also point out that this legislation doesn't score as an expense. I think we are being very frugal with the authorization we are providing to the Congress to build on this, if our legislation passes.

Per capita income in Bosnia and Herzegovina averages less than $5,000 annually. And that is a shame 20 years after the Dayton Accords. Compare this $5,000-a-year per capita to $13,000 a year right across the border in neighboring Croatia. The unemployment rate stands at 40 percent.

Things are at a critical juncture in this country, and that is why I think our trip over there with former President Clinton and with former Secretary Albright and Members from the House of Representatives came at such an important time and prompted us to work together on legislation to help make the situation better for individuals over there but also help make our national security stronger and more reliable here in America.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, as my colleague from Mississippi points out, this really is critical not just to Bosnia and its future, but this is also about the national security of the United States.

My colleague talked about the Balkans. We know World War I began in the Balkans. We know it has continued to be a part of Europe where Russian aggression and Russian efforts to subvert the governments there continue, they continue their activity. It is a place where we have a number of different ethnic groups and where different religions converge. So it is a place we need to keep supporting—Bosnia and Herzegovina. We need to look at how we can help them ensure their continued progress toward the West and Europe and also toward economic prosperity.

I traveled there in 2010 with former Senator Voinovich from Ohio, who had done a lot of work on the Balkans when he was in the Senate. I will never forget a lunch we had with a number of young people there, mostly college students or recent graduates. We talked to them about what they saw for the future of the country, and there was so

much hopelessness in that conversation because they didn't see the kinds of opportunities we want young people to see as they are thinking about their futures and their children and what is going to happen in their country. So I think this is a partial answer to how we can help them provide that economic prosperity they are looking forward to.

Finally, I think what has happened in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the Dayton Accords—for all of its flaws, it is a model we can look to as we are looking at the challenges we face in Syria. The Bosniaks, the Serbs, the Croatians, the Muslims, the Orthodox Christians, and the Roman Catholics all came together and they agreed to end the conflict in Bosnia. They agreed to try to build a successful democracy and a strong economy to create a successful multiethnic, multisectarian state under very difficult circumstances. And while we need to continue to look at how the Dayton Accords should change, it is still a milestone in what happened with that conflict and I think serves as a model for so many other regions in the world where there is conflict.

Mr. WICKER. The Senator from New Hampshire makes two very salient points I do want to underscore. And it pains me that we have to be on the floor of the Senate this afternoon talking about an aggressive Russia. Russia was trying to help 20 years ago in the Dayton Accords. They were trying to be part of getting things done. This is no longer the case. Russia and some of the few countries aligned with their interests now seem to be trying more to block effective responses to the international problems.

In addition, some of the aggression of Russia in Ukraine, for example, is eerily, troublingly reminiscent of some language in previous decades—talk of violating a neighbor's sovereignty, territory, and claiming they are doing nothing more than defending a threatened local ethnic population. That is troubling and familiar rhetoric from a very dangerous past time. So I would underscore the Senator's point there about Russia.

Before I toss this back to her to close, I would simply say this about her comments about American leadership. No one could have made this work except the United States of America in the early 1990s and in the mid-1990s. There was one people on the face of the Earth, and that was the Americans. The world turned to us, and we stopped a conflagration in Europe that was about to get out of hand.

With regard to Syria, I am so glad my friend mentioned this. The United States is being looked to internationally for leadership. No one else can provide that leadership. Again, it is incumbent on us to help people who are suffering in other locations, and we want to do that if we can, to the extent we can afford it. But we need to act with leadership on behalf of the United States of America, on behalf of our own citizens, on behalf of our own national defense interests and the interest of every American to live in the absence of fear from terrorism and the attacks and ill wishes of those who would cause us injury, if they possibly could.

I very much appreciate her point about American leadership, and I know this will not be done unless we do it across the aisle. It is why it means so much to me to take the floor this afternoon in this colloquy, with a Democratic Senator from New Hampshire and I, a Republican Senator from Mississippi, pushing in the same direction and asking for American leadership.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. I thank my colleague. As you point out, we represent two very different parts of the country.

Mr. WICKER. Although we both are Ole Miss graduates.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. We are. We share that. The fact is, this is a bipartisan issue. As my colleague points out, the United States brokered that historic agreement in Dayton. We were the only country that could really take that leadership, and we need to continue that role in the world.

I look forward to working with Senator WICKER as we try to move this bipartisan bill to support Bosnia and Herzegovina and continuing to be vigilant on efforts to undermine democratic values wherever they exist in the world, and certainly this is one place where we can provide help in a way that is very important.

I thank my colleague.

Mr. WICKER. And I thank the Senator from New Hampshire.

By Mr. DAINES (for himself, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. LEE, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2310. A bill to allow a State to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, as a fifth-generation Montanan and product of Montana public schools, I understand how important a first rate education is to our kids' future. By increasing local control of our schools and lessening the influence Washington bureaucrats, we can provide States with the flexibility needed to meet the unique needs of our students and communities. That is why I am introducing the Academic Partnerships Lead Us to Success, or A-PLUS, Act. By shifting control back to the states, individual and effective solutions can be created to address the multitude of unique challenges facing schools across the country. Through these ''laboratories of democracy,'' Americans can watch and learn how students can benefit when innovative reforms are implemented on the local level. The A-PLUS Act would give states greater flexibility in allocating federal education funding and ensuring academic achievement in their schools. With A-PLUS, States would be freed from unworkable teacher standards, Washington-knows-best performance metrics, and onerous Federal testing requirements that have failed to bring about promised improvements in academic achievement. States would be held accountable by parents and teachers because a bright light would shine directly on the decisions made by State capitals and local school districts. With freedom from Federal mandates comes more responsibility, transparency, and accountability on States. States would need to adhere to all civil rights laws and work towards advancing educational opportunities for disadvantaged children as well. This legislation would go a long ways towards returning the responsibility for our kids' education closer to home and reduces the influence of the Federal Government over our classrooms. I want to thank Senators GRASSLEY, CRUZ, LEE, RUBIO, LANKFORD, and PERDUE for being original cosponsors of this bill and I ask my other Senate colleagues to join us in support of this legislation.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BOOKER, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2323. A bill to clarify the definition of nonimmigrant for purposes of chapter 44 of title 18, United States Code; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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

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

S. 2323

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 ''Visa Waiver Program Firearms Clarification Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. NONIMMIGRANT CLARIFICATION.

Section 922 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (d)(5)(B), by inserting ''or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)'' before the semicolon at the end;

(2) in subsection (g)(5)(B), by inserting ''or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)'' before the semicolon at the end; and

(3) in subsection (y)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting ''OR PURSUANT TO THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM'' after ''VISAS'';

(B) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting ''or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)'' after ''visa''; and

(C) in paragraph (3)(A), in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting ''or pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187)'' after ''visa''.

By Ms. CANTWELL:

S. 2326. A bill to designate the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, located in the State of Washington, as the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, to establish the Medicine Creek Treaty National Memorial within the wildlife refuge, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, last year the Pacific Northwest, and the Nation lost one of our greatest civil rights heroes with the passing of Billy Frank, Jr. It is clear a great leader has been lost when an entire community shows up to commemorate his life and celebrate his spirit. I attended Billy's memorial, along with Senator MURRAY and 6,000 others, and was honored to have the chance to pay tribute to the man who fought for the civil rights of Native Americans, the principles of environmental stewardship, and the importance of salmon recovery and preservation in the Pacific Northwest.

Today, I am introducing the Billy Frank Jr. Tell Your Story Act, which would change the name of the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge to the ''Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.'' In addition, this legislation would create a national memorial to commemorate the signing of the Medicine Creek Treaty, the treaty that Billy Frank fought so hard to enforce, within the refuge. The wildlife refuge sits adjacent to the Nisqually Reservation where Billy grew up and lived, and contains the estuary and salmon that Billy devoted his life to protecting.

Billy Frank, Jr. just wanted to fish. He was a fisherman to his core, and that's how he wanted history to remember him. Everyone who knew Billy would want us to remember him as the legend that walked and fished among us. Given his life, his legacy, and the way he changed Washington State and the Nation, it is only right that we honor his legacy by forever linking his name to the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.

Along with his advocacy for protecting Tribal treaty rights, Billy Frank changed the way we look at the environment. Because of his advocacy, we now have environmental restoration efforts throughout the Puget Sound, including at the Nisqually River Delta, the largest tidal marsh rehabilitation in the Northwest. Additionally, we have the Puget Sound Partnership, a Tribal and public-private partnership dedicated to improve the health of our Puget Sound. Billy understood that we have a sacred responsibility to be stewards of our environment, and that we must leave it for future generations in better condition than it was left to us.

The Billy Frank Jr. Tell Your Story Act has the support of the Nisqually Tribe and the neighboring Puyallup Tribe, along with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, the National Congress of American Indians, and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. A companion bill introduced by Congressman Denny Heck has been approved by the House Natural Resources Committee and is awaiting consideration by the House. I urge its passage in the Senate, especially given the recent decision by President Obama to posthumously award Billy the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Billy grew up listening to the stories of his father and others belonging to the Nisqually and other tribes. Routinely harassed for fishing his tribe's namesake Nisqually River with nets, Willie Frank, Sr. recalled a warden telling him, ''Your treaty isn't worth the paper it's printed on.'' Billy's father always told him, ''Just keep fishing. Even if they arrested you, just keep fishing. Even if they beat you just keep fishing. Keep fishing and claim what was promised in the in the Medicine Creek Treaty.'' By changing the name of the Nisqually wildlife refuge, we will not only honor the fisherman that fought to protect the land and its people, but we will make this land better than it was left to us, just like Billy Frank, Jr. would have wanted.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2331. A bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to make invalid and unenforceable predispute arbitration agreements with respect to controversies arising under provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, our Nation has a strong tradition of ensuring that our service members are protected while they serve to keep us safe. As the challenges facing our service members change, we must work to ensure that our laws continue to keep pace. In this regard, I have worked with my colleagues over the years to strengthen the protections for service members and their families under the Servicemember Civil Relief Act, SCRA.

Today, I am joined by Senator GRAHAM in introducing on a bipartisan basis legislation to further enhance SCRA protections. The SCRA Rights Protection Act seeks to protect service members from being forced to accept mandatory arbitration clauses as part of everyday transactions, such as those relating to mortgage origination, automobile leases, and student loans. Often service members sign contracts that include arbitration clauses buried in the fine print, and this eliminates their access to the courts, which can limit their ability to assert their rights and reach a fair resolution. In disputes involving SCRA rights, this bill would make arbitration clauses unenforceable unless all parties consent to arbitration after the dispute arises, and would also ensure that service members retain their right to join with other service members to file a case together as a class.

I urge our colleagues to join us in supporting this improvement to the SCRA, which will better protect our military families while the men and women of our Armed Forces protect our nation.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 319—DESIGNATING NOVEMBER 29, 2015, AS ''DRIVE SAFER SUNDAY''

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Mr. COONS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 319

Whereas motor vehicle travel is the primary means of transportation in the United States;

Whereas every individual traveling on the roads and highways needs to drive in a safer manner to reduce deaths and injuries that result from motor vehicle accidents;

Whereas according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, wearing a seat belt saves as many as 15,000 lives each year; and

Whereas the Sunday after Thanksgiving is the busiest highway traffic day of the year: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) encourages—

(A) high schools, colleges, universities, administrators, teachers, primary schools, and secondary schools to launch campus-wide educational campaigns to urge students to focus on safety when driving;

(B) national trucking firms to alert their drivers to be especially focused on driving safely on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and to publicize the importance of the day through use of the Citizens Band Radio Service and at truck stops across the United States;

(C) clergies to remind their congregations to travel safely when attending services and gatherings;

(D) law enforcement personnel to remind drivers and passengers to drive safely, particularly on the Sunday after Thanksgiving;

(E) motorists to drive safely, not just during the holiday season, but every time they get behind the wheel; and

(F) all people of the United States to understand the life-saving importance of wearing a seat belt and to use the Sunday after Thanksgiving as an opportunity to educate themselves about highway safety; and

(2) designates November 29, 2015, as ''Drive Safer Sunday''.

SENATE RESOLUTION 320—CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE OF BURMA ON THEIR COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL ELECTIONS

Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 320

Whereas Burma conducted general elections on November 8 2015, the country's first national vote since a civilian government was introduced in 2011 that ended nearly 50 years of military rule;

Whereas the people of Burma have, by their vigorous participation in electoral campaigning and public debate, strengthened

the foundations of a free and democratic way of life;

Whereas preliminary reports indicate that voter turnout exceeded 80 percent;

Whereas international observers have reported that election day was largely free and fair and conducted in an orderly and peaceful fashion despite broader structural concerns such as the disenfranchisement of the Rohingya;

Whereas the ruling military-backed Union Solidarity Development Party suffered a dramatic loss at the polls, and the National League for Democracy won a sizable majority in both chambers of Burma's Union Parliament, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, and will select Burma's next President;

Whereas Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has symbolized the struggle for freedom and democracy in Burma and has actively supported democratic reform through her leadership of the National League for Democracy;

Whereas the National League for Democracy espouses a policy of nonviolent movement towards multi-party democracy in Burma, supports national reconciliation, and endorses strengthening democratic institutions, protecting human rights, implementing free market economic reforms, and reinforcing rule of law;

Whereas President Thein Sein and Commander-in-Chief Min Aug Hlaing made public commitments to respect the election results and vowed to abide by the law to ensure an orderly and prompt transition to a new government;

Whereas the continued democratic development of Burma is a matter of fundamental importance to the advancement of United States interests in Southeast Asia and is supported by the United States Senate:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the people of Burma for embracing democracy through their participation in the November 8, 2015 general elections and for their continuing efforts in developing a free, democratic society that respects internationally-recognized human rights;

(2) recognizes the National League for Democracy's victory as a reflection of the will of the Burmese people;

(3) calls on the Union Solidarity Development Party to undertake a peaceful transfer of power and abide by the law to ensure an orderly and prompt transition to a new government;

(4) encourages all parties to pursue national reconciliation talks and work together in the spirit of national unity to seek what is best for the country;

(5) recognizes that while the Government of Burma has made important progress towards democratization, there remain important impediments to the realization of full democratic and civilian government, including the reservation of unelected seats for the military and the disenfranchisement of groups of people including the Rohingya;

(6) expresses hope that newly elected members of parliament and a prompt and orderly transition to a new government will herald a new generation of responsible leadership in Burma;

(7) calls on the Government of Burma to support meaningful efforts to reform the 2008 Constitution of Burma, with the full and unfettered participation of the people of Burma and in a manner that promotes and protects democratic development of Burma and safeguards against arbitrary interference by the military;

(8) supports negotiations between the Government of Burma and ethnic-based peoples and organizations;

(9) encourages the President of the United States to take further steps toward normalization of relations with Burma and consider the potential relaxation of restrictions should the Union Solidarity Development Party respect the election results and proceed with a prompt and orderly transition in power; and

(10) reaffirms that the people of the United States will continue to stand with the people of Burma in support of democracy, partnership, and peace.

SENATE RESOLUTION 321—HONORING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF CARE

Ms. MIKULSKI submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 321

Whereas CARE is 1 of the largest and most respected international development and emergency aid organizations in the world;

Whereas CARE was officially founded on November 27, 1945, which is 70 years prior to the month of adoption of this resolution;

Whereas the United States sent 100,000,000 CARE packages to Europe during World War II, which—

(1) delivered canned meats, powdered milk, dried fruits, chocolate, and coffee to brave soldiers of the United States; and

(2) each cost only $10 but provided 10 soldiers each 1 meal;

Whereas President Harry Truman purchased the first CARE package;

Whereas CARE was originally intended to be a temporary organization, but CARE—

(1) continued as the need for global relief continued; and

(2) grew into an international organization working in 87 countries;

Whereas CARE—

(1) has significantly broadened the scope of its relief work;

(2) provides assistance in the wake of devastating natural disasters;

(3) combats hunger; and

(4) comes to the assistance of refugees, including refugees of the current refugee crisis in Syria;

Whereas CARE also works—

(1) to empower women and girls;

(2) to reduce the incidence of child marriage;

(3) to prevent and respond to gender-based violence; and

(4) to promote gender equality internationally; and

Whereas the words of President John F. Kennedy, that the work of CARE "expresses America's concern and friendship in a language that all peoples understand" are still true today: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes the 70th anniversary of the founding of CARE, which serves as a symbol of hope and humanity throughout the world.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 25—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SUBMIT THE PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE AGREEMENT TO THE SENATE FOR ITS ADVICE AND CONSENT

Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. VITTER, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. THUNE, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. COATS, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SASSE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. PAUL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 25

Whereas the United States is party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with annexes, done at New York May 9, 1992, and entered into force March 21, 1994 (in this resolution referred to as the "Convention");

Whereas the Convention requires the United States to "adopt national policies and take corresponding measures on the mitigation of climate change, by limiting its anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases," but does not require the United States to commit to specific targets or timetables for emissions reductions;

Whereas, during the Convention's advice and consent process in the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate (in this resolution referred to as the "Foreign Relations Committee") a question arose whether future protocols made pursuant to the Convention "containing targets and timetables" for emissions reductions should be submitted to the Senate for advice and consent;

Whereas the Foreign Relations Committee submitted a written question, "Would a protocol containing targets and timetables be submitted to the Senate?" to which the Executive Branch responded, "If such a protocol were negotiated and adopted, and the United States wished to become a party, we would expect such a protocol to be submitted to the Senate.";

Whereas the Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Senator Claiborne Pell, issued Executive Report 102–55 regarding the Convention in which it noted "that a decision by the Conference of the Parties to adopt targets and timetables would have to be submitted to the Senate for its advice and consent before the United States could deposit its instruments of ratification for such an agreement";

Whereas Executive Report 102–55 further noted "that a decision by the executive branch to reinterpret the Convention to apply legally binding targets and timetables for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases to the United States would alter the 'shared understanding' of the Convention between the Senate and the executive branch and would therefore require the Senate's advice and consent";

Whereas, under the auspices given by the Executive Branch that future agreements made pursuant to the Convention containing targets and timetables for emissions reductions would be submitted to the Senate, the Senate gave its consent to ratification of the Convention on October 7, 1992;

Whereas, in December 2011, at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP–17) in Durban, South Africa, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action was established, inter alia, "to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force" under the Convention to be completed no later than 2015 and adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP–21);

Whereas, subsequent to COP–17, representatives of President Barack Obama, including the Special Envoy for Climate Change, have made public statements indicating that the United States intends to finalize a climate change agreement at COP–21 that contains

targets and timetables for emissions reductions;

Whereas the Executive Branch has made clear through its public statements that it intends to negotiate a climate change agreement at COP–21 that contains legally binding provisions as well as non-binding provisions—including targets and timetables for emissions reductions—attached as an addendum or schedule to the legally-binding agreement;

Whereas the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, who will host COP–21, has stated, ''We must find a formula which is valuable for everybody and valuable for the U.S. without going to the Congress.'';

Whereas the Department of State developed guidelines known as the Circular 175 Procedure (C–175) to facilitate ''the application of orderly and uniform measures to the negotiation, conclusion, reporting, publication, and registration of U.S. treaties and international agreements'';

Whereas C–175, inter alia, set forth eight factors for determining ''whether any international agreement should be brought into force as a treaty or as an international agreement other than a treaty'';

Whereas the Executive Branch must give ''due consideration'' to the eight factors outlined in C–175, and ''the utmost care is to be exercised to avoid any invasion or compromise of the constitutional powers of the President, the Senate, and the Congress as a whole'';

Whereas the eight factors are as follows: (1) the extent to which the agreement involves commitments or risks affecting the Nation as a whole; (2) whether the agreement is intended to affect State laws; (3) whether the agreement can be given effect without the enactment of subsequent legislation by the Congress; (4) past United States practice as to similar agreements; (5) the preference of the Congress as to a particular type of agreement; (6) the degree of formality desired for an agreement; (7) the proposed duration of the agreement, the need for prompt conclusion of an agreement, and the desirability of concluding a routine or short-term agreement; and (8) the general international practice as to similar agreements;

Whereas COP–21 will be held in Paris, France from November 30 to December 11, 2015;

Whereas, at COP–21, the United States will be expected, inter alia, to commit billions of dollars in taxpayer money to fund the Green Climate Fund and other financial mechanisms to fund mitigation and adaptation projects in developing countries;

Whereas the Paris climate change agreement, either in the form contemplated by the President or in its current draft form released on October 5, 2015, by the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform, reflects the characteristics of a treaty as set forth in C–175, and does not reflect the characteristics of an international agreement other than a treaty; and

Whereas, pursuant to commitments made by the Executive Branch to the Senate during the advice and consent process for the Convention the Executive Branch stated that any protocol containing targets and timetables would be submitted to the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the statements made by the Executive Branch to the Senate during Senate consideration of the Convention and set forth in Executive Report 102–55 remain valid and in force and, accordingly, any agreement adopted at COP–21 containing targets and timetables, whether deemed ''legally binding'' or not, must be submitted to the Senate for advice and consent pursuant to Article II, section 2 of the Constitution;

(2) any agreement or decision made at COP–21 that contains targets and timetables—whether they are contained within a legally-binding instrument or attached as a non-binding schedule or addendum to a legally-binding instrument—shall be considered by the Congress to be an agreement ''containing targets and timetables'';

(3) a decision by the Executive Branch made at COP–21 or any other venue to apply targets and timetables for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases to the United States would alter the ''shared understanding'' of the Convention between the Executive Branch and the Senate and would therefore require the Senate's advice and consent;

(4) the Department of State developed the ''Circular 175 Procedure'' to determine how international agreements would be negotiated, and the eight factors contained in the Procedure strongly support the conclusion that any agreement made under the Convention that contains targets and timetables for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases must be submitted to the Senate for advice and consent;

(5) until all commitments on emissions targets and timetables made at COP–21 are submitted to the Senate for advice and consent and subsequently ratified by the Executive Branch, such commitments shall have no effect on the interpretation of United States law or the international obligations of the United States; and

(6) Congress should refuse to consider any budget resolutions and appropriations language that include funding for the Green Climate Fund or any affiliated body or financing mechanism unless and until all agreements on emissions targets and timetables reached at COP–21 are submitted to the Senate for advice and consent.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2855. Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2856. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2857. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2858. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2859. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2860. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2861. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2862. Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2863. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2864. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2865. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2866. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2867. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2868. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2869. Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2870. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2871. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2872. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2873. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mrs. ERNST) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1550, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish entities tasked with improving program and project management in certain Federal agencies, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2855. Mr. ENZI (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R.

2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. INTERSTATE TRANSPORT OF KNIVES.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Knife Owners' Protection Act of 2015''.

(b) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''transport''—

(1) includes staying in temporary lodging overnight, common carrier misrouting or delays, stops for food, fuel, vehicle maintenance, emergencies, medical treatment, and any other activity related to the journey of an individual; and

(2) does not include transport of a knife with the intent to commit an offense punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding 1 year involving the use or threatened use of force against another person, or with knowledge, or reasonable cause to believe, that such an offense is to be committed in the course of, or arising from, the journey.

(c) TRANSPORT OF KNIVES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, rule, or regulation of the United States, or of a State or political subdivision of a State, an individual who is not otherwise prohibited by Federal law from possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving a knife may transport a knife from any State or place where the individual may lawfully possess, carry, or transport the knife to any other State or place where the individual may lawfully possess, carry, or transport the knife if—

(1) in the case of transport by motor vehicle—

(A) the knife is not directly accessible from the passenger compartment of the motor vehicle; or

(B) in the case of a motor vehicle without a compartment separate from the passenger compartment, the knife is contained in a closed—

(i) container;

(ii) glove compartment; or

(iii) console; or

(2) in the case of transport by means other than a motor vehicle, including any transport over land, on or through water, or through the air, the knife is contained in a closed container.

(d) EMERGENCY KNIVES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An individual—

(A) may carry in the passenger compartment of a motor vehicle a knife or tool designed for enabling escape in an emergency that incorporates a blunt tipped safety blade or a guarded blade or both for cutting safety belts; and

(B) shall not be required to secure a knife or tool described in subparagraph (A) in a closed—

(i) container;

(ii) glove compartment; or

(iii) console.

(2) LIMITATION.—This subsection shall not apply to the transport of a knife or tool in the passenger cabin of an aircraft whose passengers are subject to airport screening procedures of the Transportation Security Administration.

(e) NO ARREST OR DETENTION.—An individual who is transporting a knife in compliance with this section may not be arrested or otherwise detained for violation of any law, rule, or regulation of a State or political subdivision of a State related to the possession, transport, or carrying of a knife, unless there is probable cause to believe that the individual is not in compliance with subsection (c).

(f) CLAIM OR DEFENSE.—An individual may assert this section as a claim or defense in any civil or criminal action or proceeding. When an individual asserts this section as a claim or defense in a criminal proceeding, the State or political subdivision shall have the burden of proving, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the individual was not in compliance with subsection (c).

(g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit any right to possess, carry, or transport a knife under applicable State law.

SA 2856. Mr. BROWN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 146, line 8, strike ''and''.

On page 146, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

(7) is not a youth who left foster care at age 14 or older and is at risk of becoming homeless; and

On page 146, line 9, strike ''(7)'' and insert ''(8)''.

SA 2857. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 163, line 23, insert ''and under the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), as applicable'' after ''(PHAS)''.

SA 2858. Mr. SESSIONS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used for high-speed rail in the State of California or for the California High-Speed Rail Authority, nor may any such funds be used by the Federal Railroad Administration to administer a grant agreement with the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

SA 2859. Mr. LEE (for himself and Mr. COTTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available under this Act shall be used to carry out the rule entitled ''Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing'' (80 Fed. Reg. 42272 (July 16, 2015)).

SA 2860. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to terminate the Federal Aviation Administration's Contract Weather Observation Services Program until after the completion of a comprehensive study, incorporating stakeholder input and public comment, of the safety risks and hazardous effects that may result from such loss of such program.

SA 2861. Mr. SULLIVAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the general provisions of title I, add the following:

SEC. _____. Any bridge eligible for assistance under title 23, United States Code, that is structurally deficient and requires construction, reconstruction, or maintenance—

(1) may be reconstructed in the same location with the same capacity and dimensions as in existence on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) shall be exempt from any environmental reviews, approvals, licensing, and permit requirements under—

(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(B) sections 402 and 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342, 1344);

(C) division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code;

(D) the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.);

(E) the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.);

(F) the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.);

(G) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), except when the reconstruction occurs in designated critical habitat for threatened and endangered species;

(H) Executive Order 11990 (42 U.S.C. 4321 note; relating to the protection of wetland); and

(I) any Federal law (including regulations) requiring no net loss of wetland.

SA 2862. Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and

Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. With respect to grants awarded using amounts in the appropriations account appropriated under the heading ''HOMELESS ASSISTANCE GRANTS'' under the heading ''COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT'' made available for either of fiscal years 2015 or 2016 for the Continuum of Care Program, as authorized under subtitle C of title IV of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11381 et seq.), costs paid through program income of a grant recipient may count toward meeting the matching requirements of the recipient, if the costs are eligible continuum of care costs that supplement the continuum of care program of the recipient.

SA 2863. Mr. WARNER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. ____. From amounts made available by this Act, such sums as may be necessary may be used to carry out the following activities:

(1) The Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, shall review policies and guidance to identify ways in which the Department of Transportation can encourage State departments of transportation, transit agencies, and other direct recipients of Federal-Aid Highway and Federal Transit funding to encourage and expand the use of innovative mobility technologies, including car sharing, bike sharing, carpool, vanpool, transportation network companies, multimodal fare payment systems, application-based mobility programs, and other innovative projects that can make the transportation system more safe and efficient.

(2) The Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, shall—

(A) review existing guidance and revise such guidance, as necessary, to encourage the use and expansion of innovative technologies, as appropriate; and

(B) develop specific guidance and circulars on how recipients of Federal-Aid Highway funding can and should be utilizing such technologies.

(3) Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall submit a report to Congress that includes—

(A) a plan describing how the Department of Transportation will identify and provide technical assistance to recipients of Federal-Aid Highway funding on integrating and utilizing innovative mobility technologies;

(B) a plan for addressing current and potential guidance documents;

(C) the identification of legislative barriers that prevent expansion and utilization of innovative mobility technologies, including mobility services provided by private providers of public transportation; and

(D) recommendations on policies that the Department of Transportation should implement and legislation that Congress should enact to expand innovative mobility technologies.

(4) To assist with the development of the report under paragraph (3), the Secretary of Transportation shall create a task force composed of representatives of—

(A) national stakeholders representing—

(i) city officials;

(ii) State departments of transportation;

(iii) transit agencies;

(iv) transportation demand management professionals;

(v) rural transportation agencies;

(vi) shared use mobility providers;

(vii) intelligent transportation system professionals; and

(viii) additional private sector technology professionals, as appropriate;

(B) university transportation centers engaged in research regarding urban mobility and shared use mobility;

(C) private companies that provide, promote, and operate digital mobility technologies and information technologies; and

(D) other entities that the Secretary determines could contribute to the development of the report.

SA 2864. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. Section 8(x)(2) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(x)(2)) is amended by striking ''not more than 21 years of age'' and inserting ''not more than 24 years of age''.

SA 2865. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Ms. COLLINS, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 169, line 13, insert ''(a)'' before ''Section''.

On page 169, between lines 15 and 16, insert the following:

(b) Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall issue final regulations to implement the amendment made by subsection (a).

SA 2866. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

After section 119C, insert the following:

SEC. 119D. It is the sense of Congress that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration continue evaluating the operational benefits of technologies, including an all-digital cylindrical technology and a panel technology as part of the multi-function phased array radar program. Further, NOAA and the FAA should jointly formulate key requirements for development and eventual acquisition strategy of such a radar system to meet the needs of the respective agencies.

SA 2867. Mr. FLAKE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. ____. (a) In this section, the term ''covered agency'' means—

(1) the Department of Housing and Urban Development;

(2) the Department of Transportation;

(3) the Federal Maritime Commission;

(4) the National Railroad Passenger Corporation;

(5) the National Transportation Safety Board;

(6) the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation; and

(7) the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness.

(b) Not later than September 30, 2016, the head of each covered agency shall submit to Congress and post on the website of the covered agency a report on projects funded by the covered agency.

(c) Each report submitted and posted under subsection (b) shall include, for each project included in the report—

(1) a brief description of the project, including—

(A) the purpose of the project;

(B) each location in which the project is carried out;

(C) the year in which the project was initiated; and

(D) each primary contractor and grant recipient for the project;

(2) the original expected date for completion of the project;

(3) the current expected date for completion of the project;

(4) the original cost estimate for the project;

(5) the current cost estimate for the project; and

(6) if known, an explanation for a delay in completion or increase in the original cost estimate for the project.

SA 2868. Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. SULLIVAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to

implement changes to the Indian Housing Block Grant allocation formula until all changes to data sources are fully evaluated by the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee established under section 106(b) of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996 (25 U.S.C. 4116(b)) at a publicly noticed, in-person session as part of the official, regular meeting process of the Committee.

SA 2869. Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. MURPHY, and Mr. CASEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 54, line 11, strike ''$1,101,500,000'' and insert ''$1,711,500,000''.

SA 2870. Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. THUNE, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 105.

SA 2871. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the amendment, add the following:

SEC. ____. None of the amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under this Act may be used to provide or administer assistance to aliens admitted, on or after November 13, 2015, as refugees or asylees under section 1157 or 1158 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157 and 1158) who were nationals of any of the following countries or territories:

(1) Afghanistan.
(2) Algeria.
(3) Bahrain.
(4) Bangladesh.
(5) Egypt.
(6) Eritrea.
(7) Indonesia.
(8) Iran.
(9) Iraq.
(10) Jordan.
(11) Kazakhstan.
(12) Kuwait.
(13) Kyrgyzstan.
(14) Lebanon.
(15) Libya.
(16) Mali.
(17) Morocco.
(18) Nigeria.
(19) North Korea.
(20) Oman.
(21) Pakistan.
(22) Qatar.
(23) Russia.
(24) Saudi Arabia.
(25) Somalia.
(26) Sudan.
(27) Syria.
(28) Tajikistan.
(29) Tunisia.
(30) Turkey.
(31) United Arab Emirates.
(32) Uzbekistan.
(33) Yemen.
(34) Palestinian Territories.

SA 2872. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2812 proposed by Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. REED) to the bill H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IV, add the following:

SEC. _____. It is the sense of the Senate that bridges classified as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete should receive priority funding under the national highway performance program under section 119 of title 23, United States Code.

SA 2873. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mrs. ERNST) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1550, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish entities tasked with improving program and project management in certain Federal agencies, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 11, line 22, strike ''in accordance'' and insert ''consistent''.

On page 12, lines 18 and 19, strike ''the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016'' and insert ''chapter 87 of title 10''.

On page 15, lines 16 and 17, strike ''the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016'' and insert ''chapter 87 of title 10''.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO OBJECT TO PROCEEDING

I, Senator CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, intend to object to proceeding to the nomination of Thomas A. Shannon, Jr. to be Undersecretary of State (Political Affairs), dated November 19, 2015.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. COLLINS. 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 November 19, 2015, at 2 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''ISIS's Impacts on the Homeland and Refugee Resettlement.''

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

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Human Trafficking Investigation.''

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

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 2:30 p.m.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC, AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on November 19, 2015, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled ''Democratic Transitions in Southeast Asia.''

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

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to Public Law 96–114, as amended, appoints the following individual to the Congressional Award Board: Karlos R. LaSane II of Nevada.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the

consideration of Calendar Nos. 379 through 382 and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Coast Guard; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc and 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, that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment to serve as Director of the Coast Guard Reserve pursuant to Title 14, U.S.C., section 53(b) in the grade indicated:

To be rear admiral

Rear Adm. Kurt B. Hinrichs

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Derek Tai-Ching Kan, of California, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Coast Guard Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203(a):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Andrew S. McKinley

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Coast Guard to the grade indicated under title 14, U.S.C., section 271(e):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Captain Matthew T. Bell
Captain Melissa Bert
Captain David M. Dermanelian
Captain Robert P. Hayes
Captain Andrew J. Tiongson
Captain Anthony J. Vogt

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

COAST GUARD

PN919 COAST GUARD nominations (56) beginning Ladonn A. Allen, and ending Jeffrey V. Yarosh, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

PN920 COAST GUARD nominations (13) beginning Sharif A. Abdrabbo, and ending Wilbur A. Velarde, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of October 28, 2015.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 136, 194, 195, 321, 322, 323, 324, 338, 344, 376, and 377; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; 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.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nominations en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations of Shelly Colleen Lowe, of Arizona, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2018; Steven M. Wellner, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years; William Ward Nooter, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years; Juan Carlos Iturregui, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation for a term expiring September 20, 2018; Diane Helen Rodriguez, of California, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2018; Francine Berman, of New York, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2020; Patricia Nelson Limerick, of Colorado, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2018; Ann Calvaresi Barr, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, United States Agency for International Development; Victoria A. Lipnic, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2020; and Michael Herman Michaud, of Maine, to be Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training?

The nominations were confirmed en bloc.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 288, S. 1550.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1550) to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish entities tasked with improving program and project management in certain Federal agencies, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 1550

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Program Management Improvement Accountability Act''.

SEC. 2. DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR MANAGEMENT.

(a) ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS.—Section 503 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.—

''(1) REQUIREMENT.—Subject to the direction and approval of the Director, the Deputy Director for Management or a designee shall—

''(A) adopt governmentwide standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management for executive agencies;

''(B) oversee implementation of program and project management for the standards, policies, and guidelines established under subparagraph (A);

''(C) chair the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b);

''(D) establish standards and policies for executive agencies, in accordance with widely accepted standards for program and project management planning and delivery;

''(E) engage with the private sector to identify best practices in program and project management that would improve Federal program and project management;

''(F) conduct portfolio reviews to address programs identified as high risk by the Government Accountability Office;

''(G) not less than annually, conduct portfolio reviews of agency programs in coordination with Project Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) to assess the quality and effectiveness of program management; and

''(H) establish a 5-year strategic plan for program and project management.

''(2) APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of that paragraph are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016.''.

(b) DEADLINE FOR STANDARDS, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue the standards, policies, and guidelines required under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under subsection (b), the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a), and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue any regulations as are necessary to implement the requirements of section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OFFICERS AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 11 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 1126. Program Management Improvement Officers and Program Management Policy Council

''(a) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OFFICERS.—

''(1) DESIGNATION.—The head of each agency described in section 901(b) shall designate a senior executive of the agency as the Program Management Improvement Officer of the agency.

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Program Management Improvement Officer of an agency designated under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) implement program management policies established by the agency under section 503(c); and

''(B) develop a strategy for enhancing the role of program managers within the agency that includes the following:

''(i) Enhanced training and educational opportunities for program managers that shall include—

''(I) training in the relevant competencies encompassed with program and project manager within the private sector for program managers; and

''(II) training that emphasizes cost containment for large projects and programs.

''(ii) Mentoring of current and future program managers by experienced senior executives and program managers within the agency.

''(iii) Improved career paths and career opportunities for program managers.

''(iv) A plan to encourage the recruitment and retention of highly qualified individuals to serve as program managers.

''(v) Improved means of collecting and disseminating best practices and lessons learned to enhance program management across the agency.

''(vi) Common templates and tools to support improved data gathering and analysis for program management and oversight purposes.

''(3) APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—This subsection shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of this subsection are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016.

''(b) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Office of Management and Budget a council to be known as the 'Program Management Policy Council' (in this subsection referred to as the 'Council').

''(2) PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS.—The Council shall act as the principal interagency forum for improving agency practices related to program and project management. The Council shall—

''(A) advise and assist the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget;

''(B) review programs identified as high risk by the General Accountability Office and make recommendations for actions to be taken by the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget or a designee;

''(C) discuss topics of importance to the workforce, including—

''(i) career development and workforce development needs;

''(ii) policy to support continuous improvement in program and project management; and

''(iii) major challenges across agencies in managing programs;

''(D) advise on the development and applicability of standards governmentwide for program management transparency; and

''(E) review the information published on the website of the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to section 1122.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—

''(A) COMPOSITION.—The Council shall be composed of the following members:

''(i) Five members from the Office of Management and Budget as follows:

''(I) The Deputy Director for Management.

''(II) The Administrator of the Office of Electronic Government.

''(III) The Administrator of Federal Procurement Policy.

''(IV) The Controller of the Office of Federal Financial Management.

''(V) The Director of the Office of Performance and Personnel Management.

''(ii) The Program Management Improvement Officer from each agency described in section 901(b).

''(iii) Other individuals as determined appropriate by the Chairperson.

''(B) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall be the Chairperson of the Council. A Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the members and shall serve a term of not more than 1 year.

''(ii) DUTIES.—The Chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the Council, determine the agenda of the Council, direct the work of the Council, and establish and direct subgroups of the Council as appropriate.

''(4) MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet not less than twice per fiscal year and may meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of the members of the Council.

''(5) SUPPORT.—The head of each agency with a Project Management Improvement Officer serving on the Council shall provide administrative support to the Council, as appropriate, at the request of the Chairperson.

''(6) COMMITTEE DURATION.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Council.''.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with each Program Management Improvement Officer designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, shall submit to Congress a report containing the strategy developed under section 1126(a)(2)(B) of such title, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 4. PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL STANDARDS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''agency'' means each agency described in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue regulations that—

(1) identify key skills and competencies needed for a program and project manager in an agency;

(2) establish a new job series, or update and improve an existing job series, for program and project management within an agency; and

(3) establish a new career path for program and project managers within an agency.

SEC. 5. GAO REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICIES ON PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Government Accountability Office shall issue, in conjunction with the High Risk list of the Government Accountability Office, a report examining the effectiveness of the following on improving Federal program and project management:

(1) The standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(2) The 5-year strategic plan established under section 503(c)(1)(H) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(3) Program Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

(4) The Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Ernst amendment be agreed to, the committee-reported substitute, as amended, 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. 2873) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To improve the bill)

On page 11, line 22, strike ''in accordance'' and insert ''consistent''.

On page 12, lines 18 and 19, strike ''the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016'' and insert ''chapter 87 of title 10''.

On page 15, lines 16 and 17, strike ''the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016'' and insert ''chapter 87 of title 10''.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1550), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1550

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 ''Program Management Improvement Accountability Act''.

SEC. 2. DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR MANAGEMENT.

(a) ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS.—Section 503 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.—

''(1) REQUIREMENT.—Subject to the direction and approval of the Director, the Deputy Director for Management or a designee shall—

''(A) adopt governmentwide standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management for executive agencies;

''(B) oversee implementation of program and project management for the standards, policies, and guidelines established under subparagraph (A);

''(C) chair the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b);

''(D) establish standards and policies for executive agencies, consistent with widely accepted standards for program and project management planning and delivery;

''(E) engage with the private sector to identify best practices in program and project management that would improve Federal program and project management;

''(F) conduct portfolio reviews to address programs identified as high risk by the Government Accountability Office;

''(G) not less than annually, conduct portfolio reviews of agency programs in coordination with Project Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) to assess the quality and effectiveness of program management; and

''(H) establish a 5-year strategic plan for program and project management.

''(2) APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of that paragraph are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of chapter 87 of title 10.''.

(b) DEADLINE FOR STANDARDS, POLICIES, AND GUIDELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall issue the standards, policies, and guidelines required under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under subsection (b), the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a), and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue any regulations as are necessary to implement the requirements of section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OFFICERS AND PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Chapter 11 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§ 1126. Program Management Improvement Officers and Program Management Policy Council

''(a) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT OFFICERS.—

''(1) DESIGNATION.—The head of each agency described in section 901(b) shall designate a senior executive of the agency as the Program Management Improvement Officer of the agency.

''(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Program Management Improvement Officer of an agency designated under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) implement program management policies established by the agency under section 503(c); and

''(B) develop a strategy for enhancing the role of program managers within the agency that includes the following:

''(i) Enhanced training and educational opportunities for program managers that shall include—

''(I) training in the relevant competencies encompassed with program and project manager within the private sector for program managers; and

''(II) training that emphasizes cost containment for large projects and programs.

''(ii) Mentoring of current and future program managers by experienced senior executives and program managers within the agency.

''(iii) Improved career paths and career opportunities for program managers.

''(iv) A plan to encourage the recruitment and retention of highly qualified individuals to serve as program managers.

''(v) Improved means of collecting and disseminating best practices and lessons learned to enhance program management across the agency.

''(vi) Common templates and tools to support improved data gathering and analysis for program management and oversight purposes.

''(3) APPLICATION TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—This subsection shall not apply to the Department of Defense to the extent that the provisions of this subsection are substantially similar to or duplicative of the provisions of chapter 87 of title 10.

''(b) PROGRAM MANAGEMENT POLICY COUNCIL.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Office of Management and Budget a council to be known as the 'Program Management Policy Council' (in this subsection referred to as the 'Council').

''(2) PURPOSE AND FUNCTIONS.—The Council shall act as the principal interagency forum for improving agency practices related to program and project management. The Council shall—

''(A) advise and assist the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget;

''(B) review programs identified as high risk by the General Accountability Office and make recommendations for actions to be taken by the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget or a designee;

''(C) discuss topics of importance to the workforce, including—

''(i) career development and workforce development needs;

''(ii) policy to support continuous improvement in program and project management; and

''(iii) major challenges across agencies in managing programs;

''(D) advise on the development and applicability of standards governmentwide for program management transparency; and

''(E) review the information published on the website of the Office of Management and Budget pursuant to section 1122.

''(3) MEMBERSHIP.—

''(A) COMPOSITION.—The Council shall be composed of the following members:

''(i) Five members from the Office of Management and Budget as follows:

''(I) The Deputy Director for Management.

''(II) The Administrator of the Office of Electronic Government.

''(III) The Administrator of Federal Procurement Policy.

''(IV) The Controller of the Office of Federal Financial Management.

''(V) The Director of the Office of Performance and Personnel Management.

''(ii) The Program Management Improvement Officer from each agency described in section 901(b).

''(iii) Other individuals as determined appropriate by the Chairperson.

''(B) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget shall be the Chairperson of the Council. A Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the members and shall serve a term of not more than 1 year.

''(ii) DUTIES.—The Chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the Council, determine the agenda of the Council, direct the work of the Council, and establish and direct subgroups of the Council as appropriate.

''(4) MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet not less than twice per fiscal year and may meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of the members of the Council.

''(5) SUPPORT.—The head of each agency with a Project Management Improvement Officer serving on the Council shall provide administrative support to the Council, as appropriate, at the request of the Chairperson.

''(6) COMMITTEE DURATION.—Section 14(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Council.''.

(b) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with each Program Management Improvement Officer designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, shall submit to Congress a report containing the strategy developed under section 1126(a)(2)(B) of such title, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 4. PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL STANDARDS.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''agency'' means each agency described in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(b) REGULATIONS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the standards, policies, and guidelines are issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall issue regulations that—

(1) identify key skills and competencies needed for a program and project manager in an agency;

(2) establish a new job series, or update and improve an existing job series, for program and project management within an agency; and

(3) establish a new career path for program and project managers within an agency.

SEC. 5. GAO REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICIES ON PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Government Accountability Office shall issue, in conjunction with the High Risk list of the Government Accountability Office, a report examining the effectiveness of the following on improving Federal program and project management:

(1) The standards, policies, and guidelines for program and project management issued under section 503(c) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(2) The 5-year strategic plan established under section 503(c)(1)(H) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 2(a).

(3) Program Management Improvement Officers designated under section 1126(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

(4) The Program Management Policy Council established under section 1126(b)(1) of title 31, United States Code, as added by section 3(a).

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2328, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2328) to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The bill (S. 2328) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 2328

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 ''National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2015''.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO THE NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM ACT.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, wherever in this Act an amendment or repeal 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 a section or other provision of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq.).

SEC. 3. MODIFICATION OF DEAN JOHN A. KNAUSS MARINE POLICY FELLOWSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 208(b) (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)) is amended by striking ''may'' and inserting ''shall''.

(b) PLACEMENTS IN CONGRESS.—Such section is further amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking ''The Secretary'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary''; and

(2) in paragraph (1), as designated by paragraph (1), in the second sentence, by striking ''A fellowship'' and inserting the following:

''(2) PLACEMENT PRIORITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—In each year in which the Secretary awards a legislative fellowship under this subsection, when considering the

placement of fellows, the Secretary shall prioritize placement of fellows in the following:

''(i) Positions in offices of, or with members on, committees of Congress that have jurisdiction over the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

''(ii) Positions in offices of members of Congress that have a demonstrated interest in ocean, coastal, or Great Lakes resources.

''(B) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.—In placing fellows in offices described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall ensure, to the maximum degree practicable, that placements are equitably distributed among the political parties.

''(3) DURATION.—A fellowship''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (b) shall apply with respect to the first calendar year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS CONCERNING FEDERAL HIRING OF FORMER FELLOWS.—It is the sense of Congress that in recognition of the competitive nature of the fellowship under section 208(b) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)), and of the exceptional qualifications of fellowship awardees, the Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, should encourage participating Federal agencies to consider opportunities for fellowship awardees at the conclusion of their fellowship for workforce positions appropriate for their education and experience.

SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF COMMERCE TO ACCEPT DONATIONS FOR NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 204(c)(4)(E) (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(E)) is amended to read as follows:

''(E) accept donations of money and, notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, of voluntary and uncompensated services;''.

(b) PRIORITIES.—The Secretary of Commerce, acting through the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, shall establish priorities for the use of donations accepted under section 204(c)(4)(E) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(E)), and shall consider among those priorities the possibility of expanding the Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship's placement of additional fellows in relevant legislative offices under section 208(b) of that Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)), in accordance with the recommendations under subsection (c) of this section.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the National Sea Grant College Program, in consultation with the National Sea Grant Advisory Board and the Sea Grant Association, shall—

(1) develop recommendations for the optimal use of any donations accepted under section 204(c)(4)(E) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(E)); and

(2) submit to Congress a report on the recommendations developed under paragraph (1).

(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or otherwise affect any other amounts available for marine policy fellowships under section 208(b) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)), including amounts—

(1) accepted under section 204(c)(4)(F) of that Act (33 U.S.C. 1123(c)(4)(F)); or

(2) appropriated under section 212 of that Act (33 U.S.C. 1131).

SEC. 5. REPEAL OF REQUIREMENT FOR REPORT ON COORDINATION OF OCEANS AND COASTAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.

Section 9 of the National Sea Grant College Program Act Amendments of 2002 (33 U.S.C. 857–20) is repealed.

SEC. 6. REDUCTION IN FREQUENCY REQUIRED FOR NATIONAL SEA GRANT ADVISORY BOARD REPORT.

Section 209(b)(2) (33 U.S.C. 1128(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking ''BIENNIAL'' and inserting ''PERIODIC''; and

(2) in the first sentence, by striking ''The Board shall report to the Congress every two years'' and inserting ''Not less frequently than once every 3 years, the Board shall submit to Congress a report''.

SEC. 7. MODIFICATION OF ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM.

Section 204(b) (33 U.S.C. 1123(b)) is amended, in the matter before paragraph (1), by inserting ''for research, education, extension, training, technology transfer, and public service'' after ''financial assistance''.

SEC. 8. DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY; DEAN JOHN A. KNAUSS MARINE POLICY FELLOWSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—During fiscal year 2016 and thereafter, the head of any Federal agency may appoint, without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, other than sections 3303 and 3328 of that title, a qualified candidate described in subsection (b) directly to a position with the Federal agency for which the candidate meets Office of Personnel Management qualification standards.

(b) DEAN JOHN A. KNAUSS MARINE POLICY FELLOWSHIP.—Subsection (a) applies with respect to a former recipient of a Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship under section 208(b) of the National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1127(b)) who—

(1) earned a graduate or post-graduate degree in a field related to ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources or policy from an accredited institution of higher education; and

(2) successfully fulfilled the requirements of the fellowship within the executive or legislative branch of the United States Government.

(c) LIMITATION.—The direct hire authority under this section shall be exercised with respect to a specific qualified candidate not later than 2 years after the date that the candidate completed the fellowship.

SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 212(a) (33 U.S.C. 1131(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (F), by striking the period at the end and inserting '';''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(G) $72,000,000 for fiscal year 2015;

''(H) $75,600,000 for fiscal year 2016;

''(I) $79,380,000 for fiscal year 2017;

''(J) $83,350,000 for fiscal year 2018;

''(K) $87,520,000 for fiscal year 2019;

''(L) $91,900,000 for fiscal year 2020; and

''(M) $96,500,000 for fiscal year 2021.'';

(2) in the heading for paragraph (2), by inserting ''FOR FISCAL YEARS 2009 THROUGH 2014'' after ''PRIORITY ACTIVITIES''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR FISCAL YEARS 2015 THROUGH 2020.—In addition to the amounts authorized under paragraph (1), there is authorized to be appropriated $6,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2020 for competitive grants for the following:

''(A) University research on the biology, prevention, and control of aquatic nonnative species.

''(B) University research on oyster diseases, oyster restoration, and oyster-related human health risks.

''(C) University research on the biology, prevention, and forecasting of harmful algal blooms.

''(D) University research, education, training, and extension services and activities focused on coastal resilience and U.S. working waterfronts and other regional or national priority issues identified in the strategic plan under section 204(c)(1).

''(E) University research on sustainable aquaculture techniques and technologies.

''(F) Fishery extension activities conducted by sea grant colleges or sea grant institutes to enhance, and not supplant, existing core program funding.''.

(b) MODIFICATION OF LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNTS FOR ADMINISTRATION.—Paragraph (1) of section 212(b) (33 U.S.C. 1131(b)) is amended to read as follows:

''(1) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—There may not be used for administration of programs under this title in a fiscal year more than 5.5 percent of the lesser of—

''(i) the amount authorized to be appropriated under this title for the fiscal year; or

''(ii) the amount appropriated under this title for the fiscal year.

''(B) CRITICAL STAFFING REQUIREMENTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall use the authority under subchapter VI of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, to meet any critical staffing requirement while carrying out the activities authorized in this title.

''(ii) EXCEPTION FROM CAP.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), any costs incurred as a result of an exercise of authority as described in clause (i) shall not be considered an amount used for administration of programs under this title in a fiscal year.''.

(c) ALLOCATION OF FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 204(d)(3) (33 U.S.C. 1123(d)(3)) is amended—

(A) in the matter before subparagraph (A), by striking ''With respect to sea grant colleges and sea grant institutes'' and inserting ''With respect to sea grant colleges, sea grant institutes, sea grant programs, and sea grant projects''; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), in the matter before clause (i), by striking ''funding among sea grant colleges and sea grant institutes'' and inserting ''funding among sea grant colleges, sea grant institutes, sea grant programs, and sea grant projects''.

(2) REPEAL OF REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING DISTRIBUTION OF EXCESS AMOUNTS.—Section 212 (33 U.S.C. 1131) is amended—

(A) by striking subsection (c); and

(B) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (c) and (d), respectively.

SEC. 10. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.

The National Sea Grant College Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1121 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 204(d)(3)(B) (33 U.S.C. 1123(d)(3)(B)), by moving clause (vi) two ems to the right; and

(2) in section 209(b)(2) (33 U.S.C. 1128(b)(2)), as amended by section 6, in the third sentence, by striking ''The Secretary shall'' and inserting the following:

''(3) AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.—The Secretary shall''.

DRIVE SAFER SUNDAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 319, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 319) designating November 29, 2015, as ''Drive Safer Sunday.''

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. 319) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

PROVIDING FOR A CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND A CONDITIONAL RECESS OR ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Chair lay before the Senate H. Con. Res. 95, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements related to the concurrent resolution be printed in the RECORD.

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

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) was agreed to, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 95

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Thursday, November 19, 2015, through Wednesday, November 25, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday, November 30, 2015, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Thursday, November 19, 2015, through Tuesday, November 24, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, November 30, 2015, or such other time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 3 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. (a) The Speaker or his designee, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House, shall notify the Members of the House to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the House adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the House shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

SEC. 3. (a) The Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, after concurrence with the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at such place and time as he may designate if, in his opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

(b) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (a), when the Senate adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the Senate shall again stand adjourned pursuant to the first section of this concurrent resolution.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO EMERGENCY PSYCHIATRIC CARE ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask that the Chair lay before the Senate the House message to accompany S. 599.

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

Resolved, That the bill from the Senate (S. 599) entitled ''An Act to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project,'' do pass with an amendment.

MOTION TO CONCUR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to concur in the House amendment, and I ask unanimous consent that the motion be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATING THE THIRD TUESDAY IN NOVEMBER AS NATIONAL ENTREPRENEURS' DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 314.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 314) expressing support for the designation of the third Tuesday in November as ''National Entrepreneurs' Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. 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.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 314) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of November 17, 2015, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 4038

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk from the House, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4038) to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, 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.

ORDER FOR MEASURE TO BE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 4038

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the adjournment of the Senate, the bill be placed on the calendar as if read for a second time.

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

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2329

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that 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 legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2329) to prevent the entry of extremists into the United States under the refugee program, 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 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2015

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn under the provisions of H. Con. Res. 95 until 3 p.m., Monday, November 30; that following the prayer and

pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, until 5 p.m.; finally, that at 5 p.m. the Senate then proceed to executive session as under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2015, AT 3 P.M.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:34 p.m., adjourned until Monday, November 30, 2015, at 3 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

GEORGETTE MOSBACHER, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2018, VICE LEZLEE J. WESTINE, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

PHILLIP H. CULLOM, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE SHARON E. BURKE, RESIGNED.

FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION

DANIEL B. MAFFEI, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSIONER FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 30, 2017, VICE RICHARD A. LIDINSKY, JR., RESIGNED.

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

SWATI A. DANDEKAR, OF IOWA, TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, VICE ROBERT M. ORR, RESIGNING.

NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD

HARRY R. HOGLANDER, OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2017. (REAPPOINTMENT)

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

PATRICK PIZZELLA, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS EXPIRING JULY 1, 2020. (REAPPOINTMENT)

FOREIGN SERVICE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASS INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

JAMES F. ENTWISTLE, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN A. NICHOLS, OF CALIFORNIA
RICHARD GUSTAVE OLSON, JR., OF NEW MEXICO
DANIEL R. RUSSEL, OF CALIFORNIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER-MINISTER:

CHERYL L. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM R. BRANDS, OF ARIZONA
THOMAS R. DELANEY, OF PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL T. HARVEY, OF TEXAS
BROOKE ANDREA ISHAM, OF WASHINGTON
JANINA ANNE JARUZELSKI, OF NEW JERSEY
CHARLES E. NORTH, OF VIRGINIA
BETH S. PAIGE, OF TEXAS
THOMAS H. STAAL, OF MARYLAND
DENNIS J. WELLER, OF ILLINOIS
MELISSA A. WILLIAMS, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE CLASSES INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR:

JENNIFER M. ADAMS, OF VIRGINIA
REBECCA R. W. BLACK, OF NEW MEXICO
SHERRY FAITH CARLIN, OF FLORIDA
NANCY L. ESTES, OF FLORIDA
ERIN ELIZABETH MCKEE, OF VIRGINIA
LESLIE K. REED, OF CALIFORNIA
JOHN MARK WINFIELD, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS INDICATED:

CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

KATHY E. BODY, OF MARYLAND
DAVID G. BROWN, OF MARYLAND
BEVERLY A. BUSA, OF CALIFORNIA
JOHN J. CARDENAS, OF CALIFORNIA
SHARON THAMS CARTER, OF FLORIDA
KATHERINE ASHTON CRAWFORD, OF MARYLAND
CHRISTOPHER M. CUSHING, OF FLORIDA
RAMONA M. EL HAMZAOUI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
HOLLY L. FERRETTE, OF MARYLAND
CRAIG K. HART, OF VIRGINIA
MARY MELINDA HOBBS, OF MISSOURI
EDITH I. HOUSTON, OF VIRGINIA
BARBARA W. HUGHES, OF CONNECTICUT
ELISE M. JENSEN, OF MASSACHUSETTS
KAREN D. KLIMOWSKI, OF CALIFORNIA
JULIE A. KOENEN, OF CALIFORNIA
GARY LINDEN, OF VIRGINIA
MARCIA MUSISI-NKAMBWE, OF ARIZONA
ANNE ELIZABETH PATTERSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
LESLIE A. PERRY, OF COLORADO
PATRICK L. ROBINSON, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
EVELYN RODRIGUEZ PEREZ, OF FLORIDA
LAWRENCE J. SACKS, OF MISSOURI
SHERYL A. STUMBRAS, OF FLORIDA
AYE AYE THWIN, OF MARYLAND
CHRISTOPHE ANDRE TOCCO, OF CALIFORNIA
AMY C. TOHILL-STULL, OF VIRGINIA
THERESA G. TUANO, OF MARYLAND
PETER A. WIEBLER, OF VIRGINIA
SUNIL SEBASTIAN XAVIER, OF VIRGINIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED PERSONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS OF THE CLASSES STATED.

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS TWO, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CHRISTOPHER VOLCIAK, OF PENNSYLVANIA

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS THREE, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

ELIZABETH A. ORLANDO, OF NEW YORK

FOR APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

CAROLYN W. ANDERSON, OF VIRGINIA
STACEY A. BA, OF VIRGINIA
BRIAN C. BEDSWORTH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ELIZABETH L. BIERMANN DE LANCIE, OF ALABAMA
IAN M. BILLARD, OF MISSOURI
MARK A. BLAND, OF FLORIDA
MICHAEL D. BREWER, OF NEW YORK
KEVIN J. BROSNAHAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
TANYA R. BROTHEN, OF ARIZONA
BRIAN W. CAMPBELL, OF NEW YORK
DAVID S. CAMPBELL, OF NEW MEXICO
GEOFFREY D. CHANIN, OF PENNSYLVANIA
MICHAEL C. COKER, OF ARIZONA
ERIC C. CONCHA, OF FLORIDA
DAVID B. CORBY, JR., OF ARIZONA
SANDRA P. CORTINA, OF VIRGINIA
DIANA L. COSTA, OF MISSOURI
EDWARD E. DAIZOVI, OF INDIANA
JANE L. DENHAM, OF TEXAS
AIMEE M. DOWL, OF CALIFORNIA
CARMEN W. DOWLING, OF FLORIDA
PHILIP M. DREWRY, OF CALIFORNIA
JAMES S. DRISCOLL, OF WASHINGTON
ANDREW J. ELLIS, JR., OF MARYLAND
OMAR I. FAROOQ, OF VIRGINIA
TERRENCE FINNERAN, OF FLORIDA
CATHERINE D. C. FISCHER, OF CALIFORNIA
BON E. FLEMING, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
BRYAN M. GIBLIN, OF MARYLAND
BENJAMIN J. GIBSON, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM C. GILBERT, OF MISSOURI
KAREN A. GLOCER, OF FLORIDA
PAUL G. GRADDON, OF WASHINGTON
JULIE R. GRIER-VILLATTE, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT E. GROSSMAN, OF NEW YORK
ALEXIS H. HAFTVANI, OF CALIFORNIA
TRAVIS J. HALL, OF COLORADO
JERROD E. HANSEN, OF WASHINGTON
JONATHAN P. HERZOG, OF VIRGINIA
JASON A. HUGHES, OF MISSOURI
OGNIANA V. IVANOVA-SRIRAM, OF NEW YORK
HEATHER L. JOHNSTON, OF WASHINGTON
EARNEST C. JONES, OF CALIFORNIA
KHULOOD M. KANDIL, OF FLORIDA
JOHN T.S. KENNEDY, OF FLORIDA
SALMAN KHAN, OF MISSOURI
DAE G. KIM, OF CALIFORNIA
DANIEL D. KOHANSKI, OF CALIFORNIA
MICAH K. LEBSON, OF MARYLAND
JACOB J. LEVIN, OF ILLINOIS
HOLLY MARIE MACKEY, OF MASSACHUSETTS
ERICA MAGALLON, OF CALIFORNIA
SPENCER A. MAGUIRE, OF RHODE ISLAND
OLIVER S. MAINS, OF CALIFORNIA
REBECCA E. MARQUEZ, OF MINNESOTA
PAUL E. MASTIN, OF COLORADO
FRISCO J. MCDONALD, OF ARKANSAS
DIMITRY MEDVEDEV, OF NEW YORK
KELLY R. MERRICK, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
THOMAS R. A. MONTGOMERY, OF CALIFORNIA
DAVID D. MOO, OF MISSOURI
JACQUELINE D. MOUROT, OF TEXAS
ANDREW NELSON, OF CALIFORNIA
JAMES P. NUSSBAUMER, OF OREGON
JEAN T. OLSON, OF WISCONSIN
BRENDAN D. OWEN, OF VIRGINIA
JOSEPH R. PALOMBO, JR., OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
MELISSA PAULSEN, OF GEORGIA
JEREMY R. PETERSON, OF WASHINGTON
GAVIN D. PIERCY, OF ALASKA
LEAH H. PILLSBURY, OF CALIFORNIA
LAWRENCE D. PIXA, OF WASHINGTON
ROBYN M. REMEIKA, OF TEXAS
THERESA A. REPEDE, OF VIRGINIA
NATHANIEL D. RETTENMAYER, OF ARIZONA
INNA ROTENBERG, OF VIRGINIA
MARTIN P. RYAN, OF WISCONSIN
YOULIANA P. SADOWSKI, OF NEW YORK
FELIX P. SANCHEZ, OF TEXAS
SARAH E. SAPERSTEIN, OF VIRGINIA
MARK J. SCHLINK, OF MISSOURI
MERLYN SCHULTZ, OF CALIFORNIA
ROBERT L. SCHWARTZ, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SAMUEL D. SIPES, OF TEXAS
DAMIAN J. STAFFORD, OF NEW YORK
ELIZABETH M. STICKNEY, OF MARYLAND
KATHERINE L. SUPLICK, OF VIRGINIA
MARY G. SWARTZ, OF MARYLAND
SARAH J. TALALAY, OF FLORIDA
EDWARD C. THOMPSON, OF ILLINOIS
JAMES C. THORN, OF MISSOURI
HALIMA K. VOYLES, OF INDIANA
HAN A. WANG, OF NEW YORK
CAROLEE A. WILLIAMSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
WARREN M. WILSON, OF TENNESSEE
ABRAHAM D. WISE, OF WASHINGTON
DEREK H. WRIGHT, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
SETH F. YEAGER, OF VIRGINIA
MICHELLE L. ZJHRA, OF WASHINGTON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED PERSON OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF THE CLASS STATED:

FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER OF CLASS FOUR, CONSULAR OFFICER AND SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2015:

EDWARD L. ROBINSON III, OF HAWAII

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. BLAKE A. GETTYS
COL. KAREN E. MANSFIELD

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. TODD M. BRANDEN
COL. MARK A. CROSBY
COL. FERMIN A. RUBIO

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. DAVID M. BAKOS
COL. VANCE C. BATEMAN
COL. SANDRA L. BEST
COL. JEFFREY C. BOZARD
COL. WILLIAM D. BUNCH
COL. RAFAEL CARRERO
COL. LARRY K. CLARK
COL. KEVIN D. CLOTFELTER
COL. MARSHALL C. COLLINS
COL. JAMES N. COX
COL. JASON R. CRIPPS
COL. CHRISTOPHER S. CROXTON
COL. FRANCIS N. DETORIE
COL. RUBEN FERNANDEZ–VERA
COL. JOHN T. FERRY
COL. JOHN E. FLOWERS
COL. MICHAEL J. FRANCIS
COL. VINCENT R. FRANKLIN
COL. CLAY L. GARRISON
COL. KEVIN J. HEER
COL. DANA A. HESSHEIMER
COL. GENE W. HUGHES, JR.
COL. CLIFFORD N. JAMES
COL. JAMES T. JOHNSON
COL. GREGORY F. JONES
COL. MARSHALL L. KJELVIK
COL. JAMES R. KRIESEL
COL. RONALD S. LAMBE
COL. ANDREW J. MACDONALD

COL. STEPHEN J. MAHER
COL. MATTHEW J. MANIFOLD
COL. MAREN MCAVOY
COL. GREGORY S. MCCREARY
COL. STEPHEN B. MEHRING
COL. JESSICA MEYERAAN
COL. BILLY M. NABORS
COL. JEFFREY L. NEWTON
COL. PETER NEZAMIS
COL. PATRICK R. RENWICK
COL. STEPHEN M. RYAN
COL. PETER R. SCHNEIDER
COL. GREGORY N. SCHNULO
COL. GREG A. SEMMEL
COL. RAY M. SHEPARD
COL. MARC A. SICARD
COL. PAUL R. SILVESTRI
COL. CHRISTOPHER A. STRATMANN
COL. PETER F. SULLIVAN, JR.
COL. TAMI S. THOMPSON
COL. JOSEPH B. WILSON
COL. GREGORY S. WOODROW

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. EDWARD P. MAXWELL

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. ROBERT C. BOLTON
BRIG. GEN. CHARLES W. CHAPPUIS, JR.
BRIG. GEN. DAWNE L. DESKINS
BRIG. GEN. TIMOTHY L. FRYE
BRIG. GEN. PAUL D. JACOBS
BRIG. GEN. MARK E. JANNITTO
BRIG. GEN. RONALD W. SOLBERG
BRIG. GEN. JAMES K. VOGEL
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM L. WELSH
BRIG. GEN. WAYNE A. ZIMMET

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. JAMES H. DIENST

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. JOHN J. DEGOES
COL. MARK A. KOENIGER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. JOHN D. BANSEMER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. RUSSELL A. MUNCY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. PATRICIA N. BEYER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. CHRISTOPHER W. LENTZ

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COL. SCOTT M. LOCKWOOD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be brigadier general

COL. LEE ANN T. BENNETT
COL. RICHARD M. CASTO
COL. JONATHAN M. ELLIS
COL. JAMES J. FONTANELLA
COL. JOHN P. HEALY
COL. DANIEL J. HEIRES
COL. ROBERT A. HUSTON
COL. WILLIAM R. KOUNTZ, JR.
COL. ALBERT V. LUPENSKI
COL. TYLER D. OTTEN
COL. RUSSELL P. REIMER
COL. HAROLD E. ROGERS, JR.
COL. TRACEY A. SIEMS

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. JOHN C. THOMSON III

THE FOLLOWING ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. SYLVIA R. CROCKETT

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be colonel

BRYAN K. ALLEN
KATHLEEN C. AMYOT
MICHAEL MEITEH ARMIJO
DOUGLAS B. BAKER
PATRICIA L. BARR
DAVID JOHN BARTCZAK
ROBERT C. BELWOOD
WILBUR C. BIGGIN III
WILLIAM T. BLADEN
THOMAS A. BOLIN
ROBERT THOMAS BOTKIN
RICHARD N. BRADLEY
JASON MICHAEL BROCK
STUART W. BROWN
MICHAEL JOSEPH BRUNO
EDWIN B. BUTLER
DONALD KENT CARPENTER
DONALD LAWRENCE CLARK
REGINALD LAMONT CLARK
THOMAS C. COLE
GREGORY BRANDON COLEMAN
NICHOLAS D. COLEMAN
MICHAEL ALAN COMSTOCK
RICHARD CARROLL COOK
MARLON E. CROOK
CHRISTIAN P. CUNNINGHAM
JAMES THOMAS DEMAREST
JOHAN A. DEUTSCHER
SEAN PETER DOUGHTY
KEVIN V. DOYLE
PAUL DRAKE IV
THOMAS JOSEPH DUGGAN III
THOMAS A. DUKES, JR.
KEVIN S. ECHTERLING
MARK EDWARD EMSHWILLER
BRENT B. ETHRIDGE
ROBERT FEHER
ROBERT A. FORINO
AKSHAI M. GANDHI
GREGORY C. GOFORTH
BERLINDA GOODSON
MICHAEL A. GUCH
CHARLES CAMERON GUTHRIE
DANIEL WEBSTER HARLOW
CHRISTOPHER E. HOWELL
VERNETTA PATRICE HUGHES
CHRISTOPHER BRANDT JONES
JON J. KALBERER
DONNE H. KANG
DANIEL ELDARIN KELLY
CHRISTOPHER S. KILCULLEN
MICHELE LEIGH KILGORE
ROBERT A. KING
BRADFORD ULRICH LARSON
DARRIN P. LELEUX
CHRISTINE LORRAINE LENNARD
JOSHLIN D. LEWIS
JAMES P. MARREN
GLEN ALLEN MARTEL
DEAN BRYAN MARTIN, JR.
STANLEY A. MARTIN
CHRISTOPHER C. MCDONALD
JOYCE A. MERL
STEVEN D. MICHAUD
HOLLY C. MITCHELL
DANIEL MARC MITOLA
GRADY O. MORTON, JR.
MARK ANDREW MUCKEY
RICK LEE MUTCHLER
ALICE A. NIEDERGALL
WILLIAM P. OBRIEN
RYAN J. OGAN
RANDALL STEVEN ORTIZ
STEPHAN K. OTTO
MATTHEW PATERNOSTRO
ROBIN M. POLLOCK
PAUL JOSEPH QUIGLEY
JERRY PAUL REEDY
JOHN K. RICHARDSON
CARLA D. RINER
NASHID A. SALAHUDDIN
SCOTT J. SALOIS
ROBERT JEFFREY SCHELL
SUEELLEN SCHUERMAN
LEMUEL JOSEPH SHAFFER
RICHARD K. SHARP
CHRISTOPHER JAMES SHEPPARD
KURT S. SHIGETA
JOSEPH CALLIE SMITH
ROSEMARY MARIA SMITH
TIMOTHY J. SMITH
CHRIS A. SNYDER
RICHARD ARTHUR TAITO
LAURIE ANN TIDEMANN
MARTIN E. TIMKO
WALTER K. TOWNSON
MARK W. TUCCILLO
TRENT J. VANHULZEN
JOHN EMILIO VARGAS, JR.
BRIAN EARL VAUGHN
DODD DOUGLAS WAMBERG
JEFFREY M. WILLIAMS
BERNARD L. WILLIS II
SANDRA LYNN WILSON
GARRICK H. YOKOE

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S. C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

JAMES D. FERGUSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

KELVIN L. BROWN
ROBERT D. FERGUSON
JOEL T. GILBERT
SEAN A. M. KLAHN
ROBERT A. MITCHELL
DOUGLAS A. PAUL
CORY S. W. SCHULZ
PAUL L. WAGNER II

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

DAESOO LEE
MARK S. NUCKOLS
BRIAN D. RAY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

WAYNE W. SANTOS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ANTHONY J. FADELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

RICARDO ALONSOJOURNET

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JEFFREY M. SLOAN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

ANDREW C. DILLON
ANDRE R. HOLDER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

REBECCA R. TOMSYCK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS PERMANENT PROFESSOR AT THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 4333(B) AND 4336(A):

To be colonel

EVERETT S. P. SPAIN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS PERMANENT PROFESSOR AT THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 4333(B) AND 4336(A):

To be lieutenant colonel

SHANE R. REEVES

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY VETERINARY CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U. S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

DAVID E. BENTZEL
JENNIFER L. CHAPMAN
REBECCA I. EVANS
CHRISTOPHER E. KELLER
BRIAN U. T. KIM

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY

MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

TERESA L. BRININGER
DAVID H. DUPLESSIS
LARRY O. FRANCE
RICHARD A. VILLARREAL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

KEVIN R. BASS
JOHN D. BELEW
TIMOTHY N. BERGERON
BRANDON M. BOWLINE
KATHERINE A. BRUCH
JONATHAN B. BUTLER
ROBERTO CARDENAS
STACEY L. CAUSEY
PATRICK A. DONAHUE
CURTIS W. DOUGLASS
CHRISTOPHER F. DRUM
MICHAEL A. ELLIOTT
MARLA J. FERGUSON
JAMES T. FLANAGAN, JR.
RICHARD G. FORNILI
MARK D. GRAY
JORDAN V. HENDERSON
DIRK D. LAFLEUR
EDWARD F. MANDRIL
JENNIFER J. MCDANNALD
SCOTT A. MOWER
ERIC J. NEWLAND
ENRIQUE ORTIZ, JR.
TANYA A. PEACOCK
JAMES L. REYNOLDS
DAVID W. SEED
DAVID L. SLONIKER
JOHN P. STALEY
MARK A. STEVENS
YOLONDA R. SUMMONS
CHRISTOPHER M. TODD
CHARLES L. UNRUH
ROY L. VERNON, JR.
JOSEPH K. WEAVER
JONATHAN R. WEBB
EDWARD J. WEINBERG
RICHARD A. WILSON
D002416
D003940

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

KIMBERLIE A. BIEVER
AMAL CHATILA
LASHANDA C. COBBS
CARLA M. DICKINSON
AMANDA R. FORRISTAL
KATHI J. HILL
SUSAN G. HOPKINSON
CRYSTAL L. HOUSE
ANGELA S. ICAZA
MARK A. MACDOUGALL
ELIZABETH A. MANNSALINAS
JOHN J. MELVIN
LISA E. MILLER
ANN M. NAYBACKBEEBE
DOUGLAS A. PHILLIPS
MELAINA E. SHARPE
MARY J. SHAW
ANGELA M. SIMMONS
PAMELA M. WULF

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

DAVID BARRETT
GREGORY R. BOCKIN
PAUL J. CUCUZZELLA
CHERYL A. P. EMERY
JOHN T. HARRYMAN
KIMBERLY J. HUHTA
ADAM SIEGLER
RONALD D. SULLIVAN
JENNIFER S. ZUCKER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

DAVID W. LAWS
JOHN E. SWANBERG

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

WILLIAM A. ALTMIRE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

JESUS J. T. NUFABLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED ARMY NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12211:

To be colonel

RUBEN BERMUDEZPAGAN
CARLOS R CAEZSIERRA
KEVIN T. HAMM
LANCE A. OKAMURA
CHRISTOPHER S. SANDISON
TODD W. SCHAFFER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

JOSHUA A. CARLISLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL'S CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

WILLIAM C. MOORHOUSE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant colonel

GREGG T. OLSOWY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be colonel

ROGER S. GIRAUD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

STEVEN M. WILKE

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 6221:

To be captain

KENNETH C. COLLINS II

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS OF THE COAST GUARD PERMANENT COMMISSIONED TEACHING STAFF FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTIONS 189 AND 276:

To be commander

CORINNA M. FLEISCHMANN
ROYCE W. JAMES

To be lieutenant commander

KIMBERLY C. YOUNG–MCLEAR

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(E):

To be lieutenant commander

MICHAEL S. ADAMS, JR.
JOHN C. ADAMS
RYAN F. ADAMS
MARK P. AGUILAR
BRAIN J. AHEARN, JR.
DAVID A. ALBRIGHT
PAUL R. ALEXANDER
NICHOLAS M. ANDERSON
LILY A. ANDREWS
MICHAEL J. ANGELI
HUNTER T. ATHERTON
HOWARD B. BAKER, JR.
KRISTEN N. BAKER
STEVEN J. BALDOVSKY
JESSICA A. BARBEAU
SIMON P. BARR
YAMARIS D. BARRIL
STEVEN J. BARRY
GREG M. BATCHELDER
PHILIP S. BAXA
DANIEL BELL
JEREMY A. BELL
MARY K. BENDER
ALEX J. BERNSTEIN
ARIEL BERRIOS
DAVID A. BIRKY
SAMUEL A. BLASE
TREVOR A. BLOUNT
TIMOTHY E. BOETTNER
HERBERT A. BOGGS
ROLLA T. BOGGS
STEPHEN BOR
COREY R. BOUDREAU
JOSHUA D. BOYLE
STEPHEN W. BRICKEY
MATTHEW P. BRINKLEY
ANTONIO D. BRINO
DOMINIC N. BUCCIARELLI
LYNN A. BUCHANAN
JOSHUA W. BUCK
ERIN S. BUSTIN
JEFF B. BYBEE
REGINA R. CAFFREY
ANDREW R. CAMPBELL
AUSTIN E. CAMPBELL
MATTHEW A. CARLTON
RAYMOND CARO
CHRISTOPHER D. CART
JOHNNY J. CARTER, JR.
DANIEL B. CATHELL
MICHAEL J. CAVANAGH
JAMES E. CEPA
LESLIE R. CLARK
JOSEPH R. COFFMAN
SHELLEY M. COLBERT
THOMAS M. CONDIT
DAVID J. CONNOR
CHAD M. CONRAD
KEVIN J. COOPER
DAVID C. COREY
ROBERT D. CRAIGHEAD
JAMES A. CROCKETT
RYAN T. CROSE
MICHAEL D. CROWE
THOMAS S. CROWLEY
NOLAN J. CUEVAS
GREGORY T. DAHL
AARON P. DAHLEN
JON–PAUL M. DEL GAUDIO
MEGAN A. DENNELLY
JOHN Z. DOWNING
MATHEW J. DOYLE
KRISTIN P. DRISCOLL
MARK C. DUKTI
JARED W. ENGLAND
CHRISTOPHER E. ENOKSEN, SR.
KYLE L. ENSLEY
JAMES J. ERICKSON
SARAH E. ERNST
MICHAEL P. FELTOVIC
BRIAN D. FITZPATRICK
TRAVIS R. GAGNON
JASON L. GALE
DIANNA D. GARFIELD
LUDWIG R. GAZVODA
ANGELIQUE M. GEYER
WESLEY M. GEYER
BRIAN C. GISMERVIK
PHILIP J. GRANATI
LUKE J. GRANT
RONALD R. GREEN
KARIMA A. GREENAWAY
JEANNETTE M. GREENE
AMY J. HAAS
GEORGE F. HALL
BRYAN K. HARRELL
ADRIAN P. HARRIS
JOSEPH H. HART
RYAN D. HAWN
JASON L. HAYES
BRIAN J. HEDGES
TYLER K. HEFFNER
RYAN P. HENEBERY
MARLON L. HERON
PRESTON J. HIEB
KELLY L. HIGGINS
KRISS K. HINDERS
THOMAS E. HOLLINBERGER
JEFFREY S. HOLM
JARED H. HOOD
JACOB I. HOPPER
JESSE L. HOUCK
SCOTT W. HYATT, JR.
TRISHA A. JANTZEN
JOSEPH K. JOHNSON
NOEL H. JOHNSON
FRANCES S. JOHNSON–GILLION
CHRISTINA M. JONES
DAN N. KAHN
MICHAEL W. KENALEY
DANIEL P. KILCULLEN
JAY F. KIRCHER
CHRISTOPHER J. KLEIN
JASON M. KLING
MICHAEL F. KOEHLER
BENJAMIN J. KREBS
WALTER C. KROLMAN
KAREN L. KUTKIEWICZ
KEVIN B. LAUBENHEIMER
DANIEL W. LAVINDER
DEREK W. LEHR
JACOB S. LONDON
JOSEPHINE A. LONG
GEORGE G. MACDONNELL
ARTHUR P. MAHAR
ERIC R. MAJESKA
PETER E. MALONEY
MICHAEL H. MANUEL
LUCAS C. MARINO
MATTHEW L. MARKOS
SIMONE B. MAUSZ
CHARLES S. MCANDREWS
DAVID P. MCCARTHY
CORY J. MCCOLLOW
JENNIFER A. MCKAY
MATTHEW B. MCKEOWN
BRENDAN J. MCKINNON
DANIEL J. MCQUATE
PEDRO L. MENDOZA
CHRISTOPHER J. MILLER
STEPHEN R. MIROS
CHRISTIAN G. MIURA
KIRA M. MOODY
CHRISTOPHER G. MORRIS
LANE M. MUNROE
ERICK M. NEUSSL
ELIZABETH J. NEWTON
CHRISTOPHER R. NORTON

JOHN E. NOTO
ELIZABETH A. OLIVEIRA
BENJAMIN K. O'LOUGHLIN
EDWIN ORTIZ
THOMAS R. OSBORN, JR.
JULIE E. PADGETT
TODD J. PAQUETTE
ADAM A. PAUL
JONATHAN C. PERRY
MICHAEL PIVATO
JEFFREY R. PLATT
EDWARD L. PORTER
JEFFREY C. PURKEY
EDWARD J. QUINN
DAVID W. RATNER
GREGORY M. REHLENDER
CORY A. RIESTERER
ERIC RIVERA
JOSEPH E. RIZZO
KEITH V. ROBERTS
NATHANIEL L. ROBINSON
CHRISTOPHER C. ROSEN
MORGAN J. ROY
ROBERT C. RUE
GEOFFREY A. SAHLIN
JORDAN C. SAMSON
JAY T. SANDUSKY
GARRETT B. SANTOS
RICHARD W. SANZO
AMANDA G. SARDONE
BRIAN G. SATTLER
KENNETH R. SAUERBRUNN
JENNIFER S. SAVIANO
LINDSEY E. SENIUK
RYAN B. SEYMOUR
DAVID A. SHOOK
JAMES C. SHULL
GREGORY S. SICKELS
BRIAN E. SIEMIATKOWSKI
STEPHEN M. SIMPSON
DAVID A. SMITH
HILARY N. SMITH
JEFF J. SMOLIK
BENJAMIN J. SPARACIN
JASON R. STANKO
IAN M. STARR
SCOTT R. STECHSCHULTE
ANNA E. STEEL
MATTHEW T. STEVICK
FRANK A. STROM III
DAVID W. STUTT
BRENDAN SULLIVAN
CONOR J. SULLIVAN
KIRSTIN E. SULLIVAN
CHRISTOPHER E. SVENCER
DANIEL L. TAVERNIER
ERIC S. TAYLOR
NICOLE M. TESONIERO
FELICIA S. THOMAS
STEPHANIE K. THOMAS
TRACEY L. TORBA
LAWRENCE E. TORMEY
WILLIAM A. TOWERS
DONALD S. TROUTMAN
JONATHAN P. TSCHUDY
JOHN W. VELASCO
PETER E. VERMEER II
ADOLFO E. VIEZCA
JOSHUA M. VINCI
REBECCA P. VINLOVE
RYAN T. WAITT
JOHN H. WALTERS
MATTHEW E. WARANIUS
BRIAN L. WARD
JORELL R. WEBB
CHRISTOPHER C. WEISER
KRISTA L. WELCH
GERARD M. WENK
JEFFREY D. WEST
TAMARA B. WHALEN
JONATHAN D. WHITE
ADAM R. WOLFE
DEWEY W. WORKER
JAKOB C. WRIEDEN
RONNY C. WRIGHT
MICHAEL A. WURSTER
GRANT C. WYMAN
JEREMY L. YANDELL
JAMES R. ZOLL, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C, SECTION 271(E):

To be commander

JASON C. ALEKSAK
NAHSHON I. ALMANDMOSS
JONATHAN A. ANDRECHIK
JOHN H. AXTELL
RENE BAEZ
TIMOTHY G. BALUNIS, JR.
KEVIN M. BARKLAGE
JASON P. BARRETT
JESSICA B. BEHERA
CHRISTOPHER J. BELMONT
ANDREW R. BENDER
KENNETH E. BETHEA
BRIAN R. BETZ
BRIAN P. BREGUET
JOHN W. BRIGGS
PEGGY M. BRITTON
DANIEL J. BROADHURST
DARKEIM L. BROWN
WILLIAM A. BUDOVEC
CHRISTOPHER G. BURRUS
DERREK W. BURRUS
JERRY D. BUTWID
MARCUS A. CANADY
CATHERINE T. CARABINE
STEVEN E. CERVENY
STEVEN J. CHARNON
MATTHEW M. CHONG
JOHN J. CHRISTENSEN
WALTER CHUBRICK, JR.
MICHAEL A. CINTRON
AUSTIN H. COHOON
ANGELA A. COOK
KEVIN A. CRECY
DEREK L. CROMWELL
MICHAEL V. DANISH
WILLIAM L. DAVIS
RULA F. DEISHER
ETIENNE DE LA RIVA
AARON W. DEMO
JOYCE M. DIETRICH
PATRICK C. DILL
SARA E. DILUNA
DAVID D. DIXON
ROBERT J. DONNELL
TAD F. DROZDOWSKI
SHAUN L. EDWARDS
JOHN T. EGAN
KENNETH W. ELLER
RYAN S. ENGEL
DAVID T. FEENEY
MATHEW S. FINE
ZACHARY R. FORD
MICHAEL R. FRANKLIN
WILLIAM A. FRIDAY
ELISA M. GARRITY
DAVID R. GATES
MARCUS G. GHERARDI
THOMAS A. GILL
MEREDITH S. GILLMAN
ZACHARY N. GLASS
TROY P. GLENDYE
CARY G. GODWIN
RYAN C. HAMEL
LUSHAN A. HANNAH
AMANDA D. HARDGRAVE
DAVID W. HATCHETT, JR.
ERIC A. HELGEN
ANGELINA HIDALGO
KATE F. HIGGINS-BLOOM
KEVIN S. HILL
BRENDAN J. HILLEARY
TIMOTHY C. HOLT
JASON D. INGRAM
JUSTIN W. JACOBS
DARWIN A. JENSEN
STEVEN F. JENSEN
ERIC D. JOHNSON
MAUREEN D. JOHNSON
MICHAEL P. KAHLE
NICHOLAS A. KALIN
BENJAMIN G. KARPINSKI
CHRISTOPHER M. KEENE
NATHAN P. KENDRICK
TERRI J. KINDNESS
ROBERT J. KINSEY
DANIEL P. LANIGAN
JOHN M. LEACH
JOHN-DAVID A. LENTINE
EDDIE LESANE, JR.
RACHEL L. LEWIS
PATRICK M. LINEBERRY
THOMAS S. LOWRY
SCOTT E. LUGO
PATRICK J. LYSAGHT
SCOTT M. MACCUMBEE
GREGORY J. MADALENA
BRIAN J. MAGGI
JILLIAN C. MALZONE
MATTHEW C. MANOFSKY
CARYN A. MARGITA
TIMOTHY J. MARGITA
ZACHARY S. MATHEWS
HEATHER R. MATTERN
ERIC S. MAY
IAIN L. MCCONNELL
KEVIN J. MCCORMACK
MARK A. MCDONNELL
SHAWN C. MCMILLAN
BRIAN K. MCNAMARA
ADAM C. MERRILL
MATTHEW A. MICHAELIS
CAROLYN L. MOBERLEY
ROBERT S. MOHR
YOUNGMEE MOON
KEVIN T. MORGAN
PETER M. MORISSEAU, JR.
MATTHEW A. MOYER
CHARLOTTE MUNDY
BRIAN J. MURPHY
CRAIG E. MURRAY
NICHOLAS E. NEELY
DAVID NEGRON–ALICEA
MARSHALL E. NEWBERRY
NEIL ORLICH
AARON J. ORTENZIO
MARK S. PALMER
BRANDY N. PARKER
ARTURO S. PEREZ
BRIAN A. POTTER
HAROLD PRICE
SCOTT A. RAE
TOBIAS C. REID
RODNEY RIOS
NICOLE D. RODRIGUEZ
AARON J. ROE
DANIEL P. ROGERS
JESSICA A. ROZZI–OCHS
MICHELE L. SCHALLIP
SHADRACK L. SCHEIRMAN
TYSON J. SCOFIELD
MARC R. SENNICK
KRISTEN L. SERUMGARD
THOMAS A. SHULER
JAMES H. SILCOX III
EMMA E. SILCOX
NICHOLAS R. SIMMONS
JAMES S. SMALL
BRIAN A. SMICKLAS
MARC H. SMITH
TIMOTHY C. SOMMELLA
BRYSON T. SPANGLER
WILLIAM R. SPORTSMAN
ERICH V. STEIN
RICHARD W. STICKLEY, JR.
HEATHER E. STRATTON
MICHAEL R. STRUTHERS
CHRISTOPHER W. SWEENEY
KRIS J. SZCZECHOWICZ
MICHAEL A. TEIXEIRA
DONALD M. TERKANIAN, JR.
KELLY A. THORKILSON
LEE D. TITUS
CHARTER B. TSCHIRGI
ROBERT C. TUCKER
PATRICIA J. TUTALO
NICOLETTE A. VAUGHAN
XAIMARA VICENCIO–ROLDAN
WILLIAM C. WALSH
ROBERT D. WEBB
WINSTON D. WOOD
JESSICA S. WORST
ANDREW W. WRIGHT
YAMASHEKA Z. YOUNG–MCLEAR

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 19, 2015:

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

SHELLY COLLEEN LOWE, OF ARIZONA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2018.

THE JUDICIARY

STEVEN M. WELLNER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS.

WILLIAM WARD NOOTER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSOCIATE JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FOR THE TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS.

INTER–AMERICAN FOUNDATION

JUAN CARLOS ITURREGUI, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER–AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2020.

LUIS A. VIADA, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER–AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2018.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

DIANE HELEN RODRIGUEZ, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE ARTS FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 3, 2018.

FRANCINE BERMAN, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2020.

PATRICIA NELSON LIMERICK, OF COLORADO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 26, 2018.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ANN CALVARESI BARR, OF MARYLAND, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PETER WILLIAM BODDE, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO LIBYA.

ELISABETH I. MILLARD, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN.

MARC JONATHAN SIEVERS, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SULTANATE OF OMAN.

DEBORAH R. MALAC, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA.

LISA J. PETERSON, OF VIRGINIA, 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 KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND.

H. DEAN PITTMAN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE,

CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION

VICTORIA A. LIPNIC, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 1, 2020.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

MICHAEL HERMAN MICHAUD, OF MAINE, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO SERVE AS DIRECTOR OF THE COAST GUARD RESERVE PURSUANT TO TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 53(B) IN THE GRADE INDICATED:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. KURT B. HINRICHS

AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEREK TAI–CHING KAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A DIRECTOR OF THE AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203(A):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. ANDREW S. MCKINLEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(E):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPTAIN MATTHEW T. BELL
CAPTAIN MELISSA BERT
CAPTAIN DAVID M. DERMANELIAN
CAPTAIN ROBERT P. HAYES
CAPTAIN ANDREW J. TIONGSON
CAPTAIN ANTHONY J. VOGT

COAST GUARD NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LADONN A. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH JEFFREY V. YAROSH, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 28, 2015.

COAST GUARD NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH SHARIF A. ABDRABBO AND ENDING WITH WILBUR A. VELARDE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON OCTOBER 28, 2015.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONDEMNING TERRORIST ATTACKS IN PARIS, FRANCE, ON NOVEMBER 13, 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, at Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, it's reported that the Marquis de Lafayette praised America saying, ''Humanity has gained its suit; Liberty will nevermore be without an asylum.'' To this day his words ring true; America continues to uphold justice over tyranny and terror, and spreads the values of individual freedom across the globe. However, Lafayette's words also remind us that America has never been alone in that struggle.

Since the inception of our nation, the French people have been our compatriots in advancing the causes of justice and liberty. Last week, our oldest friend—an ally of peace and justice—was brutally and senselessly attacked by terrorists. As they have been there during our struggles, we must now be there for the French people. While we mourn together now, we must also unite and stand against global terrorism. The terrorists responsible must be brought to justice for these horrendous acts, ensuring both of our nations remain defenders of liberty for generations to come.

REFORMING CFPB INDIRECT AUTO FINANCING GUIDANCE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 18, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1737) to nullify certain guidance of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection and to provide requirements for guidance issued by the Bureau with respect to indirect auto lending.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I will vote against H.R. 1737, the Reforming CFPB Indirect Auto Financing Act. There are arguments to be made on both sides of this debate, and I am confident that the people I've worked with over the years in the auto industry are straight shooters. It is clear, however, that there are areas of serious abuse. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has found that there are instances where auto lenders, including some dealers, charge higher interest rates for people of color than they charge white car buyers with similar credit worthiness and financial standings. These higher interest rates come in the form of on-site and undisclosed interest rate markups. Several lawsuits have highlighted these matters.

I understand there are alternative arguments. Auto dealers should have the flexibility to give car buyers the best price possible, and interest rate negotiations can be a good way to save consumers money and to streamline the sales process. Further, CFPB's mandate to enforce the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and prevent discrimination in all lending was clear even before the 2013 guidance targeted by this legislation.

On balance, however, it is important not to undercut the CFPB as the administration is working hard to protect it. Perennial Republican budget proposals attempt to limit or eliminate funding for the CFPB, and earlier this fall the House Financial Services Committee passed legislation that would replace the CFPB with a politically appointed committee.

I'm hopeful that regardless of the outcome of this debate that there is a way to be able to work in a more cooperative basis on this issue. I'm interested in how we both meaningfully address real concerns while simultaneously protecting consumers and the delicate momentum of the newly-created CFPB under continuous attack.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PRESIDENT MA YING-JEOU OF THE ROC (TAIWAN)

HON. BLAKE FARENTHOLD

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my sincere congratulations for the leadership of President Ma Ying-jeou of the ROC (Taiwan) in pursuing peace and prosperity of the region. The leaders of the two sides met in Singapore on November 7, which was the first such summit since 1949.

President Ma elaborated on the ''1992 Consensus'' in his opening and closed door remarks, aiming to consolidate the common and critical foundation of the cross-Strait relations. The State Department expressed ''the United States welcomes the meeting between leaders on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and the historic improvement in cross-Strait relations in recent years''. Again, I would like to take this opportunity to applaud President Ma for his peaceful approach. Taiwan is indeed a beacon of democracy in East Asia.

RECOGNIZING FORMER CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYMAN AND CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY JOHN A. BUSTERUD

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of John A. Busterud, World War II veteran, former Assemblymen, and advocate for the environment.

Born on March 7, 1921, in Coos Bay, Oregon, Mr. Busterud went on to graduate from the University of Oregon. He then enlisted in the United States Army and served as an Infantry officer with the U.S. Army's distinguished 90th Infantry Division in the European Theater. During combat operations, his Battalion captured the vast German gold reserves and priceless art treasures deep in a salt mine in Merkers, Germany. He was awarded the Bronze Star and Combat Infantry Badge for his service and would eventually retire from the Army as a Lieutenant Colonel. After the war, Mr. Busterud graduated from Yale Law School and moved to San Francisco to start his legal career with the firm of Brobeck, Phleger and Harrison.

A dedicated public servant, Mr. Busterud served three terms as a California Assemblyman, from 1956 to 1962, representing the 22nd District in San Francisco. He rose to the ranks of Assembly Minority Leader.

After his tenure in the Assembly, Mr. Busterud returned to private practice, but continued to serve the public as President of the Commonwealth Club of California and President of the Committee to Save the Headlands. In this latter role, he was instrumental in the successful efforts to save the Marin Headlands and lay the groundwork for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

In 1971, President Nixon appointed Mr. Busterud to be the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Environmental Quality. Subsequently, he served as a member and eventually Chairman of the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) under President Ford. During his tenure at CEQ, he represented the United States as a delegate to the groundbreaking Law of the Sea Convention in Geneva, Switzerland. After his service in Washington, Mr. Busterud returned to California to found Resolve, an environmental mediation foundation.

Mr. Busterud is now retired and, at age 94, he enjoys spending time with his beloved wife Anne and doting on his three children and seven grandchildren. He also authored ''Below the Salt,'' a historical account of the 90th Division in WW II and the discovery of the German gold at Merkers.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting to honor and thank John A. Busterud for his long and dedicated service to Country, State, and the environment, and express deep appreciation for his impressive and distinguished accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING DR. MERLE HOROWITZ

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor an educator who has devoted her life to ensuring our kids have the skills they need to

enter the global workforce. Dr. Merle Horowitz will be honored this evening at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association annual dinner. Dr. Horowitz recently retired after ten years of service as superintendent of Marple Newtown School District. Dr. Horowitz's retirement comes after a 40 year career of educating students, and nearly three decades in Delaware County. She's a respected expert on cyberbullying and has spoken at length on the topic to audiences around the country. Tonight's honor is a fitting one and we are grateful for her service to the young people in our community.

HONORING UGA IX, ''RUSS''

HON. EARL L. ''BUDDY'' CARTER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Uga IX, the University of Georgia's beloved mascot who also goes by the name of Russ, for his dedicated service over the past three-plus seasons.

On October 22, 2015, the University of Georgia announced that Uga IX has decided to retire at the age of 11. Russ has worked a total of 38 games since being awarded a ''battlefield promotion'' and assuming the title of Uga IX during the 2012 season. Following the deaths of his half-brother, Uga VII, and his successor, Uga VIII, Russ also served as the interim mascot for 25 games from 2009–2012.

With a 51–22 record, Russ served admirably as Uga IX and is cherished by University of Georgia fans worldwide. The Bulldog Nation is sad to see Russ retire, but we look forward to welcoming Uga X, ''Que'', as our new mascot. Que will be formally introduced during the Georgia Southern game on November 21, 2015, in Sanford Stadium.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today to recognize Uga IX, ''Russ,'' and thank the Seiler family of Savannah, owner of the lineage of ''Uga'' Bulldog mascots, for their continued support of the program. Go Dawgs!

RECOGNIZING THE NOVEMBER 7 CROSS-STRAIT MEETING

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the historic meeting between Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou and China's President Xi Jinping on November 7. Included below are President Ma's insights on the meeting. Like President Ma, I agree that these are discussions which must continue. But at a time of increasing security concerns and rising tensions in the region, I believe this meeting was an important step toward improved relations and stability in the region.

In my meeting with Mr. Xi, we exchanged views on cross-strait relations, peaceful development and the consolidation of peace, and the status quo of prosperity. You must all be concerned about the atmosphere at the meeting. The meeting took place in a frank and very positive atmosphere. I found Mr. Xi to be pragmatic, flexible, and candid when discussing the issues. We hope that this spirit will be reflected in the handling of cross-strait relations.

Our discussions focused on several points. The first point is the consolidation of the 1992 Consensus and the maintenance of peace across the Taiwan Strait. I told Mr. Xi that the consensus reached between the two sides in November 1992 was that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait insist on ''one China,'' but differ as to what that means, and each side could express its interpretation verbally. This was the 1992 Consensus of ''one China, respective interpretations.'' The ROC's interpretation does not involve two Chinas; one China, one Taiwan; or Taiwan independence, as the Republic of China Constitution does not allow it. I also emphasized that sustainable peace and prosperity should be the common goal in the development of cross-strait relations. We will continue to consolidate the 1992 Consensus of ''one China, respective interpretations'' as the basis for relations, and maintain the status quo of peace and prosperity.

The second point is the reduction of hostility and peaceful handling of disputes. We told Mr. Xi that the people of Taiwan are especially concerned about security and dignity. We wanted Mr. Xi and mainland China to understand that we hope all disputes, whether they be political, military, social, cultural, legal, or of any other form, can be peacefully resolved, allowing both sides to experience mutual good will. I made special mention of the frustrations our people have had when participating in NGO activities, as well as the interventions our government has faced when taking part in regional economic integration and other international activities. We hope to see a reduction of hostility in these areas, especially with regard to our NGOs. I told Mr. Xi that these organizations comprise elite members and specialists, who have reacted quite strongly to these issues and the treatment they received. We hope there will be fewer such occurrences. In response, Mr. Xi said he hopes these issues will be appropriately handled case by case.

I also stated that many people of Taiwan are concerned about mainland China's military deployments against Taiwan, including the Zhurihe base with which we are all familiar and where missiles are deployed. Mr. Xi said that these deployments are in principle not targeted at Taiwan.

The third point is the expansion of cross-strait exchanges and mutual benefits. We emphasized that given the fact that Taiwan and mainland China have different social and economic systems, the two sides need sufficient time to engage in deeper exchanges. We also reiterated Taiwan's interest in participating in regional economic integration. The issue of which side joins first and which side later should not arise. Mr. Xi expressed willingness to discuss this issue and welcomed our participation in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and mainland China's ''one belt, one road'' initiative.

The fourth point is the establishment of a cross-strait hotline. We believe that a hotline can be set up between the Mainland Affairs Council Minister and the Taiwan Affairs Office Minister, who can then exchange views on important or urgent issues. Mr. Xi stated that this matter could be promptly dealt with.

With regards to cultural and educational exchanges, I also expressed the hope that mainland China can allow more vocational college graduates to pursue higher education in Taiwan. I noted that our efforts over the past several years have met with limited success. As we from Taiwan know, our polytechnic universities have a shortage of students. I drew attention to the fact that Vietnam, Thailand, India, and Indonesia have been funding graduate studies by university lecturers at polytechnic institutes in Taiwan. We welcome these students. Before I took office, we had about 30,000 students from overseas studying in Taiwan. This year, the figure has increased to above 100,000. We intend to transform Taiwan into an Asia-Pacific center for higher education. I mentioned that mainland China has over a million vocational college graduates. Mr. Xi said he is willing to look into this matter. The vocational college graduates I refer to are like graduates from five-year junior colleges in Taiwan who then enroll in two-year programs at polytechnic colleges.

The fifth and final point is joint cooperation for cross-strait prosperity. I suggested that history has left behind several issues that the two sides cannot resolve overnight. These issues must be handled pragmatically. If we deal rashly with some of the excessively sensitive issues, it will make things worse. The maintenance of cross-strait peace and stability is Taiwan's mainstream view. How cross-strait relations develop in the future will have to take into account the direction of public opinion. In particular, I reiterated that cross-strait relations should be built on the foundation of dignity, respect, sincerity, and good will, for only then can we shorten the psychological gap between the two sides. I especially expressed the hope that the two sides can turn hostility into friendship and seek peace, not war.''

RECOGNIZING COL. WYLIE W. JOHNSON

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Col. Wylie W. Johnson of the U.S. Army Reserve. Wylie, an Army chaplain, served our nation in five conflicts. He continues to serve today as the Pastor of the Springfield Baptist Church in Springfield, Delaware County, where he's been since 1997. Wylie will tonight receive the Freedom Medal from the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association at its annual dinner. It's a well-deserved tribute for a man who has looked after the spiritual needs of our men and women in uniform for decades.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALBANIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER (AACC)

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 50th anniversary of the Albanian American Community Center (AACC) in Waterbury, Connecticut and the 103rd anniversary of Albania's independence.

Next week, the City of Waterbury will recognize Mr. Xhemal Dani as the 2015 Albanian Mayor of the Day. On that day, the double headed eagle flag will fly over Waterbury City Hall, and we will celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of the Albanian community over the past fifty years. The AACC has been instrumental in bringing our community closer together through religious and non-religious events including festivals, picnics, and charity dinners. Regularly taught Albanian language, culture, and history lessons at the center highlight the rich and vibrant heritage of the Albanian community.

The Albanian-American Community Center's mission began fifty years ago when a small committee organized to advance an environment where religious and social activities could thrive. Through strong work ethic and fundraising efforts, the organization, then-known as the Albanian American Moslem Community, was able to build a new mosque and bring an Imam to serve the City of Waterbury and the surrounding region. In 1969, construction began on the current mosque located on Raymond Street, allowing the Albanian-American Community Center to expand its membership and services to the community.

Under the leadership of President Visar Tasimi, the AACC has strengthened its Scholarship Program, making college more affordable for youth and their families. Since the fund's establishment in 2012, over $10,000 has been awarded for higher education scholarships. I was pleased to be a part of the scholarship reception this summer and meet the talented recipients.

To the members and leadership of the AACC, thank you for your tireless efforts to encourage friendships and unity among all Albanian-Americans and educate the public about your traditions and culture. Your achievements are a true testament to the positive impact diversity can bring to our community. I am proud to represent you in Congress.

Congratulations to the Board of Directors, members, volunteers, and all who have helped organize the anniversary celebration. I look forward to many more years of your continued success.

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN COONEY

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate longtime anchorman Kevin Cooney of KCCI-TV in Des Moines. After 33 years at KCCI and a lifetime dedicated to journalism, Kevin has decided it's time to put down the notes, turn off the teleprompter and enjoy retirement.

Since 1982, Kevin has been a constant figure in Iowa's living rooms, bringing us the news. During that time, he has covered some of Iowa's most important news stories ranging from the catastrophic floods of 1993 to interviewing President Clinton at the White House on the day of the Oklahoma City bombing. His wide range of knowledge on the issues of the day and his ability to captivate large audiences are second to none.

As an Iowa native Kevin has always had a unique perspective on issues Iowans care about the most. His passion and genuine love of reporting the news is clear. He has earned the respect of those all across Iowa's media for his professionalism as well as his knack for making those around him better. Kevin is a leader in the truest sense of the word and an ambassador for all Iowans, they have counted on him for breaking news the last 33 years and he has delivered.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud and congratulate Kevin on his retirement as one of the most trusted faces in Iowa news broadcasting. His unwavering support for the state of Iowa and his commitment to providing news stories with integrity is a testament to his character. I am proud to represent him, his family and his fellow colleagues in the United States Congress. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating Kevin on this incredible milestone and wishing him nothing but the best in his retirement.

RECOGNIZING MARGE LOZINAK LAWRENCE

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Marge Lozinak Lawrence of Springfield for her service to our country during the conflict in Korea. Marge was a nurse in Korea, joining the cadet nursing program for $15 a month. She cared for wounded soldiers and did her best to save lives. Marge will be honored tonight at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association Annual Dinner with the 2015 DCVMA Freedom Medal. It's a fine tribute for someone who has served our nation and our warfighters overseas.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK TAKAI

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, November 18, I was absent from the House due to illness. Due to my absence, I am not recorded on any legislative measures for the day. I would like the record to reflect how I would have voted had I been present for legislative business.

Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on Roll Call 634, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1210) Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) Fed Oversight Reform and Modernization Act.

I would have voted ''yes'' on Roll Call 635, the Motion to Recommit with Instructions for the Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act.

I would have voted ''no'' on Roll Call 636, the Portfolio Lending and Mortgage Access Act.

I would have voted ''yes'' on Roll Call 637, the Reforming CFPB Indirect Auto Financing Guidance Act.

RECOGNIZING JOLIET CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S ANNUAL VETERAN CEREMONY

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Joliet Central High School and its Veterans Ceremony.

On Friday, November 6, 2015, Joliet Central High School hosted its 5th Annual Veterans Ceremony to recognize the sacrifice of alumni, faculty, and community members who have served in the armed forces.

This year, Joliet Central High School honored the following veterans:

Joseph Berman; Charles Muller; Bill Thorns; Ted Micci; Felix Pasteris; Dan Ursitti; Edward Mena; Christo Dragatsis; Jerald Brazeal; Donald Boyer; Gregory E. Warren; Larry Musson; Frank Varman; Larry Evert; and Hank Pillard.

I would like to commend Joliet Central High School for recognizing our veterans and I join the students, faculty, and administrators in thanking them for their service.

IN RECOGNITION OF DONNA AND MICHAEL BARBETTI, RECIPIENTS OF THE 2015 SAM AND JANE CALI STAR AWARD FROM THE BROADWAY THEATRE LEAGUE OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Donna and Michael Barbetti, recipients of the 2015 Sam and Jane Cali Star Award from the Broadway Theatre League of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Broadway Theatre of Northeastern Pennsylvania was established in 1959 by the late Benno and Gertrude Levy. The Levy's love for theatre stirred their desire to bring Broadway to Scranton, thus providing access to this unique American art form to the citizens of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Broadway Theatre was blessed with a great board president for many years, the late Sam Cali, whose dedication and support moved the organization into the new millennium.

Each year, the Sam and Jane Cali Star Award is presented to a distinguished community leader who has demonstrated exemplary dedication and service to the arts in northeastern Pennsylvania. Donna and Michael Barbetti are longtime patrons of the arts and were jointly chosen for the award by a committee that wished to recognize their history of support.

Donna and Michael Barbetti are residents of the City of Scranton. Donna is a Registered Dietician with a Master's Degree from Marywood in Food and Nutrition. In addition to her involvement with the Broadway Theatre League, Donna is the President of the Lackawanna County Women's Commission and is a board member of the Pennsylvania Women's Commission. She also is a board member of St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen and the Scranton Area Foundation, and she is on the Advisory

Board for Penn State Worthington Campus. Michael is a Certified Public Accountant and operates his own private practice. He sits on the Board of Directors for Broadway in Scranton. Michael has also served as Chairman of the Board for the ARC of NEPA, The March of Dimes, and as a board member of Allied Services.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Donna and Michael Barbetti. Their selfless devotion to the arts has enriched the lives of many and has had a lasting, positive impact on the quality of life in northeastern Pennsylvania

RECOGNIZING MR. RUSTY CARTER

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor U.S. Army veteran Rusty Carter for his service to our country. Rusty is a long-time Delaware County resident who enlisted in the Army in April, 2009. Rusty became a paratrooper with the ''Screaming Eagles'' of the famed 101st Airborne Division. He deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 and in July of that year came under heavy enemy fire. Rusty was awarded a Purple Heart for his injuries in the battle but just a month later was back in the fight. Rusty was again injured in a Humvee accident in 2011. He'll receive the Freedom Medal from the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association tonight.

IN HONOR OF WINES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S 2015 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON AWARD

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Wines Elementary School. For over fifty years, Wines Elementary School has benefited our community through its dedication to the education and development of Ann Arbor's youth. The U.S. Department of Education recognized this commitment by naming the school a 2015 National Blue Ribbon Award recipient.

Founded in 1957, Wines Elementary School's mission is to ''create for every student a joyful environment that stimulates lifelong learning and inspires respect for individual differences.'' The school has actively worked to instill this mission by making community and family participation a cornerstone in the life of each student. Family volunteers organize community events such as the annual Run-a-Thon, in which students run laps around a track to raise money for charity, a movie night, and a country fair, as well as many other fun events. The school also partners with local charities and nursing homes to ensure students are provided opportunities to participate in and give back to their community.

In addition to active community involvement, Wines Elementary School has worked to strengthen all of its students by focusing on each individual as a unique and capable learner. This has been done through the creation of personalized learning plans which ensures each teacher understands the special needs of their students. The hard work of students, teachers, and parents has resulted in excellent academic achievement. Their standardized tests scores have registered in the top 5% of all Michigan schools in combined measures of student achievement and growth. This earned the school the designation from the Michigan Department of Education as a Reward School and led the department to nominate the school for the National Blue Ribbon Award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor the teachers, students and parents of Wines Elementary School. Their multifaceted methods to prepare our children have created a vibrant community which will invigorate Ann Arbor for years to come.

IN HONOR OF MISS RUTHA MAE HARRIS

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a legendary singer and activist in the Civil Rights Movement, Miss Rutha Mae Harris. Miss Harris will be celebrating her 75th birthday on Friday, November 27, 2015.

Miss Rutha Harris was born on November 27, 1940 in Albany, Georgia to the late Reverend and Mrs. I.A. Harris. She attended Albany's public schools, graduating from Monroe High School in 1958 and Albany State College, now Albany State University, in 1970. She also studied at Valdosta State University, Dillard University, and Florida A&M University.

In 1961, Miss Harris, who always had a love and talent for singing, joined the Original Freedom Singers. The Freedom Singers traveled more than 50,000 miles singing for the cause of freedom and raising funds for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). During the Albany Movement, Miss Harris was thrown several times into the same jail where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was jailed on multiple occasions.

In 1963, the Freedom Singers were signed to a recording contract with Mercury Records. This was the beginning of Miss Harris's professional career and helped propel her to the national stage. She performed in 46 states and the Virgin Islands, in renowned venues such as Radio City Music Hall in New York City and the Civic Opera House in Chicago, Illinois. The Freedom Singers also performed at the March on Washington in Washington, D.C. in 1963.

In addition to performing with the Freedom Singers, Miss Harris also recorded with the Landmark Gospel Singers, Georgia Mass Choir, and the legendary Whitney Houston. One of the highlights of Miss Harris's professional career was being selected to perform with the Georgia Mass Choir in the film, ''The Preacher's Wife,'' starring Whitney Houston and Denzel Washington. In 2004, Miss Harris recorded her first album, ''I'm on the Battlefield.''

In 1998, Miss Harris organized the Albany Civil Rights Museum (now Institute) Freedom Singers. This group performs every second Saturday of the month and travels to other cities. This group, along with the Albany Civil Rights Institute, helps to keep the Albany Movement alive for younger generations to learn of the passion and sacrifices made by their ancestors.

Miss Harris has been widely recognized for her music, her involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, and her continued activism. She received the Martin Luther King Dream Award in 2001 and the Trailblazer Award for Outstanding Work Preserving, Promoting, and Advancing the Tradition of African American Music in 2013, among many other awards and accolades. On February 9, 2010, Miss Harris had the honor of performing at the White House for President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama in a special event, ''In Performance at the White House: A Celebration of Music from the Civil Rights Movement.''

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, ''Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.'' The Freedom Singers brought light and love to those on both sides of the Civil Rights Movement. Miss Harris has helped to keep this light and love alive through her continued performances and her efforts to preserve the successes of the Movement for younger generations to enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me and my wife, Vivian, in commending and recognizing Miss Rutha Mae Harris for the inspiring life that she leads. We extend our best wishes to her as she and her family and friends prepare to celebrate her 75th birthday.

RECOGNIZING MR. JOHN COOK

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to John Cook, a Marine from Delaware County, Pennsylvania. John joined the Corps fresh out of high school, and served under Col. Lewis ''Chesty'' Puller. John landed with the Marines at Incheon and served in ''Massacre Valley'' during Operation Killer in February 1951. He was discharged in 1952 as a Sergeant, having served his country with honor and distinction. John will be honored with the Freedom Medal tonight at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association Annual Dinner. It's a fitting honor for a man who served his country ably in Korea.

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY WINS THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY'S SOLAR DECATHLON

HON. ALBIO SIRES

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Stevens Institute of Technology's remarkable achievement in winning the Department of Energy's prestigious Solar Decathlon. The competition challenges collegiate teams to spend almost two

years building and designing energy-efficient houses that run on solar power.

This year, the Stevens Institute of Technology team defeated more than a dozen other teams with their design the SURE HOUSE. Thirty students from multiple disciplines competed against teams from five different countries over the course of ten days in ten separate competitions to judge the houses' performance, livability, and affordability. This year the teams also had to prove that their house could power a hybrid, non-electric vehicle.

The SURE HOUSE is a solar powered home that is also able to withstand Hurricane-force winds and flooding. Inspired by the devastating effects of Hurricane Sandy it is meant to act as a new housing prototype for shore communities. The SURE HOUSE was ranked highest in several categories and uses almost 90 percent less energy than conventional homes. It can also provide emergency power to surrounding neighborhoods after a storm. The building will be taken back to New Jersey to act as an emergency management and coastal resiliency center along the Jersey shore.

I am confident that Stevens Institute of Technology's outstanding performance will change the future of home building, particularly in vulnerable shore communities, and I congratulate their team on this impressive achievement.

RECOGNIZING ANDREA VOIGHT OF ST. CLOUD

HON. TOM EMMER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Andrea ''Andy'' Voight for her dedicated service as a nurse in the St. Cloud Community.

For Andrea, nursing was much more than a job; it was a family tradition and way of life. Along with her two sisters, Andrea followed in her mother Rita's footsteps to pursue the noble career of nursing.

After graduating from the Miller Hospital Vocational School of Practical Nursing in St. Paul, she returned to St. Cloud to officially begin her career at St. Cloud Hospital where she remained for an impressive 26 years. Andrea says what kept her working for so long was the connections that she is able to make with people.

Andrea embodied what it truly means to care for others, as she says that she ''truly appreciated watching her surgical patients make it to discharge.''

Forty-six years and five children later, Andrea made the decision to retire. When asked what she hopes to pursue next, Andrea says that she would like to travel and spend more time attending her grandchildren's events.

Andrea, our community is so thankful for all that you have done, and I wish you a happy and peaceful retirement with your family.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 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 $18,670,014,021,513.75. We've added $8,043,136,972,600.67 to our debt in 6 years. This is over $8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

RECOGNIZING ANNA WRIGHT

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Anna M. Wright. Anna has been a longtime champion of our veterans in our community. She was instrumental in the foundation of the Delaware County Veterans Memorial in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania and her support was key to making this tribute to our veterans possible. Mr. Speaker, Anna is being honored this evening with the President's Award at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association Annual Dinner. It's a fitting tribute to Anna and a well-deserved honor for all she's done to express our gratitude to our veterans.

TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, November 20th is Transgender Remembrance Day. However, every day we must recognize that transgender men and women are being unjustly discriminated against, bullied, ostracized and even killed because of their sexual identity.

On this day, we remember those who were senselessly murdered, those who are targets because they are different and those who end up homeless when family abandon them.

Transgender men and women wake up each morning being targets of bigotry and hate. So far in 2015, about 29 transgender men and women, primarily in their early 20s, have been murdered. Many more take their own lives because they simply cannot see life getting better or easier.

Organizations like ''Project Trans at the Center'' in San Diego offer a safe environment to be themselves; they offer resources to help with life situations. It's up to Congress to offer protection from discrimination as a basic human right.

Imagine a world where you wake up every day with the challenge of existing; where it seems the world is against you no matter what you do.

This is their world. Every day. Together we can make a difference and work toward ending discrimination.

Today, let's unify and work together to fix the inequality among transgender persons.

But tomorrow—let us not forget the struggles they face and the support they need to live freely in a world that is so full of intolerance.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PROTECT OUR STUDENTS AND TAXPAYERS (POST) ACT

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Protect Our Students and Taxpayers (POST) Act, a bipartisan bill I introduced earlier today with my colleague Congressman WALTER JONES.

If enacted, it would take steps towards eliminating an incentive for for-profit colleges to aggressively recruit and enroll veterans, service members and their families, who have sacrificed for this country and deserve the highest quality of education.

Current law prohibits for-profit colleges and universities from deriving more than 90 percent of their revenue from the U.S. Department of Education's federal student aid programs. The other 10 percent is required to come from sources other than the federal government. However, because of the way the law was written, veterans' and active duty service members' federal student aid does not count towards the 90 percent. Instead, it may be included among a for-profit institution's calculation of its 10 percent non-federal revenue.

As a result, for-profit colleges and universities are left with a powerful incentive to recruit veterans, service members and their families, offering them degrees that are often less valuable than those from not-for-profit institutions.

The POST Act would strengthen the definition of ''federal aid'' to include G.I. bill funds, Department of Defense Tuition Assistance benefits, and all other federal funding sources.

Furthermore, the POST Act would reinstate a 15 percent minimum on revenue that for-profit colleges must receive from sources other than the federal government. The requirement was lowered from 15 percent to 10 percent in 1998.

The bill also takes steps towards eliminating accounting tricks used by for-profit educational institutions that inflate their declared amount of non-federal funding.

Finally, the POST Act increases the penalty for rule-breakers by causing colleges to lose eligibility to participate in federal student aid programs after one year of noncompliance with the new 85–15 rule. Currently, they do not face penalties until they have been noncompliant for two years.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and help get it passed.

RECOGNIZING MR. WILLIAM R. HILTON

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize William R. Hilton, a U.S. Army veteran whose service during the Korean War earned him three Purple Hearts and one Oak Leaf Cluster.

Mr. Hilton was born and raised in Chester County, Pennsylvania. One of ten children, he began his military career at the very young age of 16 years old. Upon completion of basic training in 1950, Mr. Hilton was sent to the frontlines of the Korean War.

During his service, Mr. Hilton endured some of the most difficult and horrific conditions of the war. Through three injuries on the frontlines, he continued to fight and act as a leader in battle.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Mr. Hilton for his service and I thank him for the extraordinary sacrifices he has made for his country.

HONORING MR. TOM DEBLASS

HON. THOMAS MacARTHUR

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MACARTHUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Tom DeBlass of New Jersey's Third Congressional District, and to express my sincerest commendation as to all of his accomplishments.

Mr. DeBlass has been named to the New Jersey Martial Arts Hall of Fame as a Grappler. He has won titles such as the Pan American and World Championships. Beyond his personal feats on the mat, Mr. DeBlass has devoted his time to giving back to his community by opening his own Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Academy.

Mr. DeBlass has used his expertise to produce his own world champion students. He has created a legacy of martial arts success in his community and has given young athletes the opportunity to develop and excel.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Jersey's Third Congressional District are tremendously proud to have Mr. Tom DeBlass as an involved member of their community. It is my honor to recognize both his personal athletic accomplishments and his lasting contributions to our community before the United States House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING MONSIEUR LOUIS SICOIT

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Monsieur Louis Sicoit, a man who has dedicated his life to honoring the American soldiers who liberated his village during World War II.

Monsieur Sicoit, a resident of Roynac, France, was just a young boy when his village was at the nexus of the Battle of Montelimar. As a result of witnessing the grueling battle and seeing those American soldiers who risked their lives to protect his village, Monsieur Sicoit built a remarkable museum filled with hundreds of photographs, pieces of memorabilia, weapons, equipment, and testimonials from survivors like him. Sicoit's museum attracts a variety of visitors and also opens its doors to local school children in order to educate them and to help honor the memory of those who helped rid France of the German occupation. Additionally, members of the U.S. Army's 173rd Brigade Support Battalion visited Sicoit's museum and bestowed upon him a Certificate of Appreciation.

Please join me in honoring Monsieur Louis Sicoit for his life-long dedication to paying homage to the brave American soldiers who risked and lost their lives in saving and liberating his village, and for helping to strengthen the bond between our two countries.

RECOGNIZING MR. CHARLES ''BUD'' BURNS

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charles ''Bud'' Burns, a U.S. Navy veteran who served during the Second World War.

A South Philadelphia native, Mr. Burns enlisted in the Navy in 1946. After completing basic training, he was sent to Italy for his first tour of duty on the USS *Compton*. During his time overseas, Mr. Burns patrolled the Mediterranean Sea before returning to the United States and being honorably discharged in 1948.

Mr. Burns received the Good Conduct Medal and the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal for his admirable service.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Mr. Burns, and I thank him for his service and allegiance to his country.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO COLONEL GEORGE DEFILIPPI UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Colonel George DeFilippi, USAF (Ret) as he prepares to fully retire after 46 years of faithful government service and extraordinary dedication to duty and to the United States of America.

George DeFilippi has had a fine career, including in his most recent role as Head, Congressional Support Branch in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller). I would like to share with you some highlights.

George DeFilippi graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in 1969. Following graduation, he honorably served his nation on active duty for the next 30 years spanning many key leadership positions. From 1986 to 1991, George was the Commanding Officer of the 23rd Tactical Air Support Unit out of Davis Monthan AFB, where he was responsible for consolidating the forward air control training for all Air Force and Marine Corps operational units.

His next assignment was to serve as the Commander/Air Liaison Officer with the U.S. Army (XVII Airborne Corps) and Republic of Korea's Third Army, leading a 250-person unit integrating aviation assets into army operations. From 1993 to 1999 George reported to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition & Technology) and was responsible for the oversight of a $4 billion tactical fighter and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle programs. He later went on to serve as the Chief of Staff within OUSD (AT&L) continuing to provide oversight for major defense acquisition programs.

Upon completing 30 years of active duty service within the United States Air Force, George retired from active duty but continued to serve his country through the civilian sector. From 1999–2010, he worked within the Cobham Life Support Division as well as Government Relations promoting life support products to the U.S. Armed Forces.

In 2010, George DeFilippi reported to his current assignment as Head, Congressional Support Branch, Navy Appropriations Matters Office where he helped the Department of the Navy achieve their financial and legislative goals. For five years, George DeFilippi has demonstrated exceptional leadership and foresight, engaging Members of the Appropriations Committee and its staff to provide information essential to resourcing the Navy for its role as the world's dominant sea power. In an increasingly difficult budget environment, George DeFilippi provided essential support in shepherding Navy budgets through the appropriations process. George served our nation with integrity, insight and dedication.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful nation, I join my colleagues today in saying thank you to George DeFilippi for his extraordinary dedication to duty and steadfast service to this country throughout his distinguished career in the United States Air Force as well as his public service and we wish him and his wife Patricia the very best in his well-deserved retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE GARY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE 8TH ANNUAL LAKESHORE CLASSIC BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with heartfelt respect that I recognize the Gary Chamber of Commerce as the organization celebrates the 8th annual Lakeshore Classic basketball tournament. In honor of this outstanding event, the Gary Chamber of Commerce will host a celebratory luncheon in Gary, Indiana, at the Majestic Star Casino on Tuesday November 24, followed by a basketball tournament at West Side Leadership Academy on Friday, November 27 and Saturday, November 28, 2015.

The theme for this year's Lakeshore Classic is ''Salute to Youth Sports,'' bestowing honor on players and coaches who have dedicated their talents to youth sports in Northwest Indiana and made a notable impact on the region's sports programs. Along with the acknowledgment of these individuals, the Gary Chamber of Commerce has chosen an equally commendable speaker for their corporate luncheon. Mr. Lloyd McClendon has an extensive professional career in baseball. He is a former Major League Baseball player who played for the Chicago Cubs, New York Mets, Cincinnati Reds, Pittsburgh Pirates, and Cleveland Indians. Lloyd is also a former manager of the Seattle Mariners and the Pittsburgh Pirates. Originally from Gary, Indiana, Mr. McClendon played for the 1971 Gary team in the Little League World Series and earned the nickname ''Legendary Lloyd'' after he homered in five consecutive at bats. The 1971 team was the first all African-American team to make it to the final round of the Little League World Series. Lloyd went on to play baseball at Gary Roosevelt High School and Valparaiso University before his professional career. With his many contributions to sports in our region and across the nation, Mr. McClendon has proven to be an extraordinary example for youth involved in any sport, and he is worthy of the highest praise.

At this time, I would like to recognize the schools participating in the Lakeshore Classic basketball tournament. These schools are dedicated to achieving academic excellence and sportsmanship, and they are passionate in their efforts. The participating teams include the Gary West Side Lady Cougars, John Marshall Lady Commandos, Gary Roosevelt Panthers, East Chicago Central Cardinals, Thea Bowman Eagles, Wendell Phillips Wildcats, Gary West Side Cougars, and the Charles A. Tindley Tigers. These teams are comprised of student-athletes who serve as exceptional role models for the youth in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in recognizing the Gary Chamber of Commerce, the organizers and sponsors of the 8th annual Lakeshore Classic, and the dedicated honorees. Their perseverance, leadership, and commitment to our youth and Northwest Indiana are to be commended.

CONGRATULATING THE HELIAS CRUSADERS FOR THEIR THIRD PLACE FINISH IN THE 2015 CLASS 1 GIRLS GOLF STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Helias Crusaders for their third place finish in the 2015 Class 1 Girls Golf State Championship.

This team and their coach should be commended for all of their hard work throughout this past year and for bringing home third place to their school and community.

I ask you to join me in recognizing the Helias Crusaders for a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO KEVIN CARTER

HON. JASON CHAFFETZ

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Mr. Kevin Carter, an outstanding citizen and leader from the State of Utah. I thank Mr. Carter for his exemplary service as Director of the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA). Mr. Carter served as Director for nearly 12 years. In this capacity, Mr. Carter oversaw the management and administration of approximately 4.4 million acres of land for various beneficiaries, primarily public education. Under Mr. Carter's leadership, SITLA earned over $1.3 billion and helped the Permanent School Fund grow to over $2 billion. I thank Mr. Carter for his dedication and his impressive contributions to our State.

EMILY CURRAY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Emily Curray for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

As an alumna of the University of Colorado School of Law, Emily has been practicing immigration law since 1996, with a focus on business immigration. Currently, Emily is managing partner of the woman-owned immigration firm Stern & Curray where she helps make the American Dream a reality for clients. Emily's passion for immigration resulted in her current role on the board of the I Have a Dream Foundation—Colorado chapter and serving as past chair of the Colorado Lawyers Committee Immigration Task Force for more than 10 years.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Emily Curray for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA'S BELOVED GLENN DOUGLAS DENNY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with both profound sadness and deep gratitude that I rise to honor Glenn Douglas Denny, of Milton, Florida who passed away on November 9, 2015.

Glenn was born in Stillwater, Oklahoma to Raymond and Mary Denny. While growing up in Stillwater, Glenn displayed exceptional athletic prowess in baseball and basketball, becoming a star at Stillwater High School, where he graduated from in 1958. His athletic ability was recognized, and he received a scholarship for both basketball and baseball to Baylor University. After one year at Baylor, he returned to Oklahoma to continue playing the sports he loved at Oklahoma Baptist University. In 1963, he graduated with a degree in mathematics and secondary education.

Upon his graduation, Glenn answered the call of duty, completing the U.S. Navy Officer Candidate School, serving on active duty for seven years with a tour in Vietnam as Commanding Officer of a barracks ship in DaNang Harbor, and serving in the Navy Reserves, retiring at the rank of Commander. Eventually, his naval career would bring him to Florida's First Congressional District, which he would call home for the remainder of his life.

In 1969, Glenn began working as a math teacher and coach at Woodham High School in Pensacola, Florida, and in 1972, he became the basketball coach and math teacher at Pace High School in Pace, Florida, while also earning a Masters of School Administration. Glenn's leadership skills and commitment to education led his selection as the first Community School Director for Santa Rosa County, Assistant Principal, and Principal of Pace High School, as well as Director of High School Education for Santa Rosa County Schools—a position he held until his retirement in 1997.

Glenn's retirement years were filled with quality family time, cross country travel in his motor home, and golf outings with family and friends. Glenn was also a man of faith, and was a long time member of the First Baptist Church of Milton.

To some Glenn Denny will be remembered as a patriot and veteran who served our Nation with honor and distinction, to others he will be remembered as an educator who used his passion for sports and commitment to education to serve the students of Northwest Florida, to his family and friends, Glenn will always be remembered as a loving and devoted husband, father, and grandfather. His impact on Northwest Florida was immense, and his legacy will live on forever.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the House of Representatives, I am proud to honor the memory of Glenn Denny. Vicki and I will keep his entire family, especially his wife of 54 years, Joanne; his son, Scott and daughter-in-law Cathy; his son Bryan and daughter-in-law Flavia; his grandchildren, Matthew, Brittany, Michael, Gabriel, Mateus, and Stella; as well as his brother Paul and sister-in-law Kathy in our thoughts and prayers.

EPILEPSY AWARENESS MONTH REMARKS

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, November is National Epilepsy Awareness Month. Epilepsy affects more than 2.8 million Americans, almost 10,000 of whom reside in my home state of Rhode Island. For the majority of those diagnosed with this condition, there is no known cause. Furthermore, one-third of people living with Epilepsy have seizures that can't be controlled with current treatments.

Richard and Deb Siravo tragically lost their five-year-old son Matty to Epilepsy in 2003. However, they chose to turn their tragedy into

action and founded The Matty Fund. They didn't want other families facing similar challenges to go without help, and they dedicated themselves to raising awareness, providing family resources and improving the lives of children and families living with Epilepsy.

I'm so proud of the work that the Matty Fund does in Rhode Island, and I encourage everyone to take a moment and reflect on what they can do to support Epilepsy awareness, not just during November, but all year long.

DANA RINDERKNECHT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dana Rinderknecht for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

Dana began her career with Coors Brewing Company and then became involved with ColoradoGives.org at Community First Foundation where she helped refine the website to make it accessible, affordable and transparent. She helped take the organization from a small Denver-area organization serving 100 nonprofits to a nationally-recognized program used by more than 1,700 organizations across the state. She also helped start Colorado Gives Day to increase philanthropy across the state. Since its inception, Colorado Gives Day—in combination with ColoradoGives—has raised more than $117 million for Colorado nonprofits.

Dana's energy and sense of humor she brings to her work helps foster a positive and creative environment. Her encouragement of others and her contribution to the nonprofit community has helped impact the lives of many.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dana Rinderknecht for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ORGANIC ACT OF GUAM ELECTION REFORM ACT OF 2015

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to amend the Organic Act of Guam to prohibit salary changes for the Governor of Guam, the Lieutenant Governor of Guam, and Senators of the Guam Legislature until after a general election of the Legislature has passed. My bill also removes the federally mandated five-year residency requirement for individuals to run for governor, lieutenant governor, and senator of the Guam Legislature, and gives the authority to set this requirement to local policymakers and the people of Guam.

The Organic Act of Guam establishes the framework of the Government of Guam and, among others, provides for qualifications and manner of elections of the Governor of Guam, the Lieutenant Governor of Guam and members of the Guam Legislature. Currently the Organic Act is silent on provisions regarding changes in salary for the Governor, Lt. Governor, or local Guam Legislature and changes can be made and implemented at any time simply by changing local law. Over the past several months, local policymakers and the people of Guam have debated pay increases that were proposed and instituted shortly after last year's general election. While I believe that these issues are up to local policymakers, and ultimately the people of Guam to decide, the Organic Act should provide safeguards regarding salaries for these elected officials that will prevent divisiveness in our community. The bill that I am introducing today would prevent the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Senators from increasing their salaries until after an intervening election of the Legislature has occurred. This is similar to the 27th Amendment to the Constitution that prohibits Members of Congress from increasing their pay until after an intervening election, and it is consistent with a request made by the Guam Legislature for me to introduce an amendment to the Organic Act for this purpose.

Additionally, the bill I am introducing will make it easier for individuals to participate in Guam elections by removing the federally-mandated five-year residency requirement for individuals to run for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Senator, and placing this authority with local Guam law. I believe that we should provide for greater opportunities to participate in government, and that the qualifications for local elected offices should be vested in the laws of Guam. Placing a federal mandate on the qualifications for Guam's Governor, Lt. Governor, and Senators ignores Guam's political maturity and is contrary to the ideals of our representative democracy. These decisions should be made by local policymakers and the people of Guam, not the U.S. Congress. The bill also puts Guam on equal footing with most of America, where state laws, not federal mandates, govern who can run for local elected offices.

This bill is a step towards improving accountability for elected officials on Guam and encourages more participation in our government. The bill is also consistent with public opinion in Guam and the views expressed by the Guam Legislature. I encourage its adoption and urge my colleague to pass this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during roll call vote number 637 on November 18, 2015 due to a previously scheduled appointment.

I would like to reflect that on roll call vote number 637 I would have voted NO.

REMEMBERING THE HISTORIC MEETING BETWEEN TAIWAN AND CHINA PRESIDENTS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, as someone, who since 1978 has followed with great interest the tinder box of South East Asia, the recent meeting between Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou and China's President Xi Jinping is an historic event that I did not think I would see in my lifetime.

On November 7 of this year, Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou and China's President Xi Jinping met in Singapore. The two leaders shook hands, gave speeches and discussed cross-Strait relations.

Before Taiwan's President Ma took office in 2008, the relationship between Taiwan and China was severely strained. The conflict over Pacific Island ownership and dispute over many other issues portends problems that could threaten peace in the region.

We greatly appreciate President Ma's initiative and leadership in pursuing this meeting and reducing tension along the Taiwan Strait.

With the recent tragedy in Paris and the increased violence in the Middle East, it is so vital that there is peace along the Taiwan Strait.

We look forward to seeing even greater peace and stability in the region as a result of this historic meeting between these two Presidents and view it as a first step on a long road.

DR. MARGIE BALL-COOK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dr. Margie Ball-Cook for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

Born in Beaumont, Texas, Dr. Ball-Cook has dedicated her life to helping others and the health care industry. She graduated as valedictorian of her high school class and went on to receive her Doctorate in Psychology from the University of Denver. Since then, she has helped establish nursing schools in both Colorado and Africa.

Currently, Dr. Ball-Cook heads the Global Health Commission of the National Black Nurses Association and was one of the founding members of Colorado Council of Black Nurses (CCBN). She has mentored and advised hundreds of students interested in medical and health careers toward their career goals, including those with low means who wish to pursue a profession in medicine.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dr. Margie Ball-Cook for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, each November, our nation recognizes the contributions of the First Americans during National Native American Heritage Month. Minnesota is home to eleven proud Ojibwe and Dakota nations, and those nations and their people are a vital part of our state's heritage and our future.

American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians are the source of America's first participatory democracy and the population with the highest rates of service in our nation's armed services. Their cultures and communities have endured despite centuries of violence, injustice, and discrimination. That legacy must never be buried or ignored, but I am committed to working with tribal leaders to move forward in a new era of respect and self-governance throughout Indian Country.

The nation-to-nation relationship between our federal government and the 567 diverse, federally recognized tribal nations across the country has been strengthened tremendously under President Obama. I am proud to have worked with the President and my colleagues in Congress to pass major legislation to better meet our federal trust responsibility, strengthen tribal self-governance, and support Native families, like the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, the Tribal Law and Order Act, and the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.

Investing in the health, safety, and education of Native youth, in particular, must be a priority for Congress. Native American youth deserve the same opportunities to shape their futures and succeed as any other child in America. Earlier this month, tribal leaders and Native youth joined President Obama and senior officials from throughout his Administration at the 7th Annual White House Tribal Nations Conference. I was incredibly proud to see young people representing their Native nations and sitting with our President, sharing their priorities and discussing their future. Whether standing against racism in their schools, advocating for opportunities in their communities, or preserving their languages and cultures, the powerful voices and actions of Native youth are helping to build a brighter future for all young people in this country.

Yet even with the progress we have made, tremendous work remains to realize that future. As sovereign nations, tribal governments play an essential role in serving the needs of their tribal members and defending the rights of their Nations. We must follow through on our federal responsibility to Native Americans with greater and more meaningful consultation and with legislative action that supports tribal self-determination, governmental parity, and significant investments throughout Indian Country.

As we honor the heritage and resilience of our Native American brothers and sisters this month, we also commit to working together to build stronger communities and a stronger nation because when Indian Country is strong, America is strong.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS FOR BOY SCOUT TROOP 16

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Boy Scout Troop 16, which will be celebrating its 100th Anniversary on November 28, 2015, at Genetti's Banquet Hall in Dickson City, Pennsylvania. Troop 16 has a long history of upholding the values of the Boy Scouts of America and serving its community with dignity and honor.

Established in 1915, Troop 16 was organized through the efforts of Pennsylvania Representative, John Scheuer. William Longcor served as the initial Scoutmaster of Troop 16. The Troop's first camping trip took place at Lake Ariel during the summer 1915 under the supervision of Scoutmaster Longcor and Assistant Scoutmaster Walter E. Mohr. The troop's inaugural banquet was held in December 1915, and the first Parents' night was in June 1916. The Troop completed its first Council Camp in 1919 at Bidwell's Pond.

Troop 16 has taken numerous camping expeditions over the years, including ones to Mountain Lake, Camp Grieser, Gettysburg, Camp Lackawanna, Washington D.C., Valley Forge, and Goose Pond. In the 1970s, the Troop participated in Scout Expositions at the Watres Armory in Scranton, with Troop 16 winning several awards. In 2008 and 2014, the Troop sent crews to High Adventure at the Florida Sea Base in the Florida Keys. Since its founding, Troop 16 has attended Summer Camp at Goose Pond and has the distinction of counting 238 Eagle Scouts as alumni.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Boy Scout Troop 16 as it celebrates a century of service. These scouts' and leaders' devotion to scouting has enriched the lives of many and has had a lasting, positive impact on their community. I wish the Troop the best as it continues to uphold the traditions of the Boy Scouts of America.

DR. HARRIET HALL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dr. Harriet Hall for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

Dr. Hall has made a significant contribution to the community through advocacy, passion and unwavering commitment to people with mental health disorders and their families. She has worked to reduce the stigma of mental illness, to bring the public's attention to urgent matters of mental health, and collaborated with government and business leaders to produce innovative changes for mental health care. Dr. Hall's contributions extend beyond her work in the mental health field and with her help for some of the neediest portions of the community such as the homeless, indigent and families in turmoil.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dr. Harriet Hall for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

HONORING TED ''GUNNER'' OUSLEY

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to honor a man that many in my District know by only one name.

Ted Ousley—or simply ''Gunner'' as he is known to his many fans—is one of the most popular people in my District and a longtime personality with WIVK radio in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Each weekday from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. ''Your Cowboy Pal'' Gunner entertains listeners with his unique brand of East Tennessee charm, humor, and grace.

He loves his job, and you can tell when listening to his show. He once said that he was ''living his dream'' by being on the air with WIVK.

In 2003 and 2004, Gunner was voted the Best DJ by Metro Pulse readers and was a finalist for the Marconi Air Personality of the Year.

But Gunner is not just known for his entertainment. He is also a tireless champion of Veterans.

Following the September 11th terror attacks in 2001, Gunner started a segment on his show called ''Voices from the Front'' where he would connect families over the phone with their loved ones serving in the wars. It was hugely popular and emotional for him and his listeners.

In 2004, he traveled to Iraq, and upon his return led an effort to bring to the United States for treatment an 8-year-old suffering from a severe form of Spina Bifida.

In 2009, Gunner received the first annual Civilian Warrior Award for his work with the 844th Engineer Battalion.

East Tennessee is one of the most patriotic places in this Country. Each year, Gunner helps lead the Veterans Day parade in Knoxville, which is attended by many thousands of people.

In addition to his service to Veterans, Gunner finds the time to run two East Tennessee farms and serve on the Board of Directors of the East Tennessee Alzheimer's Association.

Mr. Speaker, Ted ''Gunner'' Ousley embodies the Volunteer spirit of East Tennessee.

His humility and dedication to those who serve will forever hold a place in our hearts, and I thank him for his dedication to this Country and wish him success as he continues to entertain us each day.

I also call his work with Veterans to the attention of my Colleagues and other readers in hopes that he will be an inspiration to many more.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 636, I voted 'Nay' when I intended to vote 'Yea'.

SHARON TREFNY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Sharon Trefny for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

Sharon has spent extensive time as a systems engineer, community organizer and project manager, working with both domestic and international partners. She helped establish the Native American Commission on Urban Affairs, the first of its kind in the country. Sharon also helped to create a Women's Commission in Los Angeles where the first U.S. rape hot-line was set up.

In 2000, Sharon became the First Lady of the Colorado School of Mines. In that position, she interacted with women leaders such as Jehan Sudat (the late Anwar Sadat's wife), Madeline Albright, Wu Yi (Vice Premier of China), Jill Biden, and a UN delegation of women from Afghanistan. Sharon used the insight she gained from these experiences to help connect women's leadership to the women on the School of Mines campus.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Sharon Trefny for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

RECOGNIZING CALVIN FRAUENFELDER AND DUSTY JOHNSON

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Calvin Frauenfelder and Dusty Johnson for their hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Fourth District as interns in my Washington, DC office for the Fall 2015 session of Congress.

The work of this young man and woman has been exemplary and I know they both have bright futures. They served as tour guides, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity to these two and look forward to seeing them build their careers in public service.

Our interns have made plans to continue their work with various organizations in Washington and Colorado. I am certain they will succeed in their new roles and wish them all the best in their future endeavors. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Calvin Frauenfelder and Dusty Johnson for their service this Fall.

RECOGNIZING CANDY ALCOTT

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise with Congressman MIKE THOMPSON to recognize Candy Alcott, an amazing Livermore resident whose acts of kindness are bringing joy to Lake County children devastated by the Valley Fire.

When the Valley Fire destroyed hundreds of homes earlier this year, leaving many families with nothing, Candy jumped into action. She wanted to make sure the children of Lake County were ''not forgotten.''

Candy drove from Livermore and brought donations. She gave away a few bikes that first day, but there were still many more kids in need. Candy said she would be back, and she has fulfilled that promise over and over again.

Thanks to Candy's tireless efforts, good Samaritans and generous businesses have donated hundreds of bikes. Now called the ''Bike Angel,'' she has even created a group, Bike Angels United, to help continue this outpouring of love and support for the children of Lake County.

Candy said that the generosity people have shown in donating the bikes has been a ''miracle.'' This miracle, though, only happened because of her caring, dedication, and energy.

We want to express our deepest appreciation for Candy's devotion to the children affected by the Valley Fire. What she has done is truly remarkable, and we wish her the very best as she continues her charitable work.

CELEBRATING THE AVON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the Avon Chamber of Commerce's 50th anniversary.

Today, we recognize the Avon Chamber of Commerce for serving as a tireless advocate for our local businesses and an essential resource for their leaders and employees. Over the past 50 years, the chamber has worked hard to create an environment that allows its members to flourish by providing advice, resources, and networking opportunities. Currently, the Avon Chamber of Commerce represents a diverse group of over 340 businesses—both large and small—from every industry.

We here in the State of Connecticut are proud of our highly-skilled workforce, and Avon is an ideal location for companies who want to take advantage of this strength. Organizations like the Avon Chamber of Commerce help businesses continue to grow, so that Connecticut's economy is vibrant and competitive for years to come. The Farmington Valley owes much to the Avon Chamber, and Connecticut is a better state thanks to their advocacy. I look forward to continuing to work with the chamber as they continue to thrive and welcome more businesses into the region.

Congratulations to Executive Director Lisa Bohman, Board President John Shea, the Board of Directors, staff and members of the Avon Chamber of Commerce on its 50th anniversary.

JOAN SMITH

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Joan Smith for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

Joan began as a Parent Resource Counselor in 1992, but for the past 25 years has worked for Rocky Mountain Education Center at Red Rocks Community College. During her tenure, she wrote the first National Science Foundation Grants on behalf of the college both of which were funded and began the long and very successful relationship between NSF and Red Rocks Community College.

As director of the OSHA Institute at Red Rocks Community College, she became passionate in seeking solutions to the high fatality rate among oil and gas workers in the field. Joan worked nationally through the industry's STEPS Network to convene a committee of oil and gas professionals from across the country to develop safety training programs for workers. She has also developed relationships between the College and several international partners, including the countries of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. She worked with students, universities, and employers in Jordan to create the first Solar Energy Technician and Occupational Safety and Health Associates Degree programs through the Al Baqa Applied University.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Joan Smith for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

TRIBUTE TO THE CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL (CPC)

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC), which today celebrates 50 years of service to the Chinese-American, immigrant and low-income communities in New York City.

CPC was founded at the grassroots level and its roots are deep in New York's Chinese American community. In the mid-1960s, as immigration from Asia began steadily growing, CPC was launched and began counseling

families referred by local schools. As the agency developed, it began providing case management services to help recent arrivals adjust to their new homes.

The organization grew rapidly and started providing important educational services to school-age children, including early child care. Shortly thereafter, CPC launched Project Reach, which provided programs for at-risk gang youth in Chinatown. Today that initiative offers services for youth of all backgrounds.

Today, CPC has blossomed into a critical anchor in our community. Over 8,000 people are served every day through more than 50 programs in 33 locations throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens. Early childhood services provide a nurturing environment that offers young Chinese New Yorkers an environment to grow and learn.

Workforce development initiatives create economic opportunity by providing our city's residents with training, new skills and employment placement. Through these efforts, over the past year, CPC assisted over 2,500 clients, enrolling more than 525 of them into English as a Second Language classes and training over 200 others in construction, hospitality and luxury retail.

CPC has also become an important safety net for some of our city's seniors. Senior centers in Manhattan and Queens ensure we are caring for and honoring New York's elderly Chinese. The centers' meals provide a popular reason for seniors to come together, while food is brought to those who are homebound. Programs focused on music, art and entertainment help keep seniors culturally and intellectually stimulated and engaged.

Mr. Speaker, since its founding five decades ago, the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC) has become an invaluable and critical force for good in our city. Today, it helps some of our most vulnerable neighbors, while strengthening our community overall and making New York a better place to live. I would ask my colleagues to join me in saluting CPC as it celebrates half a century of service to New York's Chinese community and to our entire city.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS LEGAL SUPPORT ACT OF 2015

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the Veterans Legal Support Act of 2015, a bill to allow the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide certification and support to law school clinical programs that provide pro bono legal and support services to veterans, including, among other things, assistance with disability claims and appeals and foreclosures. There are already at least 22 law schools that have clinics devoted to veterans' legal needs, including the William & Mary Law School Veterans Benefits Clinic, which serves as a national model for this idea, as the law clinic was the first in the nation to receive a ''best practice'' certification from the VA. There are many other law schools, such as the University of the District of Columbia's David A. Clarke School of Law, that are interested in starting their own VA-certified clinics.

More than 600,000 veterans are waiting for their disability claims to be processed by the VA. With the assistance of lawyers and law professors, clinical programs provide free legal resources to assist veterans with processing their claims. My bill would merely build on what some law schools have begun to do for the last several years. More needs to be done to sustain and increase these programs.

Just as we honored our veterans on Veterans Day, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, a concrete measure that would assist our veterans, who have repeatedly put their lives on the line for this country, in their daily lives.

DAN ARVIZU

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Dan Arvizu for his exceptional work as Director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colorado.

Dr. Arvizu is retiring this year, but his legacy of leadership and innovation will endure for many, many years to come. I want to take this moment to say thank you for outstanding stewardship of our nation's premier energy efficiency and renewable energy laboratory.

In addition to his role at NREL, Dr. Arvizu is Chairman of the National Science Board, which is the governing board of the National Science Foundation. He will continue his role as Chairman of the National Science Board and he will also become a visiting professor at Stanford University.

On behalf of everyone at NREL, the people of the state of Colorado, and the United States of America, let me say thank you for a job well done. We wish you all the best on the next steps of your journey.

HONORING MARY V. KING

HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of my friend and colleague, Mary V. King. Mary was a lifelong resident of Oakland, California, and dedicated her life to public service. She passed away earlier this week.

During her three-terms as the first African American County Supervisor for Alameda County, she authored many policies with lasting impact on the Bay Area, including a values-based budgeting process still in use by the county, and the King Plan for land-use, which is now considered a model for smart-growth. She also served as the chair of several community-based and regional committees, including the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) Bay Bridge Design Task Force. Among her many roles in public service, she worked tirelessly as the General Manager of the Alameda Contra Costa Transit District, often called the AC Transit District, carrying the agency through tough economic times.

Mary and I became friends when we served together on MTC and worked together on the Caldecott Tunnel, which connects Alameda and Contra Costa counties and contributes to the economic development of our region. She used her considerable expertise in government to develop and advocate for efficient transportation systems, smart land-use planning, housing, and other policies that have helped to create opportunities throughout the Bay Area. She also worked to improve economic conditions and social services for lower income residents, promoting health and education, and youth violence prevention programs. The Mary V. King Health Education Center is named in her honor as part of the Eastmont Wellness Center in Oakland. She also founded the Alameda County ''Women's Hall of Fame Awards,'' which recognizes the accomplishments of other women and has recognized more than 200 honorees.

Among her many accolades, Mary has been awarded the ''Lifetime Achievement Award'' by the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials, the ''Allen E. Broussard Memorial Award for Outstanding Humanitarianism'' by the Alameda County Bar Association, the ''George Moscone Memorial Award'' by the American Society of Public Administration, the Community Leaders, Recognition Award by the Black Elected Officials and Faith Based Leaders of the East Bay, and was named the ''Legislator of the Year'' in 1992 by the Arc of the United States.

Mary is survived by her mother Victoria King, two daughters Kimberly and Vikki King, and two grandchildren. She leaves an indelible legacy on the East Bay, and will be greatly missed.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to celebrate the extraordinary life of Mary King, and I send my sincere and deepest condolences to her family, friends, and loved ones.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JUDGE TALMADGE LITTLEJOHN

HON. TRENT KELLY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Chancery Court Judge Talmadge Littlejohn of New Albany, Mississippi who joined his Heavenly Father on Monday, October 26, 2015.

Judge Littlejohn had a long, distinguished career as a public servant, including service as a district attorney, state legislator, and chancery court judge.

He served in our state house from 1960 to 1964 and the state senate from 1964 to 1968. In 2010 he was honored by the Mississippi Bar for his 50 years of practicing law. He was in his fourth term as a judge in the First Chancery Court District of Mississippi, which includes Alcorn, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tishomingo, and Union counties.

Judge Littlejohn always conducted himself as a selfless public servant dedicated to fulfilling any task that was assigned to him.

He was an active member of First Baptist Church of New Albany, where he faithfully

served as a deacon and Sunday school teacher. Judge Littlejohn was a man of family, faith, and a servant of God.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Julia Gray Littlejohn; his daughters, Lisa Gault (Phil) of Huntsville, Alabama and Christy Adair (Avery) of New Albany; his son, Bradley Littlejohn (Morgan) also of New Albany; his six grandchildren, Phillip Gault, Justin Gault, Katie Allison Gault, Julianne Littlejohn, Gray Littlejohn, and Ivy Littlejohn; one sister, Ivy Jean Weeden (John) of New Harmony; one aunt, Elaine Pannell of New Albany; and many nieces and nephews.

My thoughts and prayers are with Judge Littlejohn's family and friends during this difficult time.

THANK YOU MIKE PODEGRACZ FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THE CITY OF HESPERIA

HON. PAUL COOK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, over my time representing the citizens of California's Eighth Congressional District, I have been able to spend time with and learn from some of the best community leaders America has to offer.

Today I rise to speak about Mike Podegracz, the City Manager of the City of Hesperia.

Mike was first appointed City Manager in 2005. During his time as City Manager, he has overseen the completion of the Ranchero Underpass and Interchange projects, the G Avenue Lead Track and the completion of the Hesperia's Civic Plaza Complex. Being fiscally conservative, Mike led the organization through the recession without staff layoffs while maintaining a balanced general fund budget. Having spent the first half of his career in the private sector, Mike understands the impact of superior customer service on the community, and places a special value on this trait across all city departments. Hesperia is a city known for its excellent customer service, and Mike has made this possible through all he has been able to accomplish.

I wish Mike the best in all that is yet to come. He has left a huge imprint on the City of Hesperia and I'm proud to have worked with him.

MARYANN PROCTOR

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize MaryAnn Proctor for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

Whether it was tutoring second graders through the Bring up Grades (BUGS) program or volunteering at the Tennyson Center for abused children, MaryAnn lived to help others. On a daily basis, she oversaw the complex operations of Propp Realty leading the staff and making business connections, not only from tenant to tenant, but with every person she met. She insisted on quality work, respect among coworkers, and encouraged potential leaders to conduct business fairly and professionally.

She served as a board member for the West Chamber, President-elect for Lakewood Kiwanis, a volunteer at ARC, The Action Center and Lakewood High School Key Club. Additionally, she served on several City of Lakewood committees and belonged to the West Colfax Business District. MaryAnn unexpectedly passed away at the end of 2014, leaving behind a tremendous legacy.

Thank you for recognizing MaryAnn Proctor with the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Her leadership and service to the community will forever be remembered.

MARKING 20 YEARS SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE DAYTON AGREEMENT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, November 21 will mark the 20th anniversary of the Dayton Agreement, which ended the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995.

As a member and later Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I remember those events vividly—many Bosnians and Serbs testified before the Helsinki Commission in the 1990s (including victims of human rights abuses and human rights defenders) and some have since played leading roles as elected officials. In 1991, Frank Wolf and I visited Vukovar in neighboring Croatia while it was still under siege. With a group of other Helsinki Commissioners and Members of Congress, I urged a decisive international response under U.S. leadership from the very beginning of the war. In 1995 we spearheaded a movement to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia, so that it would not present such an inviting target to Serb militias. Sadly the embargo was lifted too late for the Bosniaks in Srebrenica.

Just last month I met with a group of young Bosniaks belonging to Voices of the Bosnian Genocide. It was so moving to meet with these young people—many of them were from Srebrenica—and to learn how many of them had taken up work or study that sought to bring some good out of the horrors of 1995. Many studied human rights law, or conflict resolution, or medicine.

Their lives were shaped not only by Srebrenica but also by Dayton, which brought an end to the killing. Yet as public officials we have a responsibility to remember that robust action earlier in the conflict could have saved many more lives and produced better prospects for the future.

Twenty years later, this Dayton anniversary offers the opportunity to assess what has been achieved in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The agreement should rightly be remembered for restoring a peace that has held to this day, and for ensuring the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Dayton gave the country time to begin to heal from a horrific conflict infamous for ethnic cleansing and atrocities against innocent civilians, including the genocide at Srebrenica—which we remembered with the unanimous passage of House Resolution 310 this past July—as well as the shelling of Sarajevo and other urban centers, and the rape and death camps established by Serb militant forces at the beginning of their aggression. In this small country, over two million were displaced by the conflict, more than 100,000 were killed, and tens of thousands were raped or tortured. Scars made by crimes of this scale still remain.

Dayton was a central part of an effort that helped the international community transition from a world divided between East and West in order to meeting post-Cold War challenges, including the extreme and violent nationalism and its inherent hatred for others which manifested itself elsewhere in the Balkans and Europe. For the first time since World War II, an international tribunal was established to hold persons accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Determining the fate of missing persons, using new technology such as satellite photography to locate mass graves and DNA testing to identify remains, became a priority. The NATO Alliance, previously confined to the borders of its member states, expanded its security role to operate "out of area," first to restore peace and then to keep it. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe also evolved to include significant field operations and new mandates ranging from election observation to police training. These developments remain relevant today.

As we commemorate the accomplishments of Dayton, Mr. Speaker, we also must remember that the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina must live in its wake. It is my hope that, at the 30th anniversary of the end of the conflict, Bosnia will have made more progress and we will have more to celebrate.

STATEMENT PUBLISHED BY MRS. MARYAM RAJAVI OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF RESISTANCE OF IRAN, CONDEMNING THE RECENT TERROR ATTACKS IN PARIS

HON. TOM McCLINTOCK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following statement published in the Washington Times on November 18, 2015, by Mrs. Maryam Rajavi of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, condemning the recent terror attacks in Paris.

On behalf of the Iranian people and the Iranian Resistance for freedom and democracy, I strongly condemn the terrorist attacks and massacre of defenseless people in Paris on November 13, 2015.

I extend my condolences to the Republic's President and government as well as the French people for the loss of life in these attacks, which are true examples of crime against humanity.

I express my heartfelt sympathies to the victims' families. Today, our hearts bleed for the French nation. The people of Iran deeply feel the bitterness of these crimes.

In these difficult moments, the Iranian people can empathize with the French people

and share their grief, because for the past 37 years they have been suffering under the religious and terrorist dictatorship, which is the Godfather of ISIS.

Today, humanity's conscience is in shock and disbelief, wondering how such crimes can be committed in the name of God and under the banner of religion.

Fundamentalism has nothing to do with Islam, whether it is under the pretext of Shiite extremism and religious tyranny or velayat-e faqih (absolute clerical rule) or under the pretext of Sunni extremism and Daesh (ISIS).

Such inhumane crimes have no connection to Islam, and are evils that represent enmity to peace and humanity everywhere.

Crimes committed by the religious fascism ruling Iran, including 120,000 political executions, hostage-taking and export of terrorism, have nothing to do with Islam or the Iranian people.

For this reason, I urge all Muslims to strongly condemn the crimes committed in Paris and to not allow the conduct of these ruthless terrorists to occur in the name of Islam and Muslims.

I also call on them to stand firm against such extremism, which violates the true teachings of Islam.

The Assad regime in Syria and its prime sponsor the mullahs ruling Iran are the chief sociopolitical enablers of ISIS, with their slaughter of 300,000 innocent people and displacing of more than half of the Syrian population.

As long as this dictatorship rules in Damascus with the backing of the religious fascism ruling Iran, ISIS will continue to thrive and extend its scourge of death from the Middle East to Europe.

At the same time, Iran's ruling mullahs, who are the primary beneficiaries of these crimes, are brazenly blaming the French government for the attacks.

According to what they published in a news agency affiliated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), their demand is for France to abandon its firm policy against the Assad dictatorship in light of the November 13th massacre and to instead ''coordinate its efforts with the Islamic countries,'' namely the mullahs in Tehran.

In such circumstances, it has become increasingly vital for France to insist on the removal of Bashar Assad from power and to adopt a more decisive policy in resolving the Syrian crisis.

Experience has shown that firmness is the most effective and the only principled and correct approach to confronting terrorists.

Once again, I extend my most sincere sympathies to the people of France and pray for a speedy recover for the injured.

THE PRESIDENT'S VOW: ENDING VETERANS HOMELESSNESS BY 2015

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Reps. CHARLES RANGEL (D–NY), SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (D–GA) and I rise within the 100 days remaining to reaffirm our support for the President's Vow to End Veterans Homelessness by December 2015. We also reaffirm the First Lady and Dr. Biden's White House Joining Forces Initiative aimed at supporting military families, and last year's Mayor's Challenge to End Homelessness among veterans.

We also want to recognize the legendary Hon. CHARLES RANGEL (D–NY), who was the first to call attention to our nation's greatest failing 'the plight of our homeless veterans' in 1992, on the heels of the seminal report 'Heroes Today, Homeless Tomorrow.' That report revealed that 250,000 men, or one of every three single homeless men sleeping on the streets or in shelters, on any given night, were veterans and 40% were Black. Now, 23 years later the Hons. CHARLES RANGEL, SANFORD BISHOP, Jr, and I convened the forum, ''President's Vow'' to review the past 20 year's accomplishments and shortfalls against the backdrop of Rep. RANGEL's 'Yesterday's Military Heroes Ought Not be Today's Homeless,' where high unemployment, homelessness, and health concerns prevailed.

The forum successfully blended the President's Vow and First Lady's Mayor's Challenge, along with Congressional efforts, while placing Black and women veterans homelessness within the framework of the national dialogue, or discussion. Furthermore, the forum succeeded in impressing upon lawmakers and the audience a fundamental truth that 'race and gender matter' in our comprehension of 21st century at-risk and homeless veterans. It argued the persuasive case of urban veterans' homelessness, joblessness and incarceration, the link between homelessness, poverty and hunger among veterans across America, disparities in health outcomes for male and female veterans, the triple disadvantages for African American female veterans, and the need for more case management services, transitional housing and permanent affordable housing development. It also exposed the need for better case worker-to-veteran ratios.

We began the forum with a musical prelude performed by David Bratton, known as the DC Lou Rawls, and the traditional military presenting of colors. In addition, Dr. James Averhart, Past President of the Montford Point Marine Association led us in the Pledge of Allegiance, and Chaplain Michael McCoy, Associate Director of VA Chaplains offered the invocation and benediction.

Congressman CHARLES RANGEL (D–NY) then introduced Col. Nicole Malachowski, USAF, Iraq Combat Pilot and Executive Director of the White House Joining Forces Initiative, who brought greetings from First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden as a morale booster. Accompanying greetings came from Hon. SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (D–GA) and Hon. CORRINE BROWN's (D–FL), who also introduced the new VA UnderSecretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin, MD for keynote remarks. Afterward, Congressman SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (D–GA) introduced our impressive panelist and Executive Director Ron Armstead as moderator for the panel discussion to come. The panel discussion consisted of the following members:

Col. Eugene Scott, USA, Ret., President of Chicago Defender Charities, started by focusing on the Chicago Defenders more than 100-year history in defense of the black community. However, he was more outspoken about veterans' homelessness and in highlighting veterans' hunger in Chicago. Georgia State Legislator Calvin Symre, who is also Past President, National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) stated that NBCSL is formulating and leading discussions around homeless veterans policies with the White House and other agencies. The intention is to mobilize everyone at the state, city and local levels for support, because the struggle doesn't end, and there is always the need for more people to be involved. Nan Roman, President/CEO, National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), presented statistics on veterans homelessness and discussed the overrepresentation of African Americans, who represent only 10% of the general veterans' population, adding that, although numbers appear to be declining, there still is a discrepancy. Gregory Scott, President/CEO, New Directions for Veterans (ND), talked about his father (a troubled Korean war veteran) who died all too soon and about his family knowing nothing about PTSD, thus establishing the importance of the connection between veterans and their families, in identifying with not only the homeless, but with all struggling veterans.

Baylee Crone, President/CEO, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans (NCHV) described the coalition, its services and its efforts to end chronic homelessness as well as the importance of listening to its founders, such as Ralph Cooper, M.Ed., a co-founder of NCHV, and others. Steve Peck, President/CEO of U.S. VETS, suggested the need for a long-range plan beyond December 2015. Carlyre Holder, President, National Association for Blacks in Crimination Justice (NABCJ), spoke about the criminal justice system and the need for reform—noting that President Barack Obama is the first president ever to visit a federal prison—in addition to expressing the NABCJ's support of social justice and veterans' courts. Ed Jennings, Southeast Regional Director, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), indicated that the vast majority of the First Lady's Mayor's Challenge and state and other official signers come from the southeast region of HUD. The latest numbers being 555, out of 854 nationally from Region 4.

The question-and-answer period was a lively exchange between attendees and panel members reflecting motivation, stimulated thinking and enthusiasm; Anthony Love, VA Senior Advisor and Director of Community Engagement remained throughout in order to answer questions and address concerns regarding homelessness.

The Veterans Braintrust Homeless Forum was significant for its timing—we were 100 days away from the December 2015 deadline for ending veterans homelessness. And we are embracing the First Lady's and Dr. Biden's agenda, along with fulfilling our central mission of advocating nationally and articulating clearly the message that ''Blacks are continually overrepresented among the homeless veterans population, despite being only 10% of the general veterans population.'' The key question—why are Black veterans disproportionately represented among the homeless—remains essentially unanswered, as does the issue of why ''women veterans are now the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, particularly single women with children.'' Therefore, more needs to be done before the national media declares victory, and the 'political and public will' goes away.

Although, we are watching the national homeless statistics in order to anticipate and formulate the next steps, we envisioned the forum as part of an ''all hands on deck'' effort and opportunity for enhancing homeless veterans policy, programs, services with outside-the-box problem solving. Yet, we realized that representatives from the DC area alone were absent for some unknown reason. Further, despite not requesting the Friday morning forum

be recorded, we did manage to audio record the Saturday homeless advocates and providers roundtable discussion as per Dr. William Lawson's advising the need to write, publish and develop articles, policy papers, and talking points, as a way of contributing to the literature. Furthermore, charter member Tom Harris suggested that the recording be sent to members across the country, so it can be shared locally for people to hear and discuss.

Most importantly, the forum feedback was highly favorable, with comments like 'the forum was on point,' 'I learned so much,' 'great job,' 'increditable,' 'awesome,' 'phenomenal,' 'I thought it was great for Congressional representatives to focus on homeless veterans,' 'impressed with panel and listened intensely,' 'made good contacts,' 'well organized,' and 'it was a one stop shop of information giving a broad perspective (from coast to coast), or a snap shot of black veterans status, or circumstantial situation, particularly for those of us on limited budgets and fixed incomes.' The general consensus was that we are making progress, but we still have work to do. Consequently, two tangible forum outcomes under serious consideration are crafting a position/policy paper and creating a new Veterans Braintrust Homeless Committee consisting of advocates and providers from the community or grassroots level. Also under consideration is planning a follow-up session with the strong support of the National Alliance to End Homelessness and others to include either a Capitol Hill Briefing and/or high level meetings with Congresswoman BROWN (D–FL) and other leaders in Congress.

The Annual Gala Reception and Awards Ceremony was, as usual, 'a standing room only' affair in the Cannon House Office's Room 334 (Veterans Hearing Room). With a musical showcase performed by DC's Lou Rawls, followed by Congresswoman BROWN's welcome and introduction of Veterans Affairs personnel, committee staffers and Don Phillips, Minority Staff Director, House Committee on Veterans Affairs (HCVA), in addition to our very special guest Martin Luther King III, and Pastor Leon Bryant, Sr., who blessed the food. In his role as Master of Ceremonies Executive Director Ron Armstead presented a series of gifts to Congresswoman BROWN: first, a mug inscribed 'The Best Man for the Job is a Woman'; second, a civil war book titled ''Firebrand of Liberty—The Story of Two Black Regiments that Changed the Course of the Civil War'' by Stephen V. Ash, and third, a special Josiah Walls citation on behalf of Dr. Frank Smith, Jr., Founder of the African American Civil War Memorial Museum, located in Washington, DC.

Deserving 2015 Awardees were: Andrae Bailey, Abraham House-El, Gregory Crawford, Dr. Sharon Elliott-Bynum, Duery Felton, Jr., Irvin Goodwin, Clifton Lewis, Bruce Marks, Ivan Mason, Wendy McClinton, Col. Eugene Scott, USA, Ret., Gregory Scott, M. William Sermons, Darryl Vincent, Cordell Walker, Martha Watts, Alshi Williams, Larry Williams, A Step Forward, Inc., Catholic Charities St. Leo Campus for Veterans, Central Florida Commission on Homelessness, Final Salute, Inc., Greater Chicago Food Depository, Healing with CAARE, Inc., Joseph's Place, National Alliance to End Homelessness, National Association of American Veterans, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, Neighborhood Assistance Corporation of America, Samuel L. Felton Community Center, The Jericho Project, United States Veteran Initiative (U.S. VETs), United Way of King County, United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley, Veterans on the Rise, Michigan Veterans Foundation, Stand Down House, Film: 'Sweet Georgia Brown' and Historical Group: National World War II Museum Traveling Exhibit: 'Fight for the Right to Fight: The African American Experience in World War II.'

The official awards ceremony concluded with the playing of Ray Charles' rendition of ''America the Beautiful,'' coupled with times are ''Changin'' by Brass Construction to underscore the important historical changes taking place: from the Civil War to Josiah Walls, Florida's Black Congressman of Reconstruction, to the 50th Anniversary of the successful passage of the Voting Rights Act, to Rep. BROWN's election to Congress after the passage of 127 years, and her present status as Ranking Democratic member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee. But, the recent Florida GOP redistricting plot and TVOne Roland Martin interview where she states ''if you are not at the table, you are on the menu,'' is cause to rethink the earlier musical premise.

Special acknowledgements go to Ralph Cooper, Mel King, Pamela King, Eva Kerr, South End Technology Center at Tent City, Julius Hayes, Allene Carter, Dr. Fari Nzinga, Todd Williams, Ronald Jackson, Sr., Wendy McClinton, Larry Williams, Gregory Crawford, Jas Boothe, Irvin Goodwin, Dr. Virginia Brown, Dr. William Lawson, Prof. Joel Beeson, Prof. Chad Williams, Ernest Washington, Jr., Henry 'Tabu' Taylor, Bonnie Perry, T. Michael Sullivan, Anthony Hawkins and Shantrel Brown; Congressional staffers Ronnie Simmons, Rontel Batie, Stephanie Anim-Yankah, Nick Martinelli, Chester Glover, Reginald McGill, Jackie Gray, Carla Wiley, Jonathan Halpern, William 'Bill' Golembiewski, Hannah Kim, and Reba Raffaelli.

Finally, we close by quoting decorated Korean War veteran Rep. CHARLES B. RANGEL (D–NY)—''No American let alone African American who serves this great nation deserves to be left on the streets of America homeless or alone. And shouldn't disproportionate African American homeless veterans be a 21st century civil rights issue?''

JILL FELLMAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Jill Fellman for receiving the West Chamber's 2015 Celebrate Women Award. This award celebrates local women leaders with drive, perseverance and service to their community.

As a Jefferson County native, Jill attended Jefferson County schools and then became an educator in the Jefferson County public school system for 30 years. After retiring from her education career, Jill served as an elected member of the Jefferson County School Board of Education from November 2011 to November 2015.

Currently, she is a member of the Jefferson County Schools Foundation Board, the Audit Committee, the Wheat Ridge Education Alliance, and the City of Arvada Coordinating Council. She also serves as Secretary for the Arvada Community Food Bank board and is Vice Chair for the Sooper Credit Union Foundation board. With her endless amount of energy and passion for first rate public education, she also serves on the board of Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth and is an Edgewater Collective community partner.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jill Fellman for receiving the 2015 Celebrate Women Award. Thank you for your leadership and service to the community.

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK AND RECOGNIZING NORTH CAROLINA'S EFFORTS TO ADVANCE GLOBAL EDUCATION

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week, November 16–20, marks the 16th annual International Education Week (IEW), which is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education that serves as an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of international education and exchange programs worldwide and encourages participation in them. This important week is observed all across the United States and in more than 100 countries overseas. I want to recognize some of the efforts within my home state of North Carolina to provide a global education experience to as many students as possible.

The theme of this year's IEW is 'International Education: Advancing Access for All,' which is critical because opportunities to learn global competency skills are not currently accessible to all students.

I want to call attention to the North Carolina State Board of Education, whose members help to guide NC's global education efforts via their 2013 report, 'Preparing Students for the World: Final Report of the State Board of Education's Task Force on Global Education.' As noted in this report, ''Students in North Carolina are no longer preparing for future jobs in North Carolina. They are preparing to work and compete in a global workplace. The impact of cultural sensitivities and the capability to collaborate in a diverse international setting . . . cannot be understated. Our State Board of Education in North Carolina is rightfully focusing on these skill areas, as they will become even bigger factors and differentiators in determining the future success of our students.''

At least in part due to this statewide focus on global education, there are an increasing number of course offerings and enrollment in language studies and an increasing number of K–12 dual language/immersion programs in North Carolina. Today, there are at least 15 world languages being taught in our state's K–12 schools, including Chinese, Russian, Arabic and Hindi. And there are over 100 programs—a number that is rapidly growing—utilizing several different learning models being implemented in school districts across the state. The State Board of Education recently

designated Piedmont Middle School as the first Global-Ready School under the Board's Global Education Strategic Plan and 15 schools have indicated an intent to apply for this designation in the upcoming year.

I am also proud that North Carolina is home to the nation's first statewide Global Schools Network that serves to connect teachers, school administrators, non-profit and for-profit partners with a deep commitment to international education and 21st century student preparation. The Network's founding partner is VIF International Education, based in my district, an organization that supports the efforts of more than 180 Global Schools in 22 districts across the state. These schools are a mix of urban, rural, low-wealth, affluent, magnet and traditional sites and each provides school-wide access to global learning experiences via international exchange programs, global competence training for all teachers, a school-wide global curriculum, virtual classroom to classroom partnerships, and/or dual-language/immersion programs. VIF's mission of 'Global Education for All' serves as a rallying cry for the schools statewide.

Our North Carolina universities further help to advance global competencies at the undergraduate and graduate level. For example, the statewide University of North Carolina (UNC) system hosts a myriad of global education programs, including World View, which provide daily proof of the positive impact of international exchange. And the Center for International Understanding (CIU), a program of UNC General Administration, is working to develop a first-in-the-nation strategy for North Carolina's business, government, nonprofits and educational institutions to strategically engage globally.

Many of our state's universities are also using IEW as an opportunity to inform students about how to participate in Study Abroad programs or other opportunities for international learning that encourage the exchange of knowledge and understanding and promote enlightened and responsible global citizenship. The UNC system-to-system student exchange partners currently total 32 campuses in seven countries, and individual UNC campuses offer numerous additional opportunities for students to study or intern overseas. In the 2012–2013 academic year, more than 6,300 UNC system students participated in a study abroad program, studying in 89 known countries, and the percentage of students participating expected to increase in future years. Further, there are global certificate programs at 6 UNC campuses and most campuses are developing strategies to enhance such offerings. There are also countless faculty-to-faculty interactions that occur across nations in a variety of ways, primarily through research.

During this International Education Week, I rise to celebrate these and the many other North Carolina-based organizations that are working day-in and day-out to ensure that our state continues to benefit from the efforts of international education. Further, I re-state my commitment to working this week, and every week, to help ensure that global competence is the norm rather than the exception for every student.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF BRIGADIER GENERAL FREDERICK R. PAYNE, JR., USMC, RET. ON THE OCCASION OF HIS PASSING

HON. RAUL RUIZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of Brigadier General Frederick ''Fritz'' R. Payne, Jr., a Marine Corps American Fighter Ace, recipient of a Congressional Gold Medal, dedicated husband to the late Dorothy Payne, and proud father and grandfather.

General Payne led a life centered on service, commitment, and sacrifice. In May, I was honored to present General Payne with the Congressional Gold Medal for his dedicated service to the Marine Corps and status as the oldest living American Fighter Ace, an elite group of pilots having downed at least five enemy aircraft in battle. Time after time, General Payne risked his life to preserve the freedom of all Americans, and time after time, General Payne was successful in his mission. For this, I am grateful.

In 1935, after graduating from the University of Arizona, Fritz joined the Marine Corps in an effort to pursue his dream of becoming a pilot. Not only did he achieve this dream, but after encountering fierce conflict over Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands Area, he also achieved status among the most elite fighter pilots, American Fighter Aces. Our freedom endures because of the bravery of men and women like General Payne.

General Payne is survived by his two sons, Robert Payne and Dewitt Payne; daughter Elizabeth Ann Payne; and three grandchildren. His wife, Dorothy Payne, predeceased him in 2011.

Mr. Speaker, General Payne's selfless service and vast military achievements in pursuit of the preservation of our American freedoms and ideals deserves acknowledgement. On behalf of all Americans, and in particular the residents of California's 36th Congressional District, I would like to honor the life and military service of Brigadier General Federick ''Fritz'' R. Payne, Jr.

HONORING THE JOHNSON-PHELPS VFW POST #5220 ON THEIR 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Johnson-Phelps Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #5220 of Oak Lawn, Illinois for celebrating 80 years of existing as a community organization. I appreciate all the hard work the Johnson-Phelps VFW has done to assist our nation's brave foreign war veterans.

The VFW's mission is, ''To foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts; to serve our veterans, the military and our communities; [and] to advocate on behalf of all veterans.'' The Johnson-Phelps VFW Post has excelled at fulfilling this mission by honoring the sacrifices of our veterans and admirably serving our community. The Johnson-Phelps Post was formed in 1945 by a group of veterans returning from the Second World War. The Post was named for Mr. Raymond Johnson and Mr. Leslie Phelps, both killed in action during WWII. The newly formed Post chose Mr. Johnson's and Mr. Phelps' names from a hat that included the names of all 23 men from the Oak Lawn area that were killed in the war. The current Post building was completed in 1951, built in large part by the Post's own members. The Johnson-Phelps Post later merged with six other posts in the Southwest Chicagoland area, the oldest of which was chartered in 1935.

The Post's achievement and dedication to service is made possible today by Commander Richard Bukowski, Sr. Vice Commander Thomas Krone, and Jr. Vice Commander Bryant Reed. Their dedication to serving the community is shown through programs such as the well-known Voice of Democracy & Patriots Pen Scholarship Competitions. They also provide for the public by hosting and sponsoring important local events in our community.

Throughout the United States, and in the Third District of Illinois, the VFW has worked tirelessly to improve our communities and support the needs of our war veterans. The VFW has repeatedly advocated for better medical care and benefits for veterans, and has been instrumental in the funding efforts for our nation's war memorials.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Johnson-Phelps VFW Post #5220 of Oak Lawn, Illinois for this significant achievement. The members of the VFW have done a tremendous job serving and representing the third district of Illinois and I wish them all the best.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of November as National Family Caregivers Month, and to honor family caregivers in the Ninth Congressional District of Massachusetts and across the country.

Every day, millions of Americans dedicate their time, energy, and resources to care for their loved ones. In the last year, it is estimated that over 43 million adults—parents, children, siblings, spouses, friends, and neighbors—have provided unpaid care to an adult or child in need.

The tireless and selfless devotion of caregivers allows millions of Americans to live a full—and fulfilling—life. Many caregivers balance full-time careers and the many daily demands of modern life. Family caregivers provide an estimated $450 billion in care and immeasurable support every year. Studies show that this not only provides health benefits and increases the life expectancy of those cared for, but can also increase the life expectancy for the caregivers by an average of nine months. As the number of older Americans rises, so too, will the number of caregivers. It is critical that legislators, regulators, and the general public unite to provide them with the resources—and respect—they deserve.

As we take time this month to acknowledge the exceptional efforts of caregivers, I would like to make special note of the many organizations that advocate, develop best practice programs, and provide resources for millions of caregivers around the nation, including many in Massachusetts. The ARC of Greater Plymouth County, Friends Or Relatives With Autism and Related Disabilities (FORWARD), Alzheimer's Family Support Center of Cape Cod, Coastline Elderly, and Old Colony Elder Services are but a few of the instrumental organizations assisting caregivers in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Speaker, during National Family Caregivers Month, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the dedication of caregivers and to pledge our continued support for their selfless efforts.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN RHONDA R. POWELL

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Captain Rhonda Powell, a daughter of Metro Atlanta, for her extraordinary service to the nation while serving in the United States Army for the past 23 years.

Since the beginning of her career, Captain Powell exhibited a steadfast commitment and dedication to serving her country. A graduate of the University of Memphis and George Washington University, Captain Powell has been stationed in Fort Gillem, Fort Bragg, and is currently a congressional legislative liaison to the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve for the U.S. Department of Defense at the Pentagon.

While deployed in Doha, Qatar from 2006–2007, Captain Powell served as the detachment commander of the 312th Adjutant General Company in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to Camp As Sayliyah. Captain Powell exhibited strong operational planning and intelligence analysis, and assumed duties as the officer in charge (OIC) of the Quick Reaction Force element on Camp As Sayliyah. She not only supported the health, welfare, morale, and development of her assigned soldiers, but also led her team in rapid responses to threats and other developments on or near the base.

In her current role interfacing with the U.S. Congress, Captain Powell used her experience in military relations to establish the Soldiers and Leaders United Through Engagements (SALUTE) Program. This unique and timely initiative helps connect Members of Congress with issues and experiences facing American soldiers.

Upon her retirement next month, Captain Powell plans to return to her roots in Atlanta, where her parents still reside near Howell Mill Road, and to begin a new chapter of her life. Mr. Speaker, I join others in congratulating and thanking Captain Powell, for her service, perseverance, hard work, and contributions to our nation. I and the other residents of Georgia's 5th Congressional District are happy and proud to welcome her home.

TRIBUTE TO DR. BILLYE BROWN

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the first registered nurse elected to the U.S. Congress, I would like to take a moment to congratulate a remarkable woman for her remarkable devotion to the nursing community, as well as wish her a safe and happy 90th birthday.

Dr. Billye Brown graduated from nursing school at Arkansas Baptist Hospital in Little Rock and received a Bachelor's degree in Nursing Education from the University of Texas' Medical Branch School of Nursing at Galveston, Texas. She earned her Master's degree in Nursing Education from St. Louis University and a Doctor of Education degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Internationally recognized as a leader in education and administration, Dr. Billye J. Brown has been at the forefront of nursing for more than 30 years through her achievements as both professor and dean at the University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, and as a prominent leader in nursing's most distinguished professional organizations.

In 2013, the American Nurses Credentialing Center, a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association, awarded Billye its prestigious President's Award to honor her lifetime contributions to the nursing profession, including her support of original research in the 1980s that led to the establishment of ANCC's Magnet Recognition Program.

During her years at The University of Texas at Austin, Billye was dean and professor of the School of Nursing for 17 years. Billye's visionary approach to teaching and administration led to her appointment as the LaQuinta Motor Inns Centennial Professor in 1983 and her induction into the Hall of Fame at the University of Texas' School of Nursing at Galveston in 1992.

Her numerous professional awards and honors include being named Nurse of the Year by the Texas Nurses' Association; her selection as one of the Most Influential Women in Education by the Austin American Statesman; and resolutions passed by the State of Texas Senate and House of Representatives acknowledging her contributions to nursing.

At the national and international level, Billye is widely respected for her service as past president of both the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI). As chairman of the fundraising task force for STTI, Billye led a successful multi-year campaign that produced more than $7 million in planned gifts. She was honored by the AACN with the Sister Bernadette Armiger Award.

In 1999, STTI selected Billye for the Mary Tolle Wright Award for Excellence in Leadership and announced the formation of the Billye Brown Society to pay homage to her dedication to planned giving efforts that contribute to the advancement of scholarly nursing. She was recognized with the Nell J. Watts Lifetime Achievement in Nursing Award at the 2007 STTI Biennial Convention. Billye was recognized as the 2010 American Academy of Nursing Living Legend, and in 2011 she was selected to receive the prestigious National League for Nursing President's Award for an Enduring Legacy in Nursing Education.

Mr. Speaker, the only list more longer and more plentiful than the list of Billye's professional achievements is the list of people whose lives she has touched. She dedicated her life to nursing because it is a profession on the forefront of patient care, human interaction, and practiced compassion. Her work is selfless, but she is so humble, she would never even say that. Her life is for others, but today is for her. May the RECORD recognize Dr. Billye Brown's historic career and milestone birthday.

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Diabetes Month, during which we reflect on the importance of understanding, treating, and caring for this serious condition.

The diabetes endemic is a present and growing threat in today's society. Close to 30 million Americans have diabetes, while another 86 million are pre-diabetic. According to the Centers for Disease Control, if current trends continue, 1 in 3 Americans will have diabetes by 2050.

The economic burden of diabetes, pre-diabetes and the largely preventable chronic diseases resulting from diabetes costs the United States approximately $245 billion. Many of these costs are associated with diabetes-related complications, including kidney failure, blindness, and amputations. Diabetes is also a major cause of heart disease and stroke.

To address this problem, it is critical that we make investments in diabetes prevention, care, and treatment. In my district and throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, citizens are benefiting from the exceptional efforts of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the New England Office of the American Diabetes Association. These organizations are dedicated to raising awareness, providing support to patients and families, and funding promising diabetes research. Both of these organizations are also extraordinary advocates on behalf of families and individuals living with diabetes.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring November as National Diabetes Month and in supporting diabetes research and care.

AMERICAN LEGION POST 117 VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit a Veterans Day speech written and delivered by Mr. Don Hirst to American Legion Post 117 on Veterans Day 2015.

[From American Legion Post 117 Veterans Day Ceremony, Nov. 11, 2015]

AMERICAN LEGION POST 117 VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

(By Don Hirst)

Good morning and thank you all for coming to Post 117's Veterans Day Event.

Let me start of by asking for a show of hands, to include family members and surviving spouses. Please leave them up until I'm finished with a few brief questions, if you can.

How many of you are veterans of World War II? Of the Korean War? The Cold War? Vietnam? Grenada, Panama or similar actions? Desert Storm? Afghanistan? Iraq? Deployments to support any of those action or similar ones I've overlooked?

Now look around the room. Quite a lot of hands, right? Okay, please put them down and relax while I make a few observations and comments. Everyone who raised a hand is a veteran, or a significant part of a veteran's family. Some of you may even be both.

Today is Veterans Day, and that's why we're gathered here and in tens of thousands of other places across the nation and the world: to mark an important date in America's history. For us, it's a day that represents a whole lot more than big sales at the supermarket, shopping mall or car dealerships. Yeah, we all may take part in some of that, but we know to the core of our being that it's intended to honor those who served the nation and served it well. You're all part of that select group. Many of you bear scars, physical or otherwise, as a result of your service.

So what does it mean to be a veteran? In the minds of a lot of folks, a veteran is someone whose service is over, tour of duty ended. That's a long way from the truth. Especially in today's world, with all of the dangers and challenges that seem to be popping up everywhere. Kind of like a grim version of Whack-a-Mole.

As I sat writing this a couple of days ago, the news reports once again trumpeted more acts of violence against the nation's citizens. Two American trainers—civilians but working to help train police in Jordan, a U.S. ally headed by a courageous leader with extensive military experience and service—were gunned down in an apparent blue-on-blue attack. They were murdered by a Jordanian officer. This wasn't the first such case we've encountered in recent years and in different locations. It won't be the last, either. You can take that to the bank.

The list of incidents, both overseas and, increasingly, at home here in the United States, grows with each flip of the calendar page. Unless you're totally ignorant, oblivious or intellectually challenged—or a combination of all three—you sense with a growing feeling of foreboding that we are at war.

So what do we do about it?

This isn't the venue to get into partisan political discussions, something we're not supposed to do at official events since we're part of the American Legion and thus have nonprofit, tax-exempt status. We Legion members each have our own political beliefs, but we're a nonpartisan organization. We do our politicking informally, over a beer, and at the local precinct ballot box each election day. As an aside, I hope all of you voted on November 3 and repeat that civic duty in the coming year. Voting is a precious right. That right was earned by blood sacrifices of the past, and is kept alive by the sacrifices that will come.

But let's get back to the ''what do we do about it?'' part. The situation is serious—and getting worse. The historian in me says that we arguably haven't been in such perilous times since the 1930s. Back then we saw economic chaos, the rise of Nazi Germany, Japanese militarism and a continued avoidance of taking action by the great democracies of the world.

Finally, of course, we did act, winning a stunning, hard fought victory against the forces of pure evil. We won, and that's a fact beyond dispute. But we paid a much higher price for that victory by not acting sooner, when decisive action may well have saved millions from a horrible fate.

I think we're at such a crossroads today. Even a casual glance at the headlines shows how dangerous it is right now. And it's likely to get worse before it's over.

As the horizon grows darker, I believe it's a good idea to take stock of where we are, what assets we have and what we can do about it. I'm not advocating forming a militia of disgruntled, angry veterans or vigilante groups. But I am strongly urging us as free citizens, neighbors in the vibrant, close-knit communities of the Northern Neck, to stand up and stand together so that we are better prepared for what may come.

It's like insurance. You might not need it right this second, but when you do, it's too late to buy a policy after the flood waters reach the second floor of your home or the volunteer fire department battles the blaze threatening your house.

Now let me ask for one more show of hands. Are there any members of our local government, our sheriff's department or other similar agencies here today? Please raise your hands. And if there aren't any hands up, I expect that more than one person here today is acquainted with such folks and can help spread the word.

You saw a few minutes ago how many people raised their hands when I asked about prior military service. They're veterans. They're experienced. They've been in the tough places, done the tough jobs. And they're an extremely valuable asset that shouldn't be overlooked in future times of need. Those times could be months or years from now—or maybe never come. Or they could be this afternoon or tomorrow. Think Pearl Harbor. And 9–11.

So I urge the local authorities to reach out, to connect with us, the veterans who are your friends and neighbors. We're here, we're near—and we're something you should put in the emergency kit. This T-shirt I ordered [holds up T-shirt in front of the audience] came in the mail just in time for Veterans Day. Rather than wear it under my shirt, I wanted to use it to reinforce my point. I don't know if you all can see it, but the inscription on the back says,

VETERAN.
Don't Think Because My Time Has
Ended
That I Won't Suit Up Again &
Protect This Flag
Against Terrorism
On American Soil

I'd add protecting against other threats to the terrorism part, because that's what we can do, too.

At the dawn of the birth of our nation, a group of poorly armed patriots stood together at Concord Bridge to fight for their freedom against the might of the British army. Standing strong against great odds also is the theme of the epic poem ''Horatius at the Bridge'' written by English poet Thomas Babington Macaulay in 1842. The poem tells of a time in ancient Rome when the citizens wanted self-rule against kings and tried to hold the city against the king's attacking army. One bridge across the Tiber River had to be demolished by the defenders for the city to hold, but they needed time to do it.

Horatius, a valiant Roman soldier, and two stalwart comrades-in-arms, stood shoulder-to-shoulder at that bridge. They bought the time needed. It was Winston Churchill's favorite poem, and a few short verses tell you why:

Then out spake brave Horatius,
the Captain at the Gate.
''To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods.

So saddle up, fellow veterans. We've got a job to do. See you at the bridge!

IN RECOGNITION OF NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, since its designation in 1990, this month seeks to honor the influence of Native Americans in shaping American history, acknowledging the injustices wrought upon the many tribes, and looking forward so we can strive to forge a better future together for all.

As we prepare to celebrate the 394th anniversary of the first Thanksgiving in Plymouth, Massachusetts, so too should we pay tribute to the significant contributions of the original Americans. As some of the earliest inhabitants of this beautiful land, the Native Americans paved the way for future settlements by mastering skilled ways of farming, discovering natural medicines, and hunting.

Their contributions to our shared history continued through the centuries; they have served in the Armed Forces during times of war and peace. Most notably, we celebrate the service of the Navajo Code Talkers during World War II, who ensured that our vital communications could not be decrypted by the enemy. Native Americans are woven into the nation's fabric, having taught us new sports and craft such as lacrosse, canoeing, kayaking and snowshoeing, as well as provided our shared culture with celebrated athletes, musicians, dancers, politicians, and many more.

Mr. Speaker, Native American Heritage Month is an opportunity for us to reflect on the significant accomplishments of our proud Native American tribes—including the Wampanoag and Aquinnah tribes in my district. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing all Native American tribes across the nation for their indomitable spirit and remarkable achievements.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and observe November 25th as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Last week, I introduced House Resolution 519, which supports the ideals and goals of this day. November 25th is the start of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, which ends on December 10th—Human Rights Day.

Time and time again, in periods of conflict and natural disaster, the most unspeakable cruelties are inflicted on the bodies of women and children. Whether in the house or in conflict zones; whether by soldiers or by intimate partners—violence against women and girls is an ongoing cycle and a global threat which must be eliminated.

Violence against women and girls are public health issues and egregious violations of human rights. The facts are startling. Worldwide, 35 percent of women have experienced either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. 120 million girls worldwide have experienced sexual assault at some point in their lives. And according to the World Health Organization, women aged 15–44 are more at risk from rape and domestic violence, than cancer, car accidents, war, and malaria.

In addition, women and girls are disproportionately impacted by natural disasters. Displacement settings exacerbate preexisting inequalities, render women and girls even more vulnerable, and create greater barriers in their ability to benefit from relief, recovery, and long-term reconstruction and development efforts. As we saw during the humanitarian crises in the Philippines, Nepal, Haiti, and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, women and children are the most vulnerable populations to sexual violence and human trafficking.

Violence upon, and trafficking of, women are the worst kind of atrocities. As we have seen in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Liberian refugee camps, sexual violence was rampant. Today, ISIL forces are systematically raping and violating Yezidi women and girls. In addition, since the beginning of Syria's conflict, reports have revealed patterns of gender-based violence perpetrated by both regime and opposition forces. Sadly, rapes in the Syrian refugee camps have also been reported.

This violence must stop. Once and for all.

Mr. Speaker, whether on the battlefield or in post-disaster areas, in the household or workplace; whether in refugee camps or sexual enslavement camps—violence against women and children must be recognized and stopped around the world.

Even though we recognize November 25th as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we should fight every day to end this violence against human rights.

THE INSTALLATION OF BISHOP MICHAEL CURRY

HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as a lifelong Episcopalian, I am filled with pride over the installation of Bishop Michael Curry, the first African-American leader of the U.S. Episcopal Church. His historic election comes at a challenging time in history for both the nation and the church. In response, Bishop Curry has valiantly pledged to take up ''the serious work of racial reconciliation'' in his new role and to strive for the ''beloved community,'' envisioned by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. At a time when all denominations are struggling to rebuild declining memberships, his focus on both evangelism and inclusion marks an exciting new chapter for our church. I am supremely confident that he is up to both tasks.

I recently had the honor of welcoming to my Capitol Hill office the Right Rev. Peter Eaton, who is the new bishop coadjutor of the Episcopal Diocese in Southeast Florida. He met with me and our own House of Representatives chaplain, my friend, the Rev. Patrick J. Conroy. Bishop Eaton comes to us from St. John's Cathedral in Denver, Colorado, and I look forward to helping him get to know our church community.

May God shine His light on both Bishop Curry and Bishop Eaton as they embrace their new vocations.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM J. CALLAGHAN

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 19, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Mr. William ''Bill'' Callaghan. He passed away November 16, 2015, at the Veterans Affairs (VA) Central Iowa Health Care System. Bill was the son of John Francis ''Jack'' Callaghan. Jack was the founding Director of the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy and longtime servant to the people of Iowa and Nebraska in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Bill carried on this tradition of service to our nation entering the Army in 1970 serving in the 4th Infantry Division in the Vietnam War. After serving in Vietnam, Bill came back to Omaha to earn his Juris Doctor (JD) at Creighton Law School. He served as a Prosecuting Attorney in Webster City and Ottumwa, IA before becoming the Law Instructor at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in 1984, where he served for 26 years impacting the lives of thousands of officers through his Iowa Criminal Code and United States Code classes.

Bill married Jeanette Wagner in 1985 and they were blessed with a son, John R. Callaghan. Both Jeanette and John R. survive him. Jeanette is a retired music teacher and John, following in his father's footsteps, is a Sergeant in the 4th Infantry Division of the United States Army, stationed at Ft. Carson, CO.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by Mr. William J. Callaghan and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent great Iowans like Bill in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives will join me in honoring his memory.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 95, Adjournment Resolution.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S8113–S8180

Measures Introduced: Twenty-seven bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2305–2331, S. Res. 319–321, and S. Con. Res. 25. **Pages S8159–60**

Measures Passed:

Surface Transportation Extension Act: Senate passed H.R. 3996, to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund. **Page S8126**

Program Management Improvement Accountability Act: Senate passed S. 1550, to amend title 31, United States Code, to establish entities tasked with improving program and project management in certain Federal agencies, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, and the following amendment proposed thereto: **Pages S8171–73**

McConnell (for Ernst) Amendment No. 2873, relative to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016. **Page S8172**

National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act: Senate passed S. 2328, to reauthorize and amend the National Sea Grant College Program Act. **Pages S8173–74**

Drive Safer Sunday: Senate agreed to S. Res. 319, designating November 29, 2015, as "Drive Safer Sunday". **Pages S8174–75**

Adjournment Resolution: Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 95, providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate. **Page S8175**

National Entrepreneurs' Day: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 314, expressing support for designation of the third Tuesday in November as "National Entrepreneurs' Day", and the resolution was then agreed to. **Page S8175**

Measures Considered:

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act: Senate continued consideration of H.R. 2577, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S8119–24, S8126**

Pending:

Collins/Reed Amendment No. 2812, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S8119**

Collins/Reed Amendment No. 2813 (to Amendment No. 2812), to make a technical amendment. **Page S8119**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion to invoke cloture on Collins/Reed Amendment No. 2812 (listed above), be withdrawn. **Page S8126**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that the motion to invoke cloture on the bill, be withdrawn. **Page S8126**

House Messages:

Improving Access to Emergency Psychiatric Care Act: Senate concurred in the amendment of the House to S. 599, to extend and expand the Medicaid emergency psychiatric demonstration project. **Page S8175**

Appointments:

Congressional Award Board: The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to Public Law 96–114, as amended, appointed the following individual to the Congressional Award Board: Karlos R. LaSane II of Nevada. **Page S8170**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

By a unanimous vote of 95 yeas (Vote No. EX. 309), Peter William Bodde, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to Libya. **Pages S8135, S8179–80**

Elisabeth I. Millard, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Tajikistan. **Pages S8135, S8179–80**

Marc Jonathan Sievers, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. **Pages S8135, S8179–80**

Deborah R. Malac, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Uganda. **Pages S8135, S8179–80**

Lisa J. Peterson, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Swaziland. **Pages S8135, S8179–80**

H. Dean Pittman, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Mozambique. **Pages S8135, S8179–80**

Derek Tai-Ching Kan, of California, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of five years.

8 Coast Guard nominations in the rank of admiral.

Routine lists in the Coast Guard.

Shelly Colleen Lowe, of Arizona, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2018.

Steven M. Wellner, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

William Ward Nooter, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

Juan Carlos Iturregui, of Maryland, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation for a term expiring June 26, 2020.

Luis A. Viada, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation for a term expiring September 20, 2018.

Diane Helen Rodriguez, of California, to be a Member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2018.

Francine Berman, of New York, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2020.

Patricia Nelson Limerick, of Colorado, to be a Member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2018.

Ann Calvaresi Barr, of Maryland, to be Inspector General, United States Agency for International Development.

Victoria A. Lipnic, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2020.

Michael Herman Michaud, of Maine, to be Assistant Secretary of Labor for Veterans' Employment and Training. **Pages S8170–71, H8179–80**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Georgette Mosbacher, of New York, to be a Member of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2018.

Phillip H. Cullom, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

Daniel B. Maffei, of New York, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner for a term expiring June 30, 2017.

Swati A. Dandekar, of Iowa, to be United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, with the rank of Ambassador.

Harry R. Hoglander, of Massachusetts, to be a Member of the National Mediation Board for a term expiring July 1, 2017.

Patrick Pizzella, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years expiring July 1, 2020.

88 Air Force nominations in the rank of general.

2 Army nominations in the rank of general.

Routine lists in the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Foreign Service, and Navy. **Pages S8176–79**

Messages from the House: **Page S8157**

Measures Referred: **Page S8158**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Page S8158**

Measures Read the First Time: **Page S8158**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Page S8158**

Executive Communications: **Pages S8158–59**

Petitions and Memorials: **Page S8159**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Page S8159**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S8160–62**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S8162–67**

Additional Statements: **Pages S8154–57**

Amendments Submitted: **Pages S8167–70**

Notices of Intent: **Page S8170**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S8170**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—309) **Page S8135**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned, pursuant to the provisions of H. Con. Res. 95, at 6:34 p.m., until 3 p.m. on Monday, November 30, 2015. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on pages S8175–76.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

NOMINATIONS

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nominations of Alissa M. Starzak, of New York, to be General Counsel of the Department of the Army, Franklin R. Parker, of Illinois, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, John Conger, of Maryland, to be a Principal Deputy Under Secretary, and Stephen P. Welby, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary, all of the Department of Defense, after the nominees testified and answered questions in their own behalf.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 329, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain segments of the Farmington River and Salmon Brook in the State of Connecticut as components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, with an amendment;

S. 556, to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 782, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a bison management plan for Grand Canyon National Park;

S. 1583, to authorize the expansion of an existing hydroelectric project, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1592, to clarify the description of certain Federal land under the Northern Arizona Land Exchange and Verde River Basin Partnership Act of 2005 to include additional land in the Kaibab National Forest;

S. 1694, to amend Public Law 103–434 to authorize Phase III of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project for the purposes of improving water management in the Yakima River basin, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1941 and H.R. 2223, bills to authorize, direct, expedite, and facilitate a land exchange in El Paso and Teller Counties, Colorado;

S. 1942 and H.R. 1554, bills to require a land conveyance involving the Elkhorn Ranch and the White River National Forest in the State of Colorado;

S. 2046, to authorize the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to issue an order continuing a stay of a hydroelectric license for the Mahoney Lake hydroelectric project in the State of Alaska;

S. 2069, to amend the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 to modify provisions relating to certain land exchanges in the Mt. Hood Wilderness in the State of Oregon, with amendments;

S. 2083, to extend the deadline for commencement of construction of a hydroelectric project;

H.R. 373, to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions;

H.R. 1324, to adjust the boundary of the Arapaho National Forest, Colorado; and

The nominations of Suzette M. Kimball, of West Virginia, to be Director of the United States Geological Survey, Department of the Interior, and Victoria Marie Baecher Wassmer, of Illinois, to be Under Secretary, John Francis Kotek, of Idaho, to be an Assistant Secretary (Nuclear Energy), and Cherry Ann Murray, of Kansas, to be Director of the Office of Science, all of the Department of Energy.

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy concluded a hearing to examine democratic transitions in Southeast Asia, after receiving testimony from Scott Busby, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and James Carouso, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Maritime and Mainland Southeast Asian Affairs, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, both of the Department of State; Mark Green, International Republican Institute, and Murray Hiebert, Center for Strategic and International Studies, both of Washington, D.C.; and Kelley Currie, Project 2049 Institute, Arlington, Virginia.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations concluded a hearing to examine human trafficking, after receiving testimony from Washington Deputy Attorney General Darwin P. Roberts, Olympia; and Yiota G. Souras, The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Alexandria, Virginia.

IMPACT OF ISIS AND REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the impact of ISIS on the homeland and refugee resettlement, after receiving testimony from Anne C. Richard, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of

Population, Refugees, and Migration; Leon Rodriguez, Director, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security; Peter Bergen, New America, and Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, Foundation for Defense of Democracies, both of Washington, D.C.; Brian Michael Jenkins, RAND Corporation, and Lavinia Limon, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, both of Arlington, Virginia; and Eric P. Schwartz, University of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs, Minneapolis.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 47 public bills, H.R. 4079–4126; and 11 resolutions, H.J. Res. 74; H. Con. Res. 95–99; and H. Res. 534–438, were introduced. **Pages H8409–12**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H8414–15**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 3842, to improve homeland security, including domestic preparedness and response to terrorism, by reforming Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers to provide training to first responders, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–343, Part 1);

H.R. 2899, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Office for Countering Violent Extremism, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–344);

H.R. 3490, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the National Computer Forensics Institute, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–345, Part 1);

S. 611, to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to reauthorize technical assistance to small public water systems, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 114–346);

H.R. 8, to modernize energy infrastructure, build a 21st century energy and manufacturing workforce, bolster America's energy security and diplomacy, and promote energy efficiency and government accountability, and for other purposes, with an amendment (H. Rept. 114–347, Part 1);

H.J. Res. 71, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from New, Modified, and Reconstructed Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units'' (H. Rept. 114–348); and

H.J. Res. 72, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to Carbon Pollution Emission Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units'' (H. Rept. 114–349). **Page H8409**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Simpson to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H8365**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by voice vote. **Pages H8365, H8400**

FORM Act of 2015: The House passed H.R. 3189, to amend the Federal Reserve Act to establish requirements for policy rules and blackout periods of the Federal Open Market Committee, to establish requirements for certain activities of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and to amend title 31, United States Code, and to reform the manner in which the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System is audited, by a recorded vote of 241 ayes to 185 noes, Roll No. 641. Consideration began yesterday, November 18th. **Pages H8378–81**

Rejected the Matsui motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 182 ayes to 242 noes, Roll No. 640. **Pages H8378–80**

H. Res. 529, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1210) and (H.R. 3189) was agreed to yesterday, November 18th.

American SAFE Act of 2015: The House passed H.R. 4038, to require that supplemental certifications and background investigations be completed prior to the admission of certain aliens as refugees, by a recorded vote of 289 ayes to 137 noes, Roll No. 643. **Pages H8381–H8400**

Rejected the Thompson (MS) motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 180 yeas to 244 nays, Roll No. 642. **Pages H8397–99**

H. Res. 531, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4038) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 242 ayes to 183 noes, Roll No. 639, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 243 yeas to 182 nays, Roll No. 638.

Pages H8367–78

Committee on Ways and Means—Communication: Read a letter from Chairman Brady (TX) wherein he notified the House, pursuant to Section 8002 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, in order to fill the House majority vacancy on the Joint Committee on Taxation created by the resignation of the Hon. Paul D. Ryan from the Committee, Representative Nunes has been designated to serve on the Committee. **Page H8400**

Adjournment Resolution: The House agreed to H. Con. Res. 95, providing for an conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

Page H8402

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 5 p.m. on Friday, November 20th, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in H. Con. Res. 95, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution. **Page H8402**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate today appears on page H8400.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H8377–78, H8378, H8379–80, H8380–81, H8399, and H8399–H8400. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9:30 a.m. and at 3:19 p.m., the House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Monday, November 30, 2015, pursuant to H. Con. Res. 95.

Committee Meetings

ADVANCING THE SCIENCE AND ACCEPTANCE OF AUTONOMY FOR FUTURE DEFENSE SYSTEMS

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities held a hearing entitled Advancing the Science and Acceptance of Autonomy for Future Defense Systems''. Testimony was heard from Greg L. Zacharias, Chief Scientist of the U.S. Air Force; Frank Kelley, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Unmanned Systems; and Jonathan Bornstein, Chief, Autonomous System Division, Vehicle Technology Directorate, U.S. Army Research Laboratory.

U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS FOR SEASONAL INFLUENZA: HAS THE RESPONSE IMPROVED?

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled U.S. Public Health Preparedness for Seasonal Influenza: Has the Response Improved?''. Testimony was heard from Anne Schuchat, Principal Deputy Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Karen Midthun, Director, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, Food and Drug Administration; Robin Robinson, Director, Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, Department of Health and Human Services; and Carole Heilman, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Division of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health.

THE DISRUPTER SERIES: THE FAST-EVOLVING USES AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF DRONES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade held a hearing entitled The Disrupter Series: The Fast-Evolving Uses and Economic Impacts of Drones''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF THE FINANCIAL STABILITY OVERSIGHT COUNCIL: DUE PROCESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN NO-BANK SIFI DESIGNATIONS

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled Oversight of the Financial Stability Oversight Council: Due Process and Transparency in Non-Bank SIFI Designations''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

THE GOLDMAN ACT TO RETURN ABDUCTED AMERICAN CHILDREN: ENSURING ADMINISTRATION ACTION

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled The Goldman Act to Return Abducted American Children: Ensuring Administration Action''. Testimony was heard from Michele Thoren Bond, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Department of State; and public witnesses.

THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT ON THE SECURITY OF THE U.S. REFUGEE ADMISSIONS PROGRAM

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security held a hearing entitled

The Syrian Refugee Crisis and Its Impact on the Security of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program''. Testimony was heard from Anne C. Richard, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Department of State; Leon Rodriguez, Director, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services; and public witnesses.

IMPROVING SIZE STANDARDS FOR SMALL FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Committee on Small Business: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Energy and Trade held a hearing entitled Improving Size Standards for Small Farmers and Ranchers''. Testimony was heard from Representative Bost; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT CONFERENCE

Conferees agreed to file a conference report on the differences between the Senate and House passed versions of **S.** 1177, to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves, with amendments.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2015

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

3 p.m., Monday, November 30

Senate Chamber

Program for Monday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 5 p.m.), Senate will begin consideration of the nomination of Gayle Smith, of Ohio, to be Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2 p.m., Monday, November 30

House Chamber

Program for Monday: House will meet at 2 p.m. for legislative business.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

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Blumenauer, Earl, Ore., E1653
Bordallo, Madeleine Z., Guam, E1660
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Buck, Ken, Colo., E1662
Byrne, Bradley, Ala., E1658
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Cartwright, Matt, Pa., E1655, E1661
Chaffetz, Jason, Utah, E1659
Coffman, Mike, Colo., E1657
Cohen, Steve, Tenn., E1657
Cook, Paul, Calif., E1664
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Farenthold, Blake, Tex., E1653
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Kelly, Trent, Miss., E1663
Langevin, James R., R.I., E1659
Lewis, John, Ga., E1668
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