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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: God of mercy, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Bless the Members of the people's House as they depart the Nation's Capital to return to their homes. May they find rest and renewal during their time with family and friends.

Bless our Nation as holy days of religious traditions for so many of our citizens approach and as the year

comes to a close. Help us to look to the future with hope, committed to a renewed effort to work together as citizens of a united America.

Help us all to be truly grateful for the blessings of this past year.

As always, we pray that whatever is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois 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.

NOTICE

If the 114th Congress, 1st Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 24, 2015, a final issue of the *Congressional Record* for the 114th Congress, 1st Session, will be published on Thursday, December 31, 2015, to permit Members to insert statements.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT-59 or S-123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through Wednesday, December 30. The final issue will be dated Thursday, December 31, 2015, and will be delivered on Monday, January 4, 2016.

None of the material printed in the final issue of the *Congressional Record* may contain subject matter, or relate to any event, that occurred after the sine die date.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

GREGG HARPER, *Chairman*.

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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H10693

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

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

CONGRESS MUST STOP THE
SUFFERING

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

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as Americans celebrate Christmas, millions of families will have an empty chair at the table for a relative who is lost in our failed mental health system or one of the more than 80,000 mentally ill who died this year.

They suffer from a brain disease of serious mental illness, but they also suffer from Federal policies stopping them from getting treatment: Medicaid rules that say you can't see two doctors on the same day, you can't go to a psychiatric hospital with more than 16 beds, and perverse priorities of the right to be sick instead of the right to be well.

Mr. Speaker, this holiday season, let us give our families a gift of hope. Members should cosponsor H.R. 2646, the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, and let compassion dictate. We must stop the suffering, stop the congressional delays, and finally take action because where there is no help, there is no hope.

A YEAR OF ACTION AND
PROGRESS

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have spent the past year working with Illinois families to see how we could make this year a year of action and progress for Second District families. Keeping that in mind, I wanted to end this year on a high note by providing a brief snapshot on the state of my district on the education and economic front.

This year, I donated over 1,000 books to Second District's school libraries, even as we faced a tough State budget crisis. Illinois students should have the best educational resources possible, and I am working with my community to ensure just that. I also kicked off my "Robin's Readers" reading challenge. More than 3,000 kids participated, reading over 20,000 books in a 10-week period.

On the economic front, I held my third annual job fair, where I connected 500 jobseekers with 70 businesses looking to hire. We also held our second job and resource fair for our youth, as well as a veterans event.

This is just a sample of the work we were able to accomplish, and I look forward to continuing our success in the new year.

Happy holidays.

OBAMACARE DESTROYS JOBS

(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, last Monday, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office confirmed what we have seen for the last 5 years: ObamaCare destroys jobs.

Over the next 10 years, ObamaCare is expected to significantly reduce American work hours, destroying nearly 2 million jobs. The impact will also reduce America's workforce by nearly 1 percent.

The cause is clear. Workers cannot afford the excessive mandates and changes in tax rates. ObamaCare not only hurts wallets by increasing premiums, but it also hurts workers by destroying jobs. Last month, we learned that major insurance companies, like UnitedHealthcare, may not remain in the exchanges because of high costs. ObamaCare is unsustainable.

We have seen time and time again how ObamaCare has harmed jobs and families. Its architect, Jonathan Gruber, admitted that it was built on "the stupidity of the American voter." We must repeal it and replace this broken law with patient-centered solutions.

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

CONGRATULATING EAST
NICOLAUS HIGH SCHOOL ON
GOING TO THE STATE AA CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to your attention East Nicolaus High School. I suspect all of you are aware of this. I see my colleague from my bordering district, to the north of me, who went to Biggs High School, which was the rival of East Nicolaus High School.

East Nicolaus High School is going to the State AA championships in San Diego. Congratulations to them.

To all of you, be aware: there are less than 250 students in this school, and they are tough.

TAX RATE EXTENDERS HAVE
POSITIVE ECONOMIC EFFECTS

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Merry Christmas to the East Nicolaus Spartans from the Biggs Wolverines. Congratulations this year.

Mr. Speaker, the tax credit package we have passed will not only lower taxes for families across the Nation, it will spur more investment and growth by small businesses and farms, like in my northern California district.

For too long, Americans have had to wait until the last few days of each year to find out under which laws they will be taxed and at what rates. If the Senate will join us, this package will end that vicious cycle, and Americans can finally make financial decisions with greater stability to plan for the future.

We have supported education through tax credits for students and teachers, and we have increased protections to rein in the IRS.

Particularly important components for the First District are provisions that allow farmers, ranchers, as well as mining operations, timber operators, and construction contractors to make informed decisions about how they can buy new equipment for the coming years and how it will be taxed.

Families and businesses have been asking and begging for us to have the stability and predictability in what their tax rates are going to be. I am very happy that we were able to get this done, and I urge the Senate to also get that done so we can have predictability in tax rates and go about our business.

FUNDING FOR NEUROSCIENCE

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

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, over 50 million Americans suffer from a neurological disease or disorder, over 1 billion worldwide. I authored language that created an interagency working group that brought together dozens of federal agencies years ago, and we have laid out a map, a plan, over the last 4 years now including mapping the human brain with the BRAIN Initiative and funding a host of specific efforts.

I am so pleased that the bill that we will pass today will have a historic level of funding for neuroscience, over \$7 billion in efforts at the National Institutes of Health, a historic investment at the National Science Foundation, and now we have brought together our national labs to create a national brain observatory.

I want to thank my colleague from Oklahoma, TOM COLE, for working with me as the chair of our Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies. And in my role on the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, there is so much more for us to do. But I am convinced that if we have the mind to work, we, indeed, can rebuild the walls.

RECOGNIZING THE GIRLS VARSITY VOLLEYBALL TEAM AT CHEROKEE TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL IN AURORA, COLORADO, FOR WINNING THE 5A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the girls varsity volleyball team of Cherokee Trail High School in Aurora, Colorado, on winning the 2015 Colorado 5A State championship game on November 14, 2015.

The students and staff who were a part of the title-winning Cougar team deserve the utmost respect and commendation for winning in what has been a season full of challenges. Following the tragic death of one of their players, Celeste James, and a serious injury to another, Amazing Ashby, the Cherokee Trail Cougars showed courage in the face of true adversity to complete a title-winning season which honored their teammates.

These volleyball players were led to the championship title through the extraordinary leadership of their head coach, Terry Miller, and his hard-working staff.

It is with great pride that I join all of the residents of Aurora, Colorado, in congratulating the Cherokee Trail Cougars on their State championship.

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. PETERS. Albuquerque, New Mexico, January 19, 2013:

Jael Griego, 5 years old.

Angelina Griego, 2 years old.

Greenwood, Minnesota, September 17, 2015:

Karen Short, 48 years old.

Cole Short, 17.

Madison Short, 15.

Brooklyn Short, 14.

Bell, Florida, September 18, 2014:

Sara Spirit, 28 years old.

Kaleb Kuhlmann, 11 years old.

Kylie Kuhlmann, 9 years old.

Johnathon Kuhlmann, 8.

Brandon Stewart, 4.

Destiny Stewart, 5.

Alanna Stewart, 3 months old.

Federal Way, Washington, April 21, 2013:

Roland Scobee, 62 years old.

Bradley Fischer, 47.

Justine Baez, 24.

Cesar A. Valdovinos, 23.

Spanish Fork, Utah, January 16, 2014:

Marie King, 55 years old.

Kelly Boren, 32.

Joshua Boren, 7.

Haley Boren, 5.

CONGRATULATING CLINCH COUNTY PANTHERS

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Clinch County High School football team. Last Friday night, the Clinch County Panthers faced off against the Irwin County Indians for the Georgia Class A Public State Championship.

Early in the game, both teams were well matched, with both scoring touchdowns in the first quarter. However, the Panthers scored a second touchdown early in the second quarter and never looked back.

In total, the Panthers racked up 292 rushing yards in the 24-7 win. This was the sixth title in the school's history and the first since winning it in 2010.

I commend Coach Dickerson and the Clinch County Panthers for a great season. You deserve it.

REMEMBERING LILLIAN VERNON

(Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, Lillian Vernon, a woman who personified the American Dream and inspired generations of girls and boys, passed away this week.

Lillian was born Lilli Menasche in Leipzig, Germany, in 1927. Her family arrived here in 1937 after fleeing the new Nazi regime. She attended NYU for a couple of years before leaving to get married. And shortly after her nuptials, the newly pregnant Lillian gathered together what little wedding money she had to start a mail order business from her home in Mount Vernon, New York. She took the name Vernon as her own, and the Lillian Vernon Company was born.

She put an advertisement in "Seventeen" magazine for a personalized purse and belt for \$5; and within weeks, she had \$34,000 dollars in orders.

By 1970, Lillian Vernon had her first million-dollar year. A few decades later, she had nine catalogues, 15 outlet stores, two Web sites, a business-to-business division, and yearly revenue close to \$300 million.

She was a role model for women. She started her company when working mothers were often criticized and female entrepreneurs could rarely get credit. But undeterred, she persevered.

She was also a trailblazer outside the business world and was known for her charity and her devotion to so many causes, including her dedication to the Lillian Vernon Foundation, which supports the U.S. Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, Literacy Volunteers of America, and a number of other charities. In 2011, Vernon was honored with the Project Sunshine Award for Philanthropic Leadership and was appointed by President Clinton as chairwoman of the National Women's Business Council in 1995.

Above all, she was a mother. She was dedicated to her two sons, David and

Fred, both of whom worked in the family business with her.

I had the pleasure of meeting Lillian throughout the years. And I can say that even a reading of her accolades and accomplishments would fail to give a sense of just how special this wonderful woman truly was.

We have lost a great American, and she will be sorely missed.

□ 0915

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise for a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CURBELO of Florida). The gentlewoman will state her parliamentary inquiry.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is facing a dire economic crisis, and our fellow Americans who live there need our help.

Just now, I introduced the Puerto Rico Emergency Financial Stability Act, a bill that provides Puerto Rico some critical, temporary breathing room from creditor lawsuits until Congress acts.

Puerto Rico urgently needs this respite while Congress considers restructuring legislation—legislation to provide the 3.5 million U.S. citizens that call Puerto Rico home the tools they need to comprehensively address the territory's unsustainable debt burden.

Mr. Speaker, my parliamentary inquiry is: Is it in order for this bill to be considered and voted on by this House right now by unanimous consent?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under guidelines consistently issued by successive Speakers, as recorded in section 956 of the House Rules and Manual, the Chair will not entertain a unanimous consent request for the consideration of a measure unless it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and committee leaderships.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, that only adds to the urgency of our acting by March 31, 2016, as the Speaker indicated. He also indicated that hearings on this important legislation would begin on our first day back.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 2 of House Resolution 566 and clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Concurring in the Senate amendment to H.R. 2029 with the House amendment specified in section 3(a) of House Resolution 566; and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 2241, if ordered.

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

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on concurring in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2029) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes, with the House amendment specified in section 3(a) of House Resolution 566, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on concurring in the Senate amendment with an amendment.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 316, nays 113, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 705]

YEAS—316

Adams	Cramer	Honda
Aderholt	Crenshaw	Hoyer
Aguiar	Crowley	Huffman
Allen	Culberson	Huizenga (MI)
Ashford	Cummings	Hurd (TX)
Barr	Curbelo (FL)	Israel
Barton	Davis (CA)	Issa
Bass	Davis, Danny	Jackson Lee
Beatty	Davis, Rodney	Jeffries
Benishek	DeFazio	Jenkins (WV)
Bera	DeGette	Johnson (OH)
Beyer	Delaney	Jolly
Bilirakis	DeLauro	Joyce
Bishop (GA)	DelBene	Kaptur
Bishop (MI)	Denham	Katko
Bishop (UT)	Dent	Keating
Blumenauer	DeSaulnier	Kelly (IL)
Bonamici	Deutch	Kelly (MS)
Bost	Diaz-Balart	Kilmer
Boustany	Dingell	Kind
Boyle, Brendan	Dold	King (NY)
F.	Donovan	Kinzinger (IL)
Brady (PA)	Doyle, Michael	Kirkpatrick
Brady (TX)	F.	Kline
Brooks (IN)	Duckworth	Knight
Brown (FL)	Duffy	Kuster
Brownley (CA)	Edwards	Langevin
Buchanan	Ellmers (NC)	Larsen (WA)
Bucshon	Engel	Larson (CT)
Burgess	Eshoo	Lawrence
Bustos	Esty	Lee
Butterfield	Farr	Levin
Calvert	Fattah	Lewis
Capps	Fitzpatrick	Lipinski
Capuano	Fleischmann	LoBiondo
Cárdenas	Flores	Loebsack
Carson (IN)	Foster	Loudermilk
Carter (GA)	Fox	Love
Carter (TX)	Frankel (FL)	Lowenthal
Cartwright	Frelinghuysen	Lowe
Castor (FL)	Fudge	Lucas
Castro (TX)	Gabbard	Luetkemeyer
Chabot	Garamendi	Lujan Grisham
Chaffetz	Gibson	(NM)
Chu, Judy	Graham	Luján, Ben Ray
Cicilline	Granger	(NM)
Clark (MA)	Graves (GA)	Lynch
Clarke (NY)	Graves (MO)	MacArthur
Clay	Grayson	Maloney,
Cleaver	Green, Al	Carolyn
Clyburn	Green, Gene	Maloney, Sean
Coffman	Grothman	Marchant
Cohen	Guthrie	Matsui
Cole	Hahn	McCarthy
Collins (GA)	Hanna	McCaul
Collins (NY)	Harper	McCollum
Comstock	Hartzler	McGovern
Conaway	Hastings	McHenry
Connolly	Heck (WA)	McMorris
Conyers	Hensarling	Rodgers
Cook	Herrera Beutler	McNerney
Cooper	Higgins	McSally
Costa	Hill	Meeks
Costello (PA)	Himes	Meng
Courtney	Hinojosa	Messer

Mica	Rice (NY)
Miller (MI)	Rice (SC)
Moolenaar	Richmond
Moore	Rigell
Moulton	Rogers (KY)
Mullin	Rokita
Murphy (FL)	Rooney (FL)
Murphy (PA)	Ros-Lehtinen
Nadler	Roskam
Napolitano	Ross
Neal	Rouzer
Neugebauer	Roybal-Allard
Newhouse	Royce
Noem	Ruiz
Nolan	Ruppersberger
Norcross	Rush
Nugent	Russell
Nunes	Ryan (OH)
O'Rourke	Ryan (WI)
Olson	Sánchez, Linda
Palazzo	T.
Pallone	Sanchez, Loretta
Pascrell	Sarbanes
Paulsen	Scalise
Payne	Schakowsky
Pearce	Schiff
Pelosi	Scott (VA)
Perlmutter	Scott, Austin
Peters	Scott, David
Peterson	Sensenbrenner
Pingree	Serrano
Pittenger	Sessions
Pitts	Sewell (AL)
Poe (TX)	Sherman
Poliquin	Shimkus
Price (NC)	Simpson
Price, Tom	Sinema
Quigley	Sires
Rangel	Slaughter
Reed	Smith (NJ)
Reichert	Smith (WA)
Renacci	Speier
Ribble	Stefanik

NAYS—113

Abraham	Grijalva
Amash	Guinta
Amodei	Gutiérrez
Babin	Hardy
Barletta	Harris
Becerra	Heck (NV)
Black	Hice, Jody B.
Blackburn	Holding
Blum	Hudson
Brat	Huelskamp
Bridenstine	Hultgren
Brooks (AL)	Hunter
Buck	Hurt (VA)
Byrne	Jenkins (KS)
Carney	Johnson (GA)
Clawson (FL)	Johnson, Sam
Crawford	Jones
DeSantis	Jordan
DesJarlais	Kelly (PA)
Doggett	King (IA)
Duncan (SC)	Labrador
Duncan (TN)	LaHood
Ellison	LaMalfa
Emmer (MN)	Lamborn
Farenthold	Lance
Fleming	Latta
Forbes	Lieu, Ted
Fortenberry	Lofgren
Franks (AZ)	Long
Gallego	Lummis
Garrett	Marino
Gibbs	Massie
Gohmert	McClintock
Goodlatte	McDermott
Gosar	McKinley
Gowdy	Meadows
Graves (LA)	Meehan
Griffith	Miller (FL)

NOT VOTING—5

Cuellar	Johnson, E. B.	Kildee
Fincher	Kennedy	

□ 0949

Messrs. SAM JOHNSON of Texas and SANFORD changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Ms. FUDGE changed her vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the second portion of the divided question was adopted.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, December 18th, I am not recorded on any votes because I was absent due to a death in the family.

If I had been present, I would have voted: “yea” on rollcall 705, on the Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 2029 with House Amendment Number 1—Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016.

Stated against:

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, on December 18, 2015 I missed a rollcall vote. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay” on rollcall No. 705 on Amendment No. 1 to the Senate Amendment of H.R. 2029 and providing for appropriations for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2016.

GLOBAL HEALTH INNOVATION ACT OF 2015

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill (H.R. 2241) to direct the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to submit to Congress a report on the development and use of global health innovations in the programs, projects, and activities of the Agency, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bills were signed by the Speaker on Thursday, December 17, 2015:

H.R. 2297, to prevent Hezbollah and associated entities from gaining access to international financial and other institutions, and for other purposes;

H.R. 2820, to reauthorize the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005, and for other purposes;

H.R. 3831, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend the annual comment period for payment rates under Medicare Advantage;

S. 1090, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide eligibility for broadcasting facilities to receive certain disaster assistance, and for other purposes.

THANK YOU TO STAFF AND JO-MARIE ST. MARTIN

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, this has been a busy month for all of us. We have passed more major legislation in a few weeks than we have in a few years. And now I want to thank all of the people who made it possible. I am talking about all the committee staff and all the people behind the scenes here in the Capitol who make this work. Thank you very, very much.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, this includes, of course, our legislative counsel. I don't think you could find a group of people more dedicated to their jobs. These people work late nights every night. They work weekends. They are always on call.

So I want to put into the RECORD a statement thanking every one of them by name. They were a part of history, and history should know their names.

I also want to thank one person in particular, and that is Jo-Marie St. Martin. Today is Jo-Marie's last day on the Hill. She has been working for this House for over 20 years, most recently as general counsel and chief of legislative operations for the Speaker. I could not even begin to list everything that she has accomplished.

We all know her so well. She is a legend in her own right. But as her colleagues will tell you, what is even more impressive than her career is her character. She is simply unflappable. When everyone else is on edge, she is calm. When they are flustered—and, believe it or not, some people get flustered around here from time to time—she is steady.

And though other people might like to show off their brains and their know-how, she is the definition of kindness, of humility. I have never heard her dismiss a question, no matter how small. She is always eager to help people understand. And her enthusiasm is nothing short of infectious. You can see it when she walks into a room. She has an effect on people. Everyone feels more at ease. The word that comes to mind is Zen—except, of course, when she is at a Caps game.

She knows the law backwards and forwards because she loves the law. She cares about the law. She cares about this House. For over 20 years, she has done her part to uphold its rights, to make sure that every voice was heard. Everyone here owes her a debt of gratitude.

If I could use an old-fashioned word, I would say she is a true patriot. We salute her.

So please join me one last time in thanking our friend Jo-Marie St. Martin.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of those who have been flustered by Jo-Marie.

Jo-Marie, as all of you know, has been with this institution for over two decades. She started as an intern in the Committee on Rules, unfortunately, because she got to know the rules very, very well.

And as majority leader for 4 years, as Jo-Marie ran the opposition—the constructive opposition, I will say, the friendly opposition but, nevertheless, the opposition—her intellect, her judgment, her tenacity, her focus was always a challenge. But it has always been good for this institution, because she made sure that the minority was heard. Unfortunately, for us, she has also made sure that the majority was loudly heard when the Republicans were in the majority.

Jo-Marie, as some of you know, is a mathematician by training. She is also a lawyer. She is also a scholar. She is also somebody who cares deeply about this institution.

Jo-Marie is my friend. Now, that does not mean that Jo-Marie and I always had an even-keeled relationship. Sometimes, as I said, she flustered me and us by her skill and by her devotion and loyalty to the Republican Party. But more than that, as the Speaker has said, she had a loyalty to this institution and to our country.

Jo-Marie, you have been an extraordinary representative not only of your party, but of this House. You have been an extraordinary friend of mine and so many.

I know Alexis Covey-Brandt, my chief of staff, and you have worked together a lot. Sometimes you agreed, and sometimes you didn't. Two brilliant women who cared, however, about this institution and making it work for the people.

We call this the people's House. Jo-Marie, you have been one who has always kept that uppermost in your mind. We, on this side of the aisle, share a great respect and affection for you, and we wish you the very best. As a young woman, you still have a lot of contributions to make, and we know you will make them.

We have mixed emotions about your leaving. To some degree, frankly, we think we are advantaged by your leaving. But as an individual and as someone who is your dear, dear friend, I will lament your not being on the floor and ever present, for your advice and counsel, always honest; sometimes in opposition, but always positive. Thank you for all you have done.

God bless you.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

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

H.R. 4246. An act to exempt for an additional 4-year period, from the application of the means-test presumption of abuse under chapter 7, qualifying members of reserve components of the Armed Forces and mem-

bers of the National Guard who, after September 11, 2001, are called to active duty or to perform a homeland defense activity for not less than 90 days.

The message also announced that the Senate has agreed to without amend a joint resolution and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.J. Res. 76. Joint resolution appointing the day for the convening of the second session of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress.

H. Con. Res. 102. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2576. An act to modernize the Toxic Substances Control Act, and for other purposes.

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

S. 284. An act to impose sanctions with respect to foreign persons responsible for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, and for other purposes.

S. 2261. An act to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the way beneficiaries are assigned under the Medicare shared savings program by also basing such assignment on services furnished by Federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics.

□ 1000

CONGRATULATING PROSSER AND OKANOGAN HIGH SCHOOLS

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

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to congratulate two high school football teams that continue to establish central Washington as the football powerhouse of Washington State.

On December 5, the 13-1 Prosser Mustangs rolled over the Tumwater Thunderbirds to claim the Washington State 2A high school football championship. Led by a stellar defense, the Mustangs amassed four interceptions for the third time in the playoffs. This is Prosser's fifth State football championship.

Not to be outdone, the also 13-1 Okanogan High School Bulldogs pulled off an amazing nail-biter win, a win you usually only see in the movies. Rallying from a 27-14 third quarter deficit, the Bulldogs pulled off a late fourth-quarter touchdown to defeat the Napavine Tigers 36-34. This was Okanogan's second straight Washington State 2B high school football championship.

Both teams have proudly represented their schools and demonstrated a level of skill, teamwork, and tenacity that will prepare them well for future seasons and for future success in life.

Congratulations to both Prosser and Okanogan on well-played seasons.

HONORING OUR MILITARY

(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 recognize and honor all the brave men and women who have served and are currently serving our country today in the Armed Forces.

Today over 70,000 servicemembers are overseas protecting America and Americans. These men and women sacrifice their lives fighting wars overseas so that the wars don't come to our shores. This year many American families have endured the tragedies of war through the loss of their family members. We must never forget their service.

As we celebrate this holiday season, let us remember all of our military servicemembers and their families as they continue to serve our country and fight for our security and freedoms. Too many American soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and airwomen will be away from their families at this holiday season. I would like to express my gratitude for their service and wish them all happy holidays.

QUESTIONS FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to warn my colleagues and my constituents about the latest in a string of White House distractions that will not make Americans safer.

This time the President is reportedly planning to unilaterally establish new restrictions on private gun transactions, and he may act while Congress is out of session.

Mr. Speaker, the President knows he was elected to lead all Americans, even the ones he disagrees with. Thus, I call on him to answer the questions my House colleagues and I are sending to the White House on Monday:

First, consider that Washington Post fact-checkers have confirmed their agreement with the sad truth that none of the recent months' and years' major shootings would have been prevented by stricter gun control laws. Why would the President think his proposal would be any different?

Second, if this is good policy, why wasn't it included in the executive actions announced by the President in January 2013?

Our remaining questions ask whether the President relied on appropriate data to choose this executive order and how it would be enforced.

Mr. Speaker, this kind of secretive, unilateral action is not just wrong; it

results in bad policy. I call on the President to answer our letter as quickly as possible.

PROUD MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, this is the last day of the first session of the 114th Congress. I have served here for 9 years. I am proud to be a Member, and I look forward to continuing to be a Member in the future.

In the last 2 months of this year, we have gotten a lot accomplished by working together. The omnibus and tax extender bills weren't unanimous, but they got a majority of each caucus. I was proud to support each. We got a transportation and an education bill passed, which was very important.

This House does work. It worked under Speaker RYAN, working with Leader PELOSI. I thank all of the leaders and all of the people involved in getting these last two bills together and everyone who supported them.

I also thank the people for allowing me to be a Member of this House. I am proud to be a Member of the House of Representatives.

HUNTINGDON SALVATION ARMY FIRE/DONATIONS

(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, this is the season of giving. Today I rise in recognition of a community in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, which banded together after a fire destroyed the home of a local charity.

On the evening of December 12, flames ripped through the Huntingdon Salvation Army Church, destroying everything inside. Toys and clothes donated for the holiday season were left ruined by smoke and water damage. These items would have made the holiday season a little better for around 300 local families. Meals would have been provided for more than 100.

Like so many of us know, small towns often come together in times of hardship. The people of Huntingdon and the surrounding area have risen to the task. In fact, Salvation Army Church officials say donations in the form of both monetary gifts and supplies have been coming in nonstop since last weekend's fire.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the people of Huntingdon for stepping up to the plate and brightening the holidays for their friends and neighbors.

RETURN CONFISCATED PROPERTY

(Mr. ROHRABACHER asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, at the height of the cold war, Ethiopia fell to the Communists in 1974. Shortly thereafter, an Ethiopian family—the Berhane family—ended up in Huntington Beach, California, and for a long time they have been proud Americans and good citizens.

After the Communist regime in Ethiopia collapsed in 1991, thanks to Ronald Reagan's global efforts to undue the Communist establishment, the government in Ethiopia, which was replaced in 1991, has refused to return the confiscated property the Communists took from the Berhane family.

I rise in support of my constituents. I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in opposing any aid or activities helping the Ethiopian Government until they have returned the property of American citizens confiscated by the Communists.

It is our job to stand up for American citizens, whether they come from Ethiopia or are born in Brooklyn. They are now proud Americans. We need to stick together and refuse to give support to regimes like Ethiopia that refuse to turn confiscated property.

EPA SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE

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

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, recently the Government Accountability Office reported findings from their investigation of the EPA regarding their waters of the United States rule that drastically increases their authority at the expense of States. The GAO report is plain and simple: The EPA broke the law.

By using social media tactics the GAO called "covert propaganda," the EPA undermined the integrity of the rulemaking process and violated the trust of the American people. They conspired to influence and skew the public comments during the open rulemaking process to promote and justify an agenda that the majority of the States oppose and have sued to stop.

The EPA should be held accountable for their unlawful actions, and the people responsible should be dismissed and prosecuted.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY—CITY OF DAVID, JERUSALEM

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, for quite some time there has been an effort at the U.N. to delegitimize the Jewish State of Israel and to try to whitewash the Jewish people's historical and biblical connection to Israel.

Denying the historical connection of the people to Jerusalem is false, and

amazing archaeological discoveries are frequently made that prove the roots of the Jewish people are in Israel.

Earlier this month a Hebrew University archaeological team unearthed an unprecedented impression of a royal seal of King Hezekiah from the First Temple period. This marks the first time that a seal impression of an Israelite or Judean king has ever been discovered, and it proves that not only is Israel the religious center for Jews, but it is their ancestral and historic homeland.

I want to thank the Ir David Foundation's Director of International Affairs, Ze'ev Orenstein, for sharing this and many other amazing discoveries with me. I look forward to visiting the city of David in the near future to see firsthand the rich history of the Jewish people.

□ 1015

REFLECTIONS ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY OF 2015

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe that my first year in Congress has gone by so quickly. 2016 is just around the corner, and 1 year ago the folks of the 12th District of Georgia gave me the greatest honor of my life.

This year, the House took steps to strengthen our national security, repeal regulatory overreach, and restore local control.

With my support, Congress passed and the President signed legislation that reformed our education system, repealed the sustainable growth rate formula, and provided critical funding for our troops.

The House passed key homeland security legislation to establish a robust vetting system for refugees and reformed the Visa Waiver Program to ensure the safety of the American people.

Going into 2016, it is my hope that we can scale back the presence of Washington even more by gutting ObamaCare and providing relief for the American people from more burdensome EPA regulations.

When I came to Congress, national security, job growth, and the economy were my main priorities. I will head into 2016 with the same goals of creating jobs, growing this economy, and keeping the American people safe.

It has been an honor to serve the folks of the 12th District of Georgia. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, my first task, a wonderful task, is to wish

all the men and women of the United States military a happy holiday. For your unselfishness in putting on the uniform, without question, standing in the gap, protecting the American people, we thank you, we thank your families, and we are greatly appreciative.

We ask you to be safe during this holiday season as you put yourself on the front lines of defense.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE AND PRIVATE FIRST CLASS THOMAS WISSEMAN

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me also rise today, Mr. Speaker, to thank the United States Capitol Police, founded in 1828. We know how vital they were during the tragedy, horrific incident of 9/11, and, certainly, in 1998.

I come in contact with them every day, but I rise today to particularly thank an officer and a gentleman. Over the years, after initially greeting each other every day, the greeting became a genuine friendship of respect and kindness, and even a joke or two.

I am honored today to recognize one of our first responders, Capitol Police Private First Class Tommy Wisseman. Officer Wisseman exemplifies a model officer who takes his job very seriously, but finds the time to get to know Members of Congress on a more personal level.

Officer Wisseman has given the Capitol Police 29 years of service, all 29 at the Capitol building. He has worked every Presidential inauguration since 1989; was the lead officer for the construction of the Capitol Visitor Center; one of the head trainers for the Capitol Visitor Center officers; received multiple awards and citations.

He is the father of four daughters, and married to a lovely wife, who is with the Capitol Police.

Let me thank him and salute him as I salute all of the police.

Mr. Speaker, since 1828, the United States Capitol Police have provided protection for our Congress, ensuring a safe and open environment to facilitate the legislative process and the security of Congressional Members, staff and employees, and visitors and members of the public. This protection was magnified in 1998 when a shooter entered the Capitol killing Officer Gibson and Officer Chestnut who was protecting Majority Whip Tom DeLay and also in 2001 during the 9–11 attacks when our men and women in uniform literally moved our leadership and Members of Congress to safe havens away from the Capitol. We are grateful to all of them and the more than 2000 sworn and civilian employees who serve and protect the Congress.

As Members of Congress, we come in contact with Capitol Police every day and in the course of our days on this campus and years in Congress we get to know many of them on a first name basis. That is the case with an officer and a gentleman I have gotten to know and which started initially from just a simple greeting to each other. Over the years that initial greeting has evolved into a genuine friendship of respect and kindness and even a joke or two. I am honored today to recognize one of our first responders, Capitol Police, Private First Class Thomas Wisseman. Officer

Wisseman exemplifies a model officer who takes his job very seriously, but finds the time to get to know Members of Congress on a more personal level.

Officer Wisseman has given the Capitol Police 29 years of service—all 29 at the Capitol Building. He has worked every Presidential Inaugural since 1989, was the lead officer for the construction of the Capitol Visitors Center, one of the head trainers for Capitol Visitor Center officers, and has received multiple awards and citations for his leadership and tenure of service. He is the proud father of four daughters and is married to his lovely wife Amber who is also a Capitol Police officer here at the Capitol.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to recognize our first responders and men and women in uniform today. Officer Wissemann is an example of the dedicated men and women in uniform.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KATKO). The Chair will recognize Members for Special Order speeches without prejudice to the possible resumption of legislative business.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MRS. REVA MAE JENNINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time.

At 1:00 today, back home in Georgia, we are going to lay to rest Reva Mae Jennings.

Reva Jennings is an institution in my part of the world, Mr. Speaker. This photo here, you can see, is in the midst of a parade. She helped to found the Republican Party in Forsyth County back when it could meet in a telephone booth. She used to say that she never minded being the only one who was right in a room.

From the moment I decided to pursue this position, Mr. Speaker, Reva has been a fixture by my side. She passed away a week ago in a traffic accident.

She graduated from the University of North Carolina, Mr. Speaker. And even though she was passionate about Georgia, she was passionate about her Tar Heels. If I had a Tar Heel blue suit, I would have worn it down here to the floor today in tribute to her.

She defined her life by passion, Mr. Speaker. She has had every leadership position you can imagine in the Republican Party in our part of the world; president of the Georgia Federation of Republican Women, Mr. Speaker. She earned the title of Republican Woman of the Year. She traveled as a delegate from Georgia to the Republican National Convention.

She believed in our community. She believed in our party. She believed in America.

Mr. Speaker, I came to know Reva through her political activities, but they did not define her. Passion defined her, and there is nothing that she was more passionate about than her family.

The wife of Dr. Bruce Jennings, Mr. Speaker, who passed away far too soon, the mother of three, the grandmother of her beloved grand twins.

Mr. Speaker, the entire community is gathering this afternoon to say goodbye. It seems so cliché to talk about folks who are irreplaceable, but Reva truly is.

You can't put a marker on commitment, Mr. Speaker. There was never a responsibility, never a responsibility in the community that Reva didn't step up and say: Pick me. It characterized the community.

As Forsyth County became one of the fastest growing counties in the Nation, Mr. Speaker, her commitment was contagious.

When car accidents take our loved ones, Mr. Speaker, it happens when you least expect it. No one was prepared to say goodbye to Reva. No one had said all the things that they had to say to Reva.

But she used to pull me aside and take a picture out of her wallet, show me that beloved dentist that she married back during the Vietnam War. It was a picture they had taken in Hawaii, as I recall.

I never remember her dating. She never remarried. She said: "ROB, I got it right the first time."

As the entire community is struggling with Reva's loss, this is the image that I am left with, Mr. Speaker. She has waited decade upon decade to be united with her beloved husband, Bruce, and today, Mr. Speaker, we lay her to rest so that they can be together with their Maker once again.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I offer my heartfelt condolences to the Jennings family.

I yield back the balance of my time.

OUR JUDEO-CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, this will be the last session before we enter Christmas. And, Mr. Speaker, I have noted from a couple of articles that have been in the news this week, this one from December 17, a story from Minnesota, the title: "Parents Question Choice to Sing 'Allahu Akbar' at Holiday Concert."

It is intriguing that, in an age when groups are attacking our Judeo-Christian heritage, trying to rewrite our history, trying to prevent any mention of our Christian heritage—I am looking at the full face of Moses directly above me in front of me because we have, in this Chamber, profiles of people who were considered to be the greatest law-

givers of all time. And until recent years, Moses was considered the greatest lawgiver of all time. The Founders believed that.

The Supreme Court now has relegated Moses to the ash heap of history. His revelation that he said came from God, that a man shall leave his father and mother, a woman leave their home, the two shall become one flesh. Jesus doubled down on that. He said not only is that what marriage is, what God joined together, let nobody pull apart.

So we have relegated Moses to the ash heap. We have had the Supreme Court, for years now, saying, first, you can't have prayer in public, even though the Founders started each day of the Continental Congress with prayer; and although the Constitutional Convention didn't start each day with prayer, when they hit a brick wall and could go no further, Benjamin Franklin made his powerful speech about how they had begun each day with prayer, as he said, his exact words: "In the beginning contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room. Our prayers, sir, were heard and they were graciously answered."

He went on to say: "If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable an empire could rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writing, that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.'"

He said: I also firmly believe that without His—God's—concurring aid, we will succeed in our political building no better, than the Builders of Babel: We will be confounded by our local partial interests and we, ourselves, shall be bye words through time.

So I know our heritage. They didn't have money to pay for a chaplain that they could all agree on to do the prayer every day. He pointed out in the debate that we agreed on a chaplain. We didn't agree on any specific person here to do the prayer for all the different denominations. But we don't have a treasurer. We don't have money. We can't hire a chaplain.

And that is when Randolph made his motion. Okay, basically, they had hit a brick wall. They were making no progress. As Franklin had said, we have more noes than ayes on virtually every vote.

So he moved that they recess—here it was the end of June—they recess and reconvene to celebrate the country's birthday in early July, and worship together. So they did. That one passed. They reconvened to worship God at the Reformed Calvinistic Church there in Philadelphia.

You can go online, Mr. Speaker, and find what is reported to be the prayer that he gave. It had a powerful influence. And when they reconvened, there was a new spirit. They were able to come together and end up arriving at the Great Compromise.

Founder after Founder, including Washington himself, pointed out that

clearly God's hand was upon them in the preparation of the Constitution, and then, ultimately, resulting in the Bill of Rights.

□ 1030

The first right within the Bill of Rights was basically to make clear that government would never interfere with religion.

Basically, we have come to a place after all these years where the United States Supreme Court has said not only can you not have the Judeo-Christian God as part of any government—the same God that the Founders were giving credit to and praying to—but now this year the Supreme Court took the ultimate step of saying: Forget Moses. Forget Jesus. We are the new God and here is what we pronounce in place of Moses and Jesus and our founding principles. So this is a big year.

I know the President says we are not a Christian nation, and I won't argue that point with him. I won't debate him. I think he is right. I know where we started, and I know every time, according to my staff, I mention God here where—in this Capitol, God's name has been invoked from the very beginning of this Capitol and before this Capitol and when it was in Philadelphia and when the first Congress was sworn in and President George Washington was sworn in at Federal Hall in New York City. It was his idea to bring his Bible and put his hand on the Bible, his idea to add the words "so help me God."

It was all their idea that the first thing they would do as a Congress together, after being sworn in, was to walk down, basically, Wall Street to St. Paul's Chapel there in New York and dedicate this country there in 1789 to God Almighty.

I won't debate the President saying we are not a Christian nation, but the Bible has been quoted over our history in this Chamber more than any other book as a reason for or against legislation passing. It is a part of our heritage, to a much lesser extent in more recent years, as the Supreme Court—at least the five majority in the Supreme Court becoming our God instead of the God that was acknowledged by Ben Franklin, George Washington, basically every President.

Mr. Speaker, we have a job to represent our constituents. We have an oath to the Constitution. I know we take that seriously. Part of our job in representing our constituents is to educate people on the issues and what has been important and what has been our strength, what has been our weaknesses. If you don't know our history, then, as the saying goes, those who refuse to learn from history are destined to repeat it. It is important to know history.

It is important to note the official words of the United States' highest magistrate, our President. Jefferson was asked once as he rode his horse

down Pennsylvania Avenue on a Sunday morning—he had a big Bible in his hand, it was reported. I have had this verified by the Congressional Research Service.

When Jefferson was President for those 8 years, when he was in Washington, not only did he condone the church service, the largest Christian church service in Washington that occurred just down the hall, but he participated. He would even have the Marine Band come and play the hymns on many occasions for the Christian church service.

As he rode down this one occasion, he was asked, “Mr. President, where are you going?”

He said, “I am going to church up in the Capitol.”

The statement was made, “Mr. President, you don’t believe everything they do.”

Because he had questions about some of the miracles reported in the Bible.

But it was reported that his response was, “Sir, I am the highest elected magistrate in this country. It is imperative that I set the proper example.”

Now, I asked the Congressional Research Service is it true what has been attributed to the person people claim to be the father of the Constitution, James Madison, that when he was President for his 8 years, that he also condoned and participated in church services just down the hall here every Sunday he was in Washington?

The Congressional Research Service, a bipartisan, nonpartisan service, reported, yes, but he was different from Jefferson. Jefferson normally rode a horse down Pennsylvania Avenue whereas Madison would normally come to church up here in the Capitol in a coach drawn by horses rather than on horseback.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we take the traditional Christmas recess, no matter what your religious preference is or no preference at all, it is a fact this is a Christmas recess.

Although this was not a statement at Christmastime, the commander of our military in 1778, George Washington, made this order as commander of our military. Some say this is really the reason God blessed their efforts, is because of their commitment and dedication. This is an order of George Washington to the troops at Valley Forge. This is George Washington’s order, Mr. Speaker. I will read it verbatim:

The Commander in Chief directs that divine service be performed every Sunday at eleven o’clock in each brigade which has chaplains. Those brigades which have none will attend the places of worship nearest to them. It is expected that officers of all ranks will, by their attendance, set an example for their men. While we are zealously performing the duties of good citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of religion. To the distinguished character of patriot, it should be our highest glory to laud the more distinguished character of Christian.

Those are George Washington’s words as commander of our military.

Well, John Adams, without whom it is unlikely we would have arrived at the place we did with the Declaration—he is the one that directed Thomas Jefferson to do the first draft of the Declaration of Independence. He was critical in holding things together. Even though he only won one term as President, he was Vice President for two terms. He was very important in arriving at our Constitution.

John Adams on October 11, 1798, said this to the First Brigade, Third Division, of Militia of Massachusetts:

We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions, unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

This is from a Founder that knew how the Constitution was forged, made a difference in our country’s beginning. He says our Constitution is not fit as a governing document for any but a moral and religious people. So over the years we have been taken down the road away from being a moral and religious people.

Franklin Roosevelt started many social programs. He made a lot of decisions, I think, that were dramatic mistakes. The man deserves credit for leading this Nation through a time of war, mistakes being made.

He got us through a war and helped with Winston Churchill and other leaders to keep freedom alive so that it would be present in our lifetime, even as we see our freedoms being taken by government the further we go along.

Exactly 2 weeks after the surprise attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, a day he said in this very Chamber from right up here at this level—he had a marble podium and not this wooden one—but he said that was a day that would live in infamy.

Exactly 2 weeks later, December 21, 1941, this was Franklin Roosevelt’s message to our Nation:

Sincere and faithful men and women are asking themselves this Christmas: How can we light our trees? How can we give our gifts? How can we meet and worship with love and with uplifted spirit and heart in a world at war, a world of fighting and suffering, and death? How can we pause even for a day, even for Christmas day, in our urgent labor of arming a decent humanity against the enemies which beset it?

Parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, he didn’t mean holiday. He meant what he said, Christmas day.

Roosevelt goes on:

How can we, as men and women, put the world aside in peaceful years to rejoice in the birth of Christ? Looking into the days to come, I have set aside a day of prayer and in that proclamation I have said: The year 1941 has brought upon our Nation a war of aggression by powers dominated by arrogant rulers whose selfish purpose is to destroy free institutions. They would thereby take from the freedom-loving peoples of the Earth the hard-won liberties gained over many centuries. The new year of 1942 calls for the

courage. Our strength, as the strength of all men everywhere, is of greater avail as God upholds us. Therefore, I do hereby appoint the first day of the year 1942 as a day of prayer, of asking forgiveness for our shortcomings of the past, of consecrations to the task of the present and of asking God’s help in days to come. We need His guidance that this people may be humble in spirit, but strong in the conviction of the right, steadfast to endure sacrifice, and brave to achieve a victory of liberty and peace.

Franklin Roosevelt says our strongest weapon in this war is that conviction of the dignity and brotherhood of man which Christmas day signifies against enemies who preach the principles of hate and practice them. We set our fate in human love and in God’s care for us in all men everywhere.

A year later, on Christmas Eve, Franklin Roosevelt said:

To you who serve in uniform, I also send a message of cheer that you are in the thoughts of your families and friends at home and that Christmas prayers follow you wherever you may be. To all Americans, I say that loving our neighbor as we love ourselves is not enough, that we, as a Nation and as individuals, will please God best by showing regard for the laws of God. There is no better way of fostering goodwill toward men than by first fostering goodwill toward God.

□ 1045

Then Franklin Roosevelt basically takes a quote from John 14:15 in saying:

“If we love Him, we will keep His Commandments.

“In sending Christmas greetings to the Armed Forces and merchant sailors of the United Nations, we include therein our pride in their bravery on the fighting fronts and on all the seas.

“It is significant that tomorrow—Christmas Day—our plants and factories will be stilled. This is not true of the other holidays we have long been accustomed to celebrate. On all other holidays work goes on—gladly—for the winning of the war. So Christmas becomes the only holiday in all the year.

“I like to think that this is so because Christmas is a holy day. May all it stands for live and grow throughout the years.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, 5 years later exactly, Harry Truman nationally broadcast this address at the lighting of the National—not holiday tree but Christmas Tree—on the White House lawn. Again, Mr. Speaker, just as those who failed to learn from the mistakes of history are destined to repeat them, we can avoid the mistakes by looking at what strengthened America and what caused God to bless America.

We won a war against evil fascism that is raising its head yet again. Just as Hitler colluded with radical Islam, agreed with some of his fascist ideas against Jews, against Christians, there is so much ignorance. Some people try to say Hitler was a Christian. It is the farthest thing from it.

These are Harry Truman’s words, December 1947 on Christmas Eve:

“My fellow countrymen: We are met on the South Lawn of the White House.

Above the barren treetops rises the towering shaft of the Washington Monument. The scene is peaceful and tranquil. The shadows deepen, and the holy night falls gently over the National Capital, as we gather around our Christmas tree.

"Down the ages, from the first Christmas through all the years of 19 centuries, mankind, in its weary pilgrimage through a changing world, has been cheered and strengthened by the message of Christmas.

"The angels sang for joy at the first Christmas in a faraway Bethlehem. Their song has echoed through the corridors of time and will continue to sustain the heart of man through eternity.

"Let us not forget that the first Christmas was a homeless one. A humble man and woman had gone up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, to Bethlehem. There is a sense of desolation in St. Luke's brief chronicle that Mary 'brought forth her firstborn son, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.'

"For many of our brethren in Europe and Asia, this too will be a homeless Christmas. There can be little happiness for those who will keep another Christmas in poverty and exile and in separation from their loved ones.

"As we prepare to celebrate our Christmas this year in a land of plenty, we would be heartless, indeed, if we were indifferent to the plight of less fortunate peoples overseas.

"We must not forget that our Revolutionary fathers also knew a Christmas of suffering and desolation. Washington wrote from Valley Forge 2 days before Christmas in 1777: 'We have this day no less than 2,873 men in camp unfit for duty because they are barefooted and otherwise naked.'

"We can be thankful that our people have risen today, as did our forefathers in Washington's time, to our obligation and our opportunity.

"At this point in the world's history, the words of St. Paul have greater significance than ever before. He said, 'And now abide faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.'

"Let us then put our trust in the unerring star which guided the Wise Men to the manger of Bethlehem. Let us hearken again to the angel choir singing, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, goodwill toward men.'

"With hope for the future and with faith in God, I wish all my countrymen a very Merry Christmas."

A year later, Harry Truman, as President of the United States, officially said:

"For of all the days of the year, Christmas is the family day. Christmas began that way.

"The moving event of the first Christmas was the bringing forth of the first born in the stable in Bethlehem. There began, in humble surroundings, the home life of the Holy Family, glorified in song and story and in the

hearts of men down through the centuries. The great joys and mysteries of that event have forever sanctified and enriched all home life.

"The hallowed associations of Christmas draw all hearts toward home. With one accord, we receive with joy and reverence the message of the first Christmas: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, goodwill to men.'

"What could be more appropriate than for all of us to dedicate ourselves to the cause of peace on this holy night. As a Nation, we have a history of little more than a century and a half. But the religion which came to the world, heralded by the song of the angels, has endured for 19 centuries. It will continue to endure. It remains today the world's best hope for peace if the world will accept its fundamental teaching: that all men are brothers."

Then he quotes from Scripture:

"God that made the world and all things therein hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the Earth."

Then Truman says: "In the spirit of that message from the Acts of the Apostles, I wish all of you a Merry Christmas."

I know, Mr. Speaker, there are people that go nuts when we talk about these official pronouncements by government officials as part of their government duty, but it is part of our history.

For those who go ballistic when this part of our history, that led us to being the greatest nation in the history of the world—more assets for individuals; a country where the number one health problem for the Nation's poor is obesity; a country where we have sacrificed our greatest treasure, American lives, for other people's freedom without a demand for imperialism, without a demand that they convert to our government's leadership—that is why they speak French in France, Japanese in Japan, and German in Germany.

Dwight Eisenhower, who knew something about fighting, said this 7 years after the last statement I read from Harry Truman. This was his official pronouncement. President Eisenhower said:

"This evening's ceremony here at the White House is one of many thousands in America's traditional celebration of the birth, almost 2,000 years ago, of the Prince of Peace.

"For us, this Christmas is truly a sense of goodwill—and our first peaceful one since 1949. Our hopes are bright, even though the world still stands divided in two antagonistic parts.

"More precisely than in any other way, prayer places freedom and communism in opposition, one to the other. The Communist can find no reserve of strength in prayer because his doctrine of materialism and statism denies the dignity of man and, consequently, the existence of God.

"But in America, George Washington long ago rejected exclusive dependence upon mere materialistic values. In the

bitter and critical winter at Valley Forge, when the cause of liberty was so near defeat, his recourse was sincere and earnest prayer. From it, he received new hope and new strength of purpose out of which grew the freedom in which we celebrate this Christmas season.

"As religious faith is the foundation of free government, so is prayer an indispensable part of that faith.

"Would it not be fitting for each of us to speak in prayer to the Father of all men and women on this Earth, of whatever nation, and of every race and creed—to ask that He—God—help us and teach us and strengthen us and receive our thanks?

"Should we not pray that He help us?"

He always capitalized "He" when he spoke of God.

"Should we not pray that He receive our thanks? For certainly, we are grateful for the opportunity given us to use our strength and our faith to meet the problems of this hour. And on this Christmas Eve, all hearts in America are filled with special thanks to God that the blood of those we love no longer spills on battlefields abroad. May He—God—receive the thanks of each of us for this, His greatest bounty—and our supplication that peace on Earth may live with us, always."

So the leader of our fight against fascism, world domination of hate in World War II, Dwight Eisenhower, made those rather profound words.

But, Mr. Speaker, we see through our history when our Nation was deeply troubled—whether it was Washington, whether it was Lincoln, whether it was Franklin Roosevelt in World War II, Eisenhower in the Korean war, Kennedy during Vietnam—all of our Presidents have known up to this point that our greatest hope comes through prayer to God.

I am not speaking these words and reading our historic statements by Presidents—by our leaders—to try to convert anybody, but just so our history is understood, as our way continues to grow darker, critical violence is escalating again, racial divides are growing deeper when I thought we had—we have—we have come so far. We need to turn, according to our former leaders, historically—what they said is: Turn to God.

This is not to convert anybody. It is simply so that this record of where Presidents, leaders, and Americans used to turn be part of the RECORD today.

So John Kennedy's words, as President, December 17, 1962—at this time, there were only advisers in Vietnam—at the official lighting of the National Christmas Tree. It was still a Christmas tree for John Kennedy:

"With the lighting of this tree, which is an old ceremony in Washington and one which has been among the most important responsibilities of a good many Presidents of the United States, we initiate, in a formal way, the Christmas season.

“We mark the festival of Christmas, which is the most sacred and hopeful day in our civilization. For nearly 2,000 years, the message of Christmas, the message of peace and goodwill towards all men, has been the guiding star of our endeavors.

“I had a meeting which included some of our representatives from far-off countries in Africa and Asia. They were returning to their posts for the Christmas holidays.

□ 1100

“Talking with them afterwards, I was struck by the fact that in the far off continents Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists, as well as Christians, paused from their labors on the 25th day of December to celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace. There could be no more striking proof that Christmas is truly the universal holiday of all men. It is the day when all of us dedicate our thoughts to others; when all are reminded that mercy and compassion are the enduring virtues; when all show, by small deeds and large and by acts, that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

“It is the day when we remind ourselves that man can and must live in peace with his neighbors and that it is the peacemakers who are truly blessed. In this year of 1962 we greet each other at Christmas with some special sense of the blessings of peace. This has been a year of peril when the peace has been sorely threatened. But it has been a year when peril was faced and when reason ruled. As a result, we may talk, at this Christmas, just a little bit more confidently of peace on Earth, good will to men. As a result, the hopes of the American people are perhaps a little higher. We have much yet to do. We still need to ask that God bless everyone.”

Of course, each President has made pronouncements of a similar nature various times.

This was Jimmy Carter, President Carter, December 15, 1977, at what he described as the Christmas Pageant of Peace Ceremony on the White House Ellipse:

“Christmas has a special meaning for those of us who are Christians, those of us who believe in Christ, those of us who know that almost 2,000 years ago, the Son of Peace was born to give us a vision of perfection, a vision of humility, a vision of unselfishness, a vision of compassion, a vision of love.”

President Carter in 1978 said:

“Rosalyn and I send our warmest wishes to our fellow citizens who celebrate the birth of Christ and who rejoice with us in the coming of the peace He symbolizes.

“We welcome this opportunity to offer our thanks to those who have given us their encouragement and prayers.

“We also join in this season’s traditional expression of appreciation to God for His blessings in the past year, and we ask for His continuing guidance

and protection as we face the challenges of 1979.”

President George W. Bush, President Clinton, President George W. Bush, and President Obama have delivered Christmas messages, and President Obama his holiday messages.

I would like to conclude at this time with President Reagan’s message, as he says on the observance of Christmas, December 19, 1988, his last Christmas message as President:

“The themes of Christmas and of coming home for the holidays have long been intertwined in song and story. There is a profound irony and lesson in this, because Christmas celebrates the coming of a savior who was born without a home.

“There was no room at the inn for the Holy Family. Weary of travel, a young Mary close to childbirth and her carpenter husband Joseph found but the rude shelter of a stable. There was born the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace—an event on which all history would turn. Jesus would again be without a home, and more than once; on the flight to Egypt and during His public ministry, when he said, ‘The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the son of man hath nowhere to lay his head.’

“From His very infancy, on, our Redeemer was reminding us that from then on we would never lack a home in Him. Like the shepherds whom the angel of the Lord appeared on the first Christmas Day, we could always say: ‘Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us.’

“As we come home with gladness to family and friends this Christmas, let us also remember our neighbors who cannot go home themselves. Our compassion and concern this Christmas and all year long will mean much to the hospitalized, the homeless, the convalescent, the orphaned—and will surely lead us on our way to the joy and peace of Bethlehem and the Christ child who bids us come. For it is only in finding and living the internal meaning of the nativity that we can be truly happy, truly at peace, truly home.”

He concludes, as I will—President Reagan:

“Merry Christmas, and God bless you.”

I yield back the balance of my time.

PAYING DOWN THE DEBT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) for 30 minutes.

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. I thank the Speaker for the recognition and the opportunity to address the House on this the final hour of the final day of the final week of the final month of this year in Congress.

It has been a remarkable year. The Congress—the House especially—has

seen some remarkable changes. I would like to share with you a little perspective on where we find ourselves now from a budgetary standpoint.

For the last year, I have had the privilege of chairing the Budget Committee in the House of Representatives. That is the committee that deals with all of the spending that occurs in our Nation from the Federal Government standpoint.

I would like to start by saying: What is it defining the goal that we have at the Budget Committee and in the Republican Conference here in the House of Representatives?

That goal is broadly to create the greatest amount of opportunity and the greatest amount of success for the greatest number of people so that the greatest number of American Dreams can be realized in a fair and a compassionate system.

That is kind of the 60,000-foot view that we have here in the House of Representatives at the Budget Committee among Republicans who have allowed me the privilege of chairing the Budget Committee.

So from that point of view, in terms of the perspective of where we find ourselves and what our goal is, what does that have to do with the budget? What does that have to do with the numbers that get crunched in this town all the time and that we just finished a remarkable week talking about how to get the progrowth policies that are so necessary to get our economy growing and how do we move forward from a spending standpoint?

Folks all across the country have differing views about how that ought to be done. But I think it is helpful to kind of step back and to look at the overall picture, the big picture.

From a spending standpoint, the Nation understands and appreciates that Washington spends a lot. \$3.8 trillion is the amount of money that your Federal Government will spend in this fiscal year. That is 3.8 with too many zeros after it. It is hard to get your arms around the amount of money that that is. But it is important for all Americans to appreciate kind of how that breaks down.

The point I want to begin with is this point about mandatory spending and discretionary spending. Folks tend to think mostly, if they don’t know how Washington works, that this \$3.8 trillion is the money that Congress deals with every single year. Right? It is the spending that goes out the door here in Washington every single year and that continues to grow and grow and grow. We will go over some of those numbers.

The fact of the matter is that this spending is broken down into two major categories. One is called mandatory. I prefer the word automatic because it really isn’t mandatory. That is the spending that has occurred and continues to occur because Congress, along with the President, at some point in the past has defined a certain amount of spending or certain programs that need to be continued year

after year after year, regardless of what Congress does or until and unless Congress changes those programs. These are programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. There are a lot of other mandatory programs. These are important programs. There is no doubt about it.

The money that goes to those programs goes to them based upon an individual in this country qualifying for those programs based upon either their income or their age or some other circumstance. The amount of money to be spent on those programs doesn't change at all unless the House, the Senate, and the President agree to change it.

That is the mandatory side or the automatic side. I prefer, again, to call it automatic because it is automatic spending that occurs. It is only mandatory in that Congress in the past decided that that is what ought to be done. It doesn't bind us to it, but we have to come to some agreement, as a Congress and President, the legislative and the executive branch, in order to change that.

When you look at this chart here, what we see is that the mandatory programs—or the mandatory spending, automatic spending, is in red. All other spending, which is the discretionary spending, is in blue. This is 1965, 2014, and 2040, the three different pie charts.

We see that, in 1965, 50 years ago, the amount of mandatory spending—that is the automatic spending that occurs year after year after year unless Congress and the President agree to change something—the amount of mandatory spending as a percent of spending was about a third. About a third of all spending for the Federal Government 50 years ago was mandatory spending. So two-thirds was discretionary.

Now, what is discretionary spending? If you think about all of the spending that occurs in Washington, everything that occurs in Washington that people like and want and desire, some people want to change some of it and some people want to raise some things and lower other things.

But if you think about everything that Washington does with the exception of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and some other more minor mandatory programs—those are the ones on the automatic side—if you think about what Washington does, all of the rest of that is the blue that is the discretionary spending.

What is that? You can just march through the agencies of the Federal Government and define what those are. It is transportation. It is commerce. It is justice. It is the court system. It is roads. It is highways. It is infrastructure. It is education. It is energy. It is all of the things. It is defense. It is a remarkable amount and needed amount that we spend in the defense arena. All of those things—all of those things—are the discretionary money.

□ 1115

That is the blue on this graph. Remember that, in 1965—50 years ago—that was two-thirds of the Federal budget.

Now fast forward to 2014. They are, essentially, the same numbers as today; although, the blue has decreased a little more. The mandatory side, the automatic side, is now two-thirds—not one-third but two-thirds—of the spending that comes out of the Federal Government, which means those programs have continued to grow. Again, those are important programs—Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—and we will address the challenges that they have in a moment.

The spending there has grown to two-thirds of Federal spending, which means that the blue portion, the discretionary portion—that portion that people think about when they think about what the Federal Government spends money on, which is, again, defense and infrastructure and education and energy and all of the things that the Federal Government does—has been squeezed, if you will, to one-third of overall spending at the Federal level.

What does that mean? That is the genesis. Is this important to anybody out there across this great land?

It is the genesis for the battles that we have had on the level of spending for defense—yes—for highways or for infrastructure or for education or for anything that we debate and discuss so as to try our best to represent the American people in a positive way about what kind of money and the number of resources—hardworking taxpayer money—ought to go for those programs. That money is getting decreased.

The Federal Government's challenge is to be able to figure out how to turn this around because, in a few short years, the mandatory side will be three-quarters of the spending out of Washington, which means that that discretionary part—that part that people count on to try to grow the economy and make it so that, again, the greatest number of American dreams can be realized by the greatest number of folks in a fair and a compassionate system—will get further and further and further diminished. So there is the challenge that we have, and the difficulty is getting folks to address the mandatory side.

Now, someone might say: Well, those programs are important. And they are. Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—those programs—are important. So why not just leave them as they are? People are doing just fine. They think things are rolling along relatively well. Why not just leave them where they are?

Here is the dirty little secret about those programs: They are all going broke. Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—all of them—are running out of resources over a period of time.

What does that mean? That means that the promises that the Federal

Government has made—to seniors regarding health care, to individuals who take utilization of the Medicaid system, to seniors who have access to Social Security resources to try to make it so that their retirement years are more secure—will not be there. All of those benefits to those individuals that the Nation has promised to them will not be there. They will not be there at the level that has been promised.

You get some folks who say: Well, the length of time that it will take for us to have any real challenge in that arena is just too long. You don't have to worry about it. We have got more than enough time to take care of it.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, it is right around the corner. From Social Security's standpoint, the disability program was destined to become insolvent next year. What did we do recently? We plugged the hole. We didn't solve the problem. We plugged the hole, but that doesn't make it so that it is any less likely that it will be a greater problem as the years go on.

Medicare. As a physician, I can tell you that the Medicare system is incredibly important to seniors across this great land. The Medicare system will run out of resources in 2030 to cover the services that have been promised. That is 14, 15 short years away.

When you think that 15 years is too far in the future, just think about the challenge that we had during Y2K, when the millennium turned over. That was just 15 years ago. Most folks remember that. Most folks remember the challenge that we had during that period of time. The fact of the matter is that 15 years is not a long time; so Medicare's going broke in 15 years is something that we ought not ignore.

Social Security. When does Social Security go broke? In 2034, which is 4 years after that—a very short period of time. Again, what does it mean if Social Security goes broke? It means that the benefits that have been assured and promised by your Federal Government are not going to be able to be provided to seniors. We think that is wrong. We think that is reckless and immoral to not do anything to fix that. We think it is important to save and strengthen and secure Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

You ask: What does that have to do with the budget? That gets us to what the Budget Committee did this past year, and I can't tell you how proud I am of the work that was done on behalf of the Republican majority here in this House of Representatives.

What did we do? We put in place, adopted a budget that would solve the challenges that we have in a way that gets us to a balanced budget, that gets us on a path to paying off the debt, that puts us on a path to solving, saving, strengthening, and securing Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, and that defines what the role of the Federal Government ought to be for all of the discretionary programs in that blue area.

Where does the spending occur from the Federal Government level? This is a pie chart that defines, again, the mandatory side and the discretionary side of our spending. Remember, about two-thirds of spending at the Federal level is the automatic side. What are those programs? It includes Social Security.

In 2014, which is the last full year that we had full numbers, there was \$845 billion for Social Security. Medicare: \$505 billion for Medicare. Medicaid: \$301 billion for Medicaid. Other mandatory programs—which are the others that I have talked about, which are things like food stamps and the like—are at \$448 billion. Interest on the debt, which is this one, is about \$221 billion.

Let's talk about interest on the debt for a moment. This is money that is spent to cover the interest on the debt that we already have. The United States has a debt of about \$18.2 trillion; so the interest that we pay on that annually now is about \$221 billion. It is destined to increase enormously over the next few years, and that has huge consequences, again, on trying to find the greatest amount of opportunity and the greatest amount of success for the greatest number of folks so that the greatest number of American dreams may be realized.

How much is it going to increase? This is looking at just 10 years. The amount of interest—and that is if interest rates stay relatively reasonable—on the national debt, on the Federal debt, will be \$800 billion. It will be close to \$1 trillion that is going to be spent just on interest. That is more than on defense. That is more than on Medicaid. That is more than on Medicare. That is more than on education. That is more than on transportation. That is more than on science and space and technology.

Again, all of those things that the American people say that they want and desire are going to be crowded because of the mandatory spending—the automatic spending, yes—but the interest on the debt is approaching \$1 trillion a year.

Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do on the Budget Committee is to say to our colleagues and to say to the American people that that is an irresponsible use of hard-earned taxpayer dollars to have that level of debt. It means that \$1 trillion a year of that hard-earned money by the American people, who send it to Washington and expect that it is going to be used in a responsible way, is going to go toward interest on the debt. That doesn't do a thing to send a kid to college, to buy a house, to pay the rent, to start a business. Any of the kinds of things, again, that the American people say they want are harmed by that level of spending on interest on the national debt. That is why this is so important.

These numbers mean that the amount of opportunity and the amount of growth in our economy that will be

available to make it so that those American dreams can be realized get lessened, and that is why it is so imperative that we address the challenges that we have from an economic standpoint.

Some people would say: Well, that really isn't a problem. All we need to do is to raise taxes—right?—to take more money from the American people. That is how you solve this problem.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the level of revenue—the amount of money—coming into the Federal Government now is at its greatest point ever in real dollars. There is more money being sent to Washington by the American people and by businesses and folks all across this great land to fund the government—more money than ever—than in the history of our society. That is a phenomenal statement because what that means is that, if one believes that one just ought to raise taxes on people and take more hard-earned money, then what is the limit? What is the goal?

Our goal, again, is to create the greatest amount of opportunity for the greatest number of individuals and to create the greatest amount of success so that the greatest number of American dreams can be realized in a fair and a compassionate system. That is our goal. We don't believe that that goal is furthered by taking more money from hard-earned American taxpayers.

The challenge is how you solve that. How do you make it so that you don't get to a point at which \$1 trillion a year is going to cover interest on the Federal debt?

Here is a depiction of how that is solved. This is what I call the smile chart. You can see the smile. The fact, however, is that the smile is the blue line there and not the red line. This axis here is the level of debt held as a percent of the gross domestic product. On the lower axis, on the X axis, it goes from 1940 to 2040. Then the dark color here is the graph of what level of debt we had as a Nation from 1940, which was at the beginning of World War II, until now. You see that it goes up and down.

The largest amount of debt that we had in this area was just after World War II, which was when we covered the expenses for the war. It tended to tamp down, and it got into the 20 to 30 percent range of the gross domestic product. That is kind of the range at which economists tell you is the sweet spot for how you get the economy growing and rolling and expanding and creating jobs and opportunities.

You see over there, just after 2010, the incredible increase. That was this President and the Federal Government's response to the economic challenge that we had. What did they do? They printed a lot of money and increased the amount of debt—a huge increase in the amount of debt.

Now, the red line is where their projections go. It is where the President

and his party's projections go with current programs. Again, those are the programs that we have discussed. That is where their line goes on debt, which expands incredibly. We don't get to that point on that line because the economy won't tolerate that. It won't accommodate that in a way that makes it so that people are going to be able to even find a job, because you can't take that much money out of the economy and expect the economy to work.

□ 1130

So what we did was put in place our budget, adopt a budget, along with the Senate, that is the blue line. And that means that what we would do is figure out how to solve these challenges, get us on a path to paying off the debt.

You have got to have a surplus before you can begin to pay off the debt. But we have got to get on that path to paying off the debt so that we aren't utilizing the incredibly hard-earned taxpayer money simply for the kind of things that don't benefit anybody at all; and that is, interest on the debt. You cannot continue to have this level of spending.

We are incredibly excited about the opportunities that we have. We have got a lot of challenges in terms of having our colleagues come onboard and the American people recognizing that these problems are real and they are real right now.

We began a program in the Committee on the Budget called Restoring the Trust for All Generations. Mr. Speaker, if you had an interest, you could go to our Web site at www.budget.house.gov and look up the program that we have, Restoring the Trust for All Generations, an effort to try to build the critical mass of individuals necessary to say: Yes, we want that greatest amount of opportunity and success for folks so that American Dreams can be realized in a fair and compassionate system.

We recognize that in order for that to occur, we simply must address the mandatory, the automatic spending issues that are so challenging for us. In order to do that, we have got to make certain that we save and strengthen and secure Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and other mandatory programs in a way that makes sense to the American people and put us on a path to being able to solve these challenges.

I am extremely excited about the opportunities available to us. I am frustrated that we haven't been able to get to them sooner than now. But I want to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that your Committee on the Budget and the individuals on that committee and the individuals in this Conference, I believe, recognize the challenges that we have and are looking forward, with great anticipation, to 2016, to the leadership from Speaker RYAN and the admonition that he has provided for us to say: Look, we have got to make certain

that we define what the legislation is that solves and saves and strengthens and secures these programs. We have got to get ourselves on that path to make it so that we can get to a point where we have, indeed, balanced the budget without raising taxes and get ourselves on a path to paying off the debt.

If we are able to do that, Mr. Speaker, then we will, in fact, be able to stand proudly before the American people and say: What we have done is provided that amount of opportunity and that amount of success for the vast number of the American people so that American Dreams can be realized.

Mr. Speaker, I wish all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to that new year, again, with great anticipation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 515. An act to protect children from exploitation, especially sex trafficking in tourism, by providing advance notice of intended travel by registered child-sex offenders outside the United States to the government of the country of destination, requesting foreign governments to notify the United States when a known child-sex offender is seeking to enter the United States, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 227. An act to strengthen the Federal education research system to make research and evaluations more timely and relevant to State and local needs in order to increase student achievement.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

DECEMBER 18, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House,
U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), amended by the Division P of the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003 (22 U.S.C. 6901), I am pleased to reappoint the following individuals to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

Ms. Carolyn Bartholomew, Washington, DC.

Mr. Jeffrey L. Fiedler, Great Falls, VA.

Thank you for your attention to these appointments.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 34 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1300

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MESSER) at 1 p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 18, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 18, 2015 at 12:34 p.m.:

That the Senate concur in the House amendments to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2029.

That the Senate passed S. 2425.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1321.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PATIENT ACCESS AND MEDICARE PROTECTION ACT

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (S. 2425) to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve payments for complex rehabilitation technology and certain radiation therapy services, to ensure flexibility in applying the hardship exception for meaningful use for the 2015 EHR reporting period for 2017 payment adjustments, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

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

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2425

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 "Patient Access and Medicare Protection Act".

SEC. 2. NON-APPLICATION OF MEDICARE FEE SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSORIES AND SEAT AND BACK CUSHIONS WHEN FURNISHED IN CONNECTION WITH COMPLEX REHABILITATIVE POWER WHEELCHAIRS.

(a) NON-APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall not, prior to January 1, 2017, use information on the payment determined under the competitive acquisition programs under section 1847 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-3) to adjust the payment amount that would otherwise be recognized under section 1834(a)(1)(B)(ii) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(a)(1)(B)(ii)) for wheelchair accessories (including seating systems) and seat and back cushions when furnished in connection with Group 3 complex rehabilitative power wheelchairs.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may implement this subsection by program instruction or otherwise.

(b) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—

(1) STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on wheelchair accessories (including seating systems) and seat and back cushions furnished in connection with Group 3 complex rehabilitative power wheelchairs. Such study shall include an analysis of the following with respect to such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions in each of the groups described in clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (B):

(i) The item descriptions and associated HCPCS codes for such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions.

(ii) A breakdown of utilization and expenditures for such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

(iii) A comparison of the payment amount under the competitive acquisition program under section 1847 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-3) with the payment amount that would otherwise be recognized under section 1834 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m), including beneficiary cost sharing, for such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions.

(iv) The aggregate distribution of such wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished under such title XVIII within each of the groups described in subparagraph (B).

(v) Other areas determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(B) GROUPS DESCRIBED.—The following groups are described in this subparagraph:

(i) Wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished predominantly with Group 3 complex rehabilitative power wheelchairs.

(ii) Wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished predominantly with power wheelchairs that are not described in clause (i).

(iii) Other wheelchair accessories and seat and back cushions furnished with either power wheelchairs described in clause (i) or (ii).

(2) REPORT.—Not later than June 1, 2016, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1), together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative as the Comptroller General determines to be appropriate.

SEC. 3. TRANSITIONAL PAYMENT RULES FOR CERTAIN RADIATION THERAPY SERVICES UNDER THE MEDICARE PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(11) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN RADIATION THERAPY SERVICES.—The code definitions, the work relative value units under subsection (c)(2)(C)(i), and the direct inputs for

the practice expense relative value units under subsection (c)(2)(C)(ii) for radiation treatment delivery and related imaging services (identified in 2016 by HCPCS G-codes G6001 through G6015) for the fee schedule established under this subsection for services furnished in 2017 and 2018 shall be the same as such definitions, units, and inputs for such services for the fee schedule established for services furnished in 2016.”; and

(2) in subsection (c)(2)(K), by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iv) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN RADIATION THERAPY SERVICES.—Radiation treatment delivery and related imaging services identified under subsection (b)(11) shall not be considered as potentially misvalued services for purposes of this subparagraph and subparagraph (O) for 2017 and 2018.”

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS ON ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODEL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress a report on the development of an episodic alternative payment model for payment under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act for radiation therapy services furnished in nonfacility settings.

SEC. 4. ENSURING FLEXIBILITY IN APPLYING HARDSHIP EXCEPTION FOR MEANINGFUL USE FOR 2015 EHR REPORTING PERIOD FOR 2017 PAYMENT ADJUSTMENTS.

(a) ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONALS.—Section 1848(a)(7)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(a)(7)(B)) is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting “(and, with respect to the payment adjustment under subparagraph (A) for 2017, for categories of eligible professionals, as established by the Secretary and posted on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services prior to December 15, 2015, an application for which must be submitted to the Secretary by not later than March 15, 2016)” after “case-by-case basis”.

(b) ELIGIBLE HOSPITALS.—Section 1886(b)(3)(B)(ix) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(b)(3)(B)(ix)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of subclause (I), by striking “(n)(6)(A)” and inserting “(n)(6)”; and

(2) in subclause (II), in the first sentence, by inserting “(and, with respect to the application of subclause (I) for fiscal year 2017, for categories of subsection (d) hospitals, as established by the Secretary and posted on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services prior to December 15, 2015, an application for which must be submitted to the Secretary by not later than April 1, 2016)” after “case-by-case basis”.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall implement the provisions of, and the amendments made by, subsections (a) and (b) by program instruction, such as through information on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

SEC. 5. MEDICARE IMPROVEMENT FUND.

Section 1898(b)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395iii(b)(1)) is amended by striking “\$5,000,000” and inserting “\$0”.

SEC. 6. STRENGTHENING MEDICAID PROGRAM INTEGRITY THROUGH FLEXIBILITY.

Section 1936 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396u-6) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “, or otherwise,” after “entities”; and

(2) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “(including the costs of equipment, salaries and benefits, and travel and training)” after “Program under this section”; and

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “by 100” and inserting “by 100, or such number as de-

termined necessary by the Secretary to carry out the Program.”.

SEC. 7. ESTABLISHING MEDICARE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACTOR ERROR REDUCTION INCENTIVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1874A(b)(1)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk-1(b)(1)(D)) is amended—

(1) by striking “QUALITY.—The Secretary” and inserting “QUALITY.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clauses (ii) and (iii), the Secretary”; and

(2) by inserting after clause (i), as added by paragraph (1), the following new clauses:

“(ii) IMPROPER PAYMENT RATE REDUCTION INCENTIVES.—The Secretary shall provide incentives for medicare administrative contractors to reduce the improper payment error rates in their jurisdictions.

“(iii) INCENTIVES.—The incentives provided for under clause (ii)—

“(I) may include a sliding scale of award fee payments and additional incentives to medicare administrative contractors that either reduce the improper payment rates in their jurisdictions to certain thresholds, as determined by the Secretary, or accomplish tasks, as determined by the Secretary, that further improve payment accuracy; and

“(II) may include substantial reductions in award fee payments under cost-plus-award-fee contracts, for medicare administrative contractors that reach an upper end improper payment rate threshold or other threshold as determined by the Secretary, or fail to accomplish tasks, as determined by the Secretary, that further improve payment accuracy.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to contracts entered into or renewed on or after the date that is 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) APPLICATION TO EXISTING CONTRACTS.—In the case of contracts in existence on or after the date of the enactment of this Act and that are not subject to the effective date under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall, when appropriate and practicable, seek to apply the incentives provided for in the amendments made by subsection (a) through contract modifications.

SEC. 8. STRENGTHENING PENALTIES FOR THE ILLEGAL DISTRIBUTION OF A MEDICARE, MEDICAID, OR CHIP BENEFICIARY IDENTIFICATION OR BILLING PRIVILEGES.

Section 1128B(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a-7b(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) Whoever without lawful authority knowingly and willfully purchases, sells or distributes, or arranges for the purchase, sale, or distribution of a beneficiary identification number or unique health identifier for a health care provider under title XVIII, title XIX, or title XXI shall be imprisoned for not more than 10 years or fined not more than \$500,000 (\$1,000,000 in the case of a corporation), or both.”.

SEC. 9. IMPROVING THE SHARING OF DATA BETWEEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATE MEDICAID PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the “Secretary”) shall establish a plan to encourage and facilitate the participation of States in the Medicare-Medicaid Data Match Program (commonly referred to as the “Medi-Medi Program”) under section 1893(g) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ddd(g)).

(b) PROGRAM REVISIONS TO IMPROVE MEDI-MEDI DATA MATCH PROGRAM PARTICIPATION BY STATES.—Section 1893(g)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ddd(g)(1)(A)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “or otherwise” after “eligible entities”;

(2) in clause (i)—

(A) by inserting “to review claims data” after “algorithms”; and

(B) by striking “service, time, or patient” and inserting “provider, service, time, or patient”;

(3) in clause (ii)—

(A) by inserting “to investigate and recover amounts with respect to suspect claims” after “appropriate actions”; and

(B) by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(4) in clause (iii), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following new clause:

“(iv) furthering the Secretary’s design, development, installation, or enhancement of an automated data system architecture—

“(I) to collect, integrate, and assess data for purposes of program integrity, program oversight, and administration, including the Medi-Medi Program; and

“(II) that improves the coordination of requests for data from States.”.

(c) PROVIDING STATES WITH DATA ON IMPROPER PAYMENTS MADE FOR ITEMS OR SERVICES PROVIDED TO DUAL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and implement a plan that allows each State agency responsible for administering a State plan for medical assistance under title XIX of the Social Security Act access to relevant data on improper or fraudulent payments made under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) for health care items or services provided to dual eligible individuals.

(2) DUAL ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.—In this section, the term “dual eligible individual” means an individual who is entitled to, or enrolled for, benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395c et seq.), or enrolled for benefits under part B of title XVIII of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.), and is eligible for medical assistance under a State plan under title XIX of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) or under a waiver of such plan.

The bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2015

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 104) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution as follows:

H. CON. RES. 104

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That when the House adjourns on any legislative day from Friday, December 18, 2015, through Saturday, January 2, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned sine die, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution; and that when the Senate adjourns on any day from Friday, December 18, 2015, through Tuesday, December 22, 2015, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned sine die, or until

the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 3 of this concurrent resolution.

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.

SEC. 4. (a) When the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day of the second session of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress from Sunday, January 3, 2016, through Friday, January 8, 2016, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it shall stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, January 11, 2016, or until 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 subsection (b), whichever occurs first.

(b) 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.

(c) After reassembling pursuant to subsection (b), when the Senate recesses or adjourns on a motion offered pursuant to this subsection by its Majority Leader or his designee, the Senate shall again stand recessed or adjourned pursuant to subsection (a).

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 18, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 18, 2015 at 12:56 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2152.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2015, TO TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2015

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. 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 4 p.m. on Tuesday, December 22, 2015, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in House Concurrent Resolution 104, in which case the House shall stand adjourned sine die pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 227. An act to strengthen the Federal education research system to make research and evaluations more timely and relevant to State and local needs in order to increase student achievement; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

S. 2152. An act 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; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

S. 2261. An act to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve the way beneficiaries are assigned under the Medicare shared savings program by also basing such assignment on services furnished by Federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics; to the Committee on Ways and Means; 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.

ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills and a joint resolution of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2297. An act to prevent Hizballah and associated entities from gaining access to international financial and other institutions, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2820. An act to reauthorize the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3594. An act to extend temporarily the Federal Perkins Loan program, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3831. An act to amend title XVII of the Social Security Act to extend the annual comment period for payment rates under Medicare Advantage.

H.R. 4246. An act to exempt for an additional 4-year period, from the application of the means-test presumption of abuse under chapter 7, qualifying members of reserve components of the Armed Forces and members of the National Guard who, after September 11, 2001, are called to active duty or to perform a homeland defense activity for not less than 90 days.

H.J. Res. 76. Joint resolution appointing the day for the convening of the second session of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1090. An act to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide eligibility for broadcasting facilities to receive certain disaster assistance, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. TOM PRICE of Georgia. Mr. 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 1 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Tuesday, December 22, 2015, at 4 p.m., unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 104, in which case the House shall stand adjourned sine die 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:

3814. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Rear Admiral (lower half) Ricky L. Williamson, United States Navy, to wear the insignia of the grade of rear admiral, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 777(b)(3)(B); Public Law 104-106, Sec. 503(a)(1) (as added by Public Law 108-136, Sec. 509(a)(3); (117 Stat. 1458); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3815. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRAD, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Margin and Capital Requirements for Covered Swap Entities [Docket No.: OCC-2015-0023] (RIN:1557-AD00) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3816. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, LRAD, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Margin and Capital Requirements for Covered Swap Entities [Docket No.: OCC-2011-0008] (RIN: 1557-AD43) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110

Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3817. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2-propenoic acid, homopolymer, ester with a-[2,4,6-tris(1-phenylethyl)phenyl]-w-hydroxypoly(oxy-1,2-ethanediy), compd. with 2,2,2'-nitrioltris[ethanol]; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0630; FRL-9939-71] received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3818. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; SD; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [EPA-R08-OAR-2015-0429; FRL-9939-87-Region 8] received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3819. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Ammonium Acetate; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0700; FRL-9939-39] received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3820. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pesticides; Revisions to Minimum Risk Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2010-0305; FRL-9934-44] (RIN: 2070-AJ79) received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3821. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Spinosa; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0727; FRL-9933-41] received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3822. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Propiconazole on Tea; Pesticide Tolerance [Docket No.: EPA-HQ-OPP-2015-0685; FRL-9940-01] received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3823. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Propiconazole; Pesticide Tolerances [Docket No.: EPA-HQ-OPP-2014-0788; FRL-9939-83] received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3824. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Spinetoram; Pesticide Tolerances [Docket No.: EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0730; FRL-9933-39] received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3825. A letter from the Deputy Division Chief, CIPD, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Improvements to Benchmarks and Related Requirements Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Mobile Handsets [Docket

No.: 15-285] Amendment of the Commission's Rules Governing Hearing Aid-Compatible Mobile Handsets [Docket No.: 07-250] received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3826. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Telemarketing Sales Rule (RIN: 3084-AB19) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3827. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Listing of Color Additives Exempt from Certification; Mica-Based Pearlescent Pigments; Confirmation of Effective Date [Docket No.: FDA-2015-C-1154] received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

3828. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a six-month periodic report, covering May 15, 2015 to November 15, 2015, on the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938 of November 14, 1994, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec. 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627) and 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3829. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Annual Report for FY 2015 of the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security, pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 81p(c); June 18, 1934, ch. 590, Sec. 16(c) (as amended by Public Law 99-386, Sec. 203(b)(2)); (100 Stat. 823); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3830. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting a notice of a proposed lease to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States, Transmittal No.: 02-16, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2796a(a); Public Law 90-629, Sec. 62 (as added by Public Law 97-113, Sec. 109(a)); (95 Stat. 1525); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

3831. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's Semiannual Report to Congress for April 1, 2015, through September 30, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) Sec. 5(b); Public Law 95-452, Sec. 5(b); (92 Stat. 1103); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3832. A letter from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's Semiannual Report to the Congress for April 1, 2015, through September 30, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) Sec. 5(b); Public Law 95-452, Sec. 5(b); (92 Stat. 1103); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3833. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2015 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Golden Tilefish Hook-and-Line Component [Docket No.: 120404257-3325-02] (RIN: 0648-XE215) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3834. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oce-

anic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 141021887-5172-02] (RIN: 0648-XE342) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3835. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Sablefish in the West Yakutat District of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 140918791-4999-02] (RIN: 0648-XE296) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3836. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; 2015-2016 Accountability Measure and Closure for King Mackerel in the Florida West Coast Northern Subzone [Docket No.: 101206604-1758-02] (RIN: 0648-XE326) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3837. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries [Docket No.: 150121066-5717-02] (RIN: 0648-XE335) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3838. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, West Coast Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary orders — Fraser River Sockeye and Pink Salmon Fisheries; Inseason Orders (RIN: 0648-XE261) received December 17, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3839. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Borrower Defense Student Loan Discharges (Rev. Proc. 2015-57) received December 18, 2015, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Added by Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3840. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Certification Relating to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Between the P5+1, the European Union, and Iran (H. Doc. No. 114-83); jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Judiciary, Oversight and Government Reform, Ways and Means, and Financial Services and ordered to be printed.

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. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 3231. A bill to

amend title 5, United States Code, to protect unpaid interns in the Federal government from workplace harassment and discrimination, and for other purposes; with amendments (Rept. 114-383). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. S. 1172. An act to improve the process of presidential transition; with an amendment (Rept. 114-384, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CHAFFETZ: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. United States Secret Service: An Agency in Crisis (Rept. 114-385). 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 Committee on Homeland Security discharged from further consideration. S. 1172 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and ordered to be printed.

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 Ms. PELOSI:

H.R. 4290. A bill to provide for certain assistance and reforms relating to the territories, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. KNIGHT, and Mr. ROHR-ABACHER):

H.R. 4291. A bill to provide for additional security requirements for Syrian and Iraqi refugees, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. NOEM (for herself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 4292. A bill to provide for research and the testing of innovative health care delivery models to improve medication adherence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 4293. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROSKAM (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. REED, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico):

H.R. 4294. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that retirement investors receive advice in their best interests, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. LAWRENCE (for herself and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.R. 4295. A bill to require the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administra-

tion to increase the rest periods of flight attendants to the same rest periods of pilots; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself and Mr. CROWLEY):

H.R. 4296. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the deduction for host families of foreign exchange and other students from \$50 per month to \$400 per month; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 4297. A bill to impose certain requirements on the Secretary of the Treasury relating to transmittals of country-by-country reports for purposes of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting Action Plan; to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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 Mr. AMODEI (for himself and Mr. CARTER of Texas):

H.R. 4298. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to place in Arlington National Cemetery a memorial honoring the helicopter pilots and crew members of the Vietnam era, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BLUM (for himself, Mr. KING of Iowa, and Mr. CHABOT):

H.R. 4299. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prevent the Secretary of Health and Human Services from limiting access to excepted benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BRAT (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. MASSIE, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. MEADOWS, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. GOSAR, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 4300. A bill to improve the Federal flight deck officers program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 4301. A bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to search all public records to determine if an alien is inadmissible to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H.R. 4302. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to pursue with other countries the goal of the mutual elimination of government-backed export credit agencies, and to provide for the abolishment of the Export-Import Bank of the United States if doing so would not put the United States at a competitive disadvantage; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4303. A bill to provide for the establishment of an accountable and humane border security strategy for the international land borders of the United States, address cultural, economic, ecological, environmental and humanitarian impacts of border security infrastructure, measures, and activities along the international land borders of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, the Judiciary, Natural Resources, Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration

of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HIGGINS:

H.R. 4304. A bill to direct the Department of Labor to conduct a study on residual contamination of workers at certain facilities related the Department of Energy's processing and production of materials that emitted radiation; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 4305. A bill to amend the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 to further enhance the assistance provided by the United States to Ukraine to defend against further aggression by Russia and Russian-backed separatists against Ukraine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4306. A bill to make permanent the Advisory Committee on Minority Veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HONDA, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 4307. A bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MENG (for herself, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HONDA, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, and Mr. TED LIEU of California):

H.R. 4308. A bill to establish the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, 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. SABLON (for himself, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, and Ms. BORDALLO):

H.R. 4309. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reimburse each possession of the United States for the cost of the earned income tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SALMON (for himself, Mr. MILLER of Florida, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 4310. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to check an alien's interactions on and posting of material to the Internet prior to the issuance of a visa, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4311. A bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying or amending the standards and regulations governing the substantiation of charitable contributions; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SHERMAN (for himself, Mr. ROYCE, Ms. MENG, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. WEBER of Texas):

H.R. 4312. A bill to provide for more effective sanctions against Iran's Revolutionary

Guard Corps or any of its officials, agents, or affiliates to counter support for international terrorism and assistance to the Assad regime in Syria; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Financial Services, Ways and Means, Oversight and Government Reform, and 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. TOM PRICE of Georgia:

H. Con. Res. 104. Concurrent resolution providing for the sine die adjournment of the first session of the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress; considered and agreed to, considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. BARR):

H. Con. Res. 105. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the "Paris Agreement" announced on December 12, 2015, at the 21st session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. O'ROURKE (for himself, Mr. HURD of Texas, and Mr. PEARCE):

H. Res. 572. A resolution celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Texas Western College's 1966 NCAA Basketball Championship and recognizing the groundbreaking impact of the title game victory on diversity in sports and civil rights in the United States; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. RATCLIFFE:

H. Res. 573. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the President has failed to adequately develop and execute a strategy capable of defeating the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and a significant course correction is necessary at this time to ensure the protection of the people of the United States and United States allies; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H. Res. 574. A resolution calling for a restoration of civil government in Thailand established by fair, free, democratic, and open elections and expressing solidarity with the people of Thailand in their desire for democracy; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

164. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Kansas, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1661, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the States to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

165. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Kansas, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1661, requesting the Congress of the United States call a convention of the States to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States; which was referred 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 Ms. PELOSI:

H.R. 4290.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 4291.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution, specifically Clauses 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress) of such section.

OR

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Clause 18.

By Mrs. NOEM:

H.R. 4292.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 4293.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4294.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

a) Article I, Section 1, which states, "All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives"; and

b) Article I, Section 7, which states, "All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills"; and

c) Article I, Section 8, which states, "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes," "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes," 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."

By Mrs. LAWRENCE:

H.R. 4295.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution, which gives Congress the power "to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 4296.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. BOUSTANY:

H.R. 4297.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I

By Mr. AMODEI:

H.R. 4298.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Con-

stitution, specifically clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, Section 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 States).

By Mr. BLUM:

H.R. 4299.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. BRAT:

H.R. 4300.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: "The Congress shall have the power to . . . provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. BUCHANAN:

H.R. 4301.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana:

H.R. 4302.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4303.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. HIGGINS:

H.R. 4304.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 4305.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8,

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4306.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4307.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 4308.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. SABLON:

H.R. 4309.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4310.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8: "To establish a uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States."

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4311.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8: "To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in an department or officer thereof."

By Mr. SHERMAN:

H.R. 4312.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 59: Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 178: Mr. BABIN.
 H.R. 224: Mr. CARNEY, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. PETERS.
 H.R. 225: Ms. HAHN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. LEE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. SERRANO.
 H.R. 226: Ms. HAHN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. LEE, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Mr. SERRANO.
 H.R. 244: Mr. CONAWAY.
 H.R. 321: Mr. YODER.
 H.R. 347: Mr. SESSIONS.
 H.R. 556: Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 577: Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 592: Mr. RUIZ.
 H.R. 676: Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 711: Mr. KNIGHT, Ms. PINGREE, and Mr. CHABOT.
 H.R. 721: Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 735: Ms. BASS.
 H.R. 815: Mr. TROTT.
 H.R. 829: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 842: Mr. TROTT.
 H.R. 919: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
 H.R. 969: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. PERRY.
 H.R. 985: Mr. REICHERT.
 H.R. 986: Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana.
 H.R. 1116: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. TROTT.
 H.R. 1142: Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. LEE, and Mr. MACARTHUR.
 H.R. 1149: Mr. FLEMING.
 H.R. 1211: Ms. DUCKWORTH.
 H.R. 1220: Mr. YODER.
 H.R. 1258: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H.R. 1274: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 1282: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 1283: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
 H.R. 1306: Mr. RANGEL, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. HASTINGS, and Ms. TITUS.
 H.R. 1343: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
 H.R. 1399: Mr. ASHFORD, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. MACARTHUR.
 H.R. 1427: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.
 H.R. 1457: Mr. MCCAUL.
 H.R. 1538: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
 H.R. 1600: Miss RICE of New York.
 H.R. 1608: Mr. MARCHANT.
 H.R. 1610: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
 H.R. 1655: Mr. GUINTA, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 1680: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
 H.R. 1686: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 1769: Mr. BEYER and Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 1854: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 1859: Mr. YODER.
 H.R. 2003: Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 2016: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 2017: Mr. DENT.
 H.R. 2043: Mr. KEATING.
 H.R. 2087: Ms. KAPTUR.
 H.R. 2092: Mr. DELANEY, Mr. RUSSELL, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. TAKANO,

Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. KILMER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 2124: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. ELLISON.
 H.R. 2156: Mr. YODER.
 H.R. 2170: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 2197: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. KAPTUR, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 2224: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. KEATING.
 H.R. 2257: Mr. BEYER.
 H.R. 2283: Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 2293: Mr. MICA, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. GARAMENDI.
 H.R. 2302: Mr. NADLER.
 H.R. 2368: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. LYNCH, and Mr. HIMES.
 H.R. 2400: Mr. ROSS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. ZELDIN.
 H.R. 2403: Mr. PASCRELL.
 H.R. 2411: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. WELCH, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
 H.R. 2434: Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 2449: Mr. KILDEE.
 H.R. 2461: Mr. DOLD.
 H.R. 2493: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 2521: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 2536: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
 H.R. 2539: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. McDERMOTT.
 H.R. 2627: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
 H.R. 2657: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H.R. 2680: Mr. NORCROSS and Mrs. CAPPS.
 H.R. 2698: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia and Mr. BOST.
 H.R. 2805: Mr. KEATING.
 H.R. 2817: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. WITTMAN.
 H.R. 2826: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 2847: Mr. STIVERS and Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 2849: Mr. FOSTER.
 H.R. 2858: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 2902: Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 2903: Ms. MOORE and Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
 H.R. 2914: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
 H.R. 2962: Mr. FOSTER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. NEAL, and Mr. ENGEL.
 H.R. 2984: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
 H.R. 3029: Ms. ESHOO.
 H.R. 3036: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. BYRNE, and Ms. MENG.
 H.R. 3060: Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 3084: Mr. MESSER.
 H.R. 3092: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 3099: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
 H.R. 3151: Mr. CHABOT.
 H.R. 3163: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
 H.R. 3187: Mr. BRAT.
 H.R. 3220: Mr. NUNES and Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California.
 H.R. 3222: Mr. NEWHOUSE.
 H.R. 3235: Mr. GUINTA.
 H.R. 3268: Ms. KELLY of Illinois and Mr. GARAMENDI.
 H.R. 3284: Mr. RANGEL and Ms. DUCKWORTH.
 H.R. 3299: Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRIFFITH, and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
 H.R. 3326: Mr. LOEBSACK and Ms. TSONGAS.
 H.R. 3355: Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 3365: Mr. LOEBSACK and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
 H.R. 3366: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 3377: Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 3381: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 3481: Mr. COHEN and Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 3491: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 3520: Mr. ENGEL.
 H.R. 3546: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. FARR, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. HASTINGS, Ms. ESTY, Mr. KEATING, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BEYER, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 3605: Mr. O'ROURKE.
 H.R. 3640: Mr. BOST.
 H.R. 3684: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 3694: Mr. WALBERG.
 H.R. 3706: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 3729: Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H.R. 3783: Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 3785: Mr. PALLONE, Mr. FATTAH and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.
 H.R. 3790: Mr. RANGEL, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. VEASEY.
 H.R. 3799: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia and Mr. BABIN.
 H.R. 3805: Mr. WELCH and Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 3808: Mr. YODER, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SINEMA, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
 H.R. 3834: Mr. NOLAN.
 H.R. 3841: Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. KEATING.
 H.R. 3853: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.
 H.R. 3862: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
 H.R. 3865: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
 H.R. 3872: Mr. CUMMINGS and Mr. VEASEY.
 H.R. 3886: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 3913: Ms. LOFGREN.
 H.R. 3917: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 3927: Mr. MCNERNEY.
 H.R. 3940: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.
 H.R. 3952: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 3986: Mr. YODER.
 H.R. 3991: Mr. RANGEL.
 H.R. 4019: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
 H.R. 4029: Mrs. DINGELL.
 H.R. 4055: Mr. SWALWELL of California and Ms. PINGREE.
 H.R. 4063: Mr. CARNEY.
 H.R. 4089: Mr. KING of New York.
 H.R. 4135: Mr. DELANEY.
 H.R. 4144: Mr. FOSTER and Mr. CONNOLLY.
 H.R. 4162: Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 4177: Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H.R. 4183: Mr. CHABOT and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.
 H.R. 4184: Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 4185: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. YODER, and Mr. ROSS.
 H.R. 4197: Mr. TROTT.
 H.R. 4201: Mr. PETERSON.
 H.R. 4209: Mr. SERRANO and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
 H.R. 4216: Mr. RENACCI and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
 H.R. 4223: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
 H.R. 4224: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.
 H.R. 4226: Mr. DIAZ-BALART and Ms. ROSLEHTINEN.
 H.R. 4240: Mr. KEATING, Mr. CHABOT, and Mr. FARENTHOLD.
 H.R. 4242: Ms. MOORE, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CAPUANO.
 H.R. 4243: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.
 H.R. 4251: Ms. TITUS and Mr. TAKANO.
 H.R. 4253: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.
 H.R. 4262: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.
 H.R. 4266: Ms. BASS.
 H.R. 4273: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. MATSUI, and Mr. LOEBSACK.
 H.R. 4274: Mr. BABIN.
 H. J. Res. 74: Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H. Con. Res. 19: Mr. NOLAN and Mr. WALZ.

H. Con. Res. 88: Mr. SESSIONS.
 H. Con. Res. 101: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
 H. Res. 14: Mr. GOHMERT.
 H. Res. 237: Mr. HONDA.
 H. Res. 279: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
 H. Res. 289: Mr. TAKANO.
 H. Res. 327: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
 H. Res. 432: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
 H. Res. 447: Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania and Mrs. HARTZLER.
 H. Res. 469: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. GIBSON.
 H. Res. 494: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
 H. Res. 532: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.
 H. Res. 543: Mr. POE of Texas.
 H. Res. 549: Mr. VEASEY.
 H. Res. 553: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H. Res. 554: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
 H. Res. 558: Mr. NOLAN.
 H. Res. 564: Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
 H. Res. 567: Mr. DOLD.
 H. Res. 569: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. TITUS, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. HIMES, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

lution: R-15-0506, urging the President and Congress to protect Venezuelan refugees in the United States and to adjust their immigration status pursuant to H.R. 3744; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS—
 ADDITIONS AND WITHDRAWALS

The following Member added his name to the following discharge petition:

Petition 3 by Mr. THOMPSON of California on the bill (H.R. 1076): Mr. Aguilar.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,
 39. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City of Miami, Florida, relative to Reso-