

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the Senate continues to debate funding priorities for the American people in the coming year, I want to take a moment to recognize the importance of supporting our Nation's seniors. May is Older Americans Month. This is a time to recognize our responsibility to expand resources for the elderly and a moment to acknowledge the important role older Americans play in contributing to our country's livelihood and development.

Older Americans Month has been recognized annually since 1963, when President Kennedy designated May as Senior Citizens Month to honor the dedication of seniors to our communities. At that time, just 17 million Americans had reached their 65th birthday, with over one-third of all seniors living in poverty. With few programs to support their needs, President Kennedy pledged to highlight elderly contributions to society in order to strengthen such services.

This year's Older American's Month theme is "Blaze a Trail," aimed at raising awareness about the many issues facing seniors today. From high health care costs, to the availability of healthy foods in vulnerable communities, our Nation's seniors deserve the resources they need to enjoy these richer years.

Last month, the President signed the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act into law, marking the end of a 5-year long debate on how to reauthorize crucial programs for seniors in underserved communities. For decades, the Older Americans Act has strengthened community assistance for seniors, including through transportation, caregiver support, nutrition, and home-based aid. I am pleased the reauthorization remains steadfast in supporting these initiatives, and includes stronger protections for elder rights, while expanding disability and long-term care programs.

But we cannot stop there. We must take this as an opportunity to underscore the importance of promoting senior services across all sectors. That means coming together as a Congress to produce solutions for long-term sustainability in Social Security and Medicare. It means expanding access to healthy foods across communities, including in hospitals and senior-care facilities. This means supporting caregivers and families who take time out of their lives to provide for their loved ones. And it means ensuring that cost of living adjustments are fairly calculated to account for senior expenses year after year.

We all have a stake in promoting the livelihood of our Nation's elderly, whether it be for our own families or for the children of future generations. Let us be reminded this May that supporting older Americans is not just a matter of fairness, but a commonsense solution to promoting the wellbeing of our Nation at large.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

ADAM WALSH REAUTHORIZATION BILL

• Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, today the Senate voted on S. 2613, the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act. This legislation would extend two key programs that Congress established a decade ago to standardize and strengthen registration and monitoring of sex offenders nationwide. I support this bill because it has critical provisions that law enforcement officers need in order to protect our children from harm, and I would have voted in favor of it if I were present for the vote.

In 2006, Congress passed and the President signed into law the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. The Adam Walsh Act, which was named for a 6-year old who was tragically murdered in 1981, established nationwide notification and registration standards for those convicted of sex offenses. The Adam Walsh Act created a Federal grant program to assist State and local law enforcement to implement registration systems and locate those who fail abide by registration requirements.

The Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act would reauthorize the Sex Offender Management Assistance Program, a Federal program that assists State and local law enforcement agencies in their efforts to improve sex offender registry systems and information-sharing capabilities. The bill would also reauthorize the Jessica Lunsford Address Verification Grant Program, a Federal program that assists States and local law enforcement agencies in their efforts to verify the residence of all or some registered sex offenders. The reauthorization of these critical programs would provide law enforcement with the tools they need to keep our communities safe.

I would have voted in favor this legislation today because it helps combat child predators by giving law enforcement officials the tools they need to catch these dangerous individuals and convict them. It takes a comprehensive network of law enforcement agencies on the Federal, State, and local levels working together to ensure compliance and locate sex offenders, and that is what this bill would do. I also support this legislation because it would tighten our sex offender registration system and better track registered sex offenders, which helps to protect our children from harm. I also recognize that this legislation has the support of the Na-

tional Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the Nation's foremost missing children's clearinghouse.

Despite my support for this legislation, I do have concerns with some sex offender registration systems. First, more research is needed to assess whether or not sex offender registries actually improve the safety of the public. Some research has concluded that sex registries have no demonstrable effect in reducing sex re-offenses and often registered sex offenders have higher rates of recidivism. While our men and women in uniform believe they need this tool to combat sex offenses, Congress should not rubber-stamp Federal programs in the absence of hard data that demonstrates their effectiveness in keeping us safe.

I am also concerned that sex offender programs undermine rehabilitation because they present significant barriers to reintegration into the community. Requiring youth who are adjudicated in juvenile court of sex offenses to register as a sex offender is counter-productive to the goal of the juvenile justice system, which is designed to protect youth from lifelong penalties carried by the adult criminal justice system. The top priority of our government must be to protect the public; but one-size-fits-all solutions do not achieve that end.

Despite my concerns, I would have voted in favor of the Adam Walsh Reauthorization Act today because I believe it provides law enforcement with the tools they need to keep people safe. I am committed to working with law enforcement to make sure they receive the support they need from Congress to effectively do their jobs. However, Congress must do its job by ensuring that the programs we endorse have the research to support them. That effort is critical to both keeping the public safe and to ensuring that our justice system is fair for all Americans.●

NATIONAL MARITIME DAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, yesterday, May 22, 2016, our Nation celebrated National Maritime Day. The United States has always been and will always be a great maritime nation. My home State of Louisiana ranks first in the Nation in economic impact from America's domestic maritime industry. The American Maritime Partnership shows Louisiana's 54,850 maritime jobs pump more than \$11.3 billion annually into our economy. America's robust domestic maritime industry includes vessel operators, marine terminals, shipyards, and workers engaged in the movement of cargo exclusively within the United States.

According to a study commissioned by the Transportation Institute and conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, PwC, Louisiana also ranks first in the country in maritime jobs per capita, with 1 in every 83 jobs connected to the State's domestic maritime industry, nearly twice that of any other State.